

# STOP BULLYING NOW!

TAKE A STAND. LEND A HAND.

## Activities GUIDE

Making it work for your  
school and community





From high-school and middle-school youth activists, to community organizations and after-school programs, our **Stop Bullying Now! Activities Guide** has something for everyone. You can adapt any of these activities for your group. Just be creative and **plan a campaign** that works for you and your community. The ultimate goals are to **spread the word about bullying prevention** and to have fun while you're doing it!



## Ideas for the Community and Schools

### Stop Bullying Now! Carnival

A SBN! Carnival is an ideal way to give people important information about bullying prevention. This event can vary depending on the amount of money and time you have. It can range from a series of information booths, games, prizes and food to contests and celebrity guests.

Start planning your carnival about 3 months ahead of time. It will be necessary to get the proper supplies lined up (e.g., materials, people, food) in order to have a successful event. You'll need to promote the event at least a month ahead of time in order to get a good turnout. Most importantly, be creative! Come up with games and prizes that you know will draw a large crowd. Here are some ideas you could use for your carnival:

#### Information Booths

Partner with the local PTA, local public health department and student groups to make your information booths more effective and to reach a larger audience. Ask each of these groups to sponsor a booth where flyers and information about bullying prevention can be present. You may also want to let participants take a knowledge test about bullying facts. Flyers and other material can be found on the Stop Bullying Now! Web site, [stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov), in the "What Adults Can Do" section.

#### Postcard Booth

It's important to keep your local officials informed about the issues that are affecting the community, so why not send them a postcard about bullying in your school

or community and what you're doing to help prevent it? A postcard campaign is a great way to grab their attention and keep them informed. You might consider drafting sample postcards or ideas of what to write. Also, many local officials have Web sites that let you submit comments and information electronically. The more postcards you send, the better!

#### T-Shirt and Hat Booth

Communicate your messages right on your clothes! Well, not on good school clothes (parents might not like that idea). Create a booth at your carnival where youth can write and draw their very own bullying prevention messages on t-shirts or hats you provide. Be sure to give them sample slogans or messages and provide bright, colorful permanent markers so they can design eye-catching, original clothing!

#### Beading Booth

Beading is not only a fun activity, but it also provides an avenue for youth to wear their message in a cool way. Go to your local beading store and see if they'll donate free or discounted lettered beads. They may even be willing to sponsor this booth at your carnival. Remember, local businesses enjoy working with the community's youth, so asking for a favor may not be as hard as you think!



#### Graffiti Mural

Are you trying to get the word out about bullying prevention at your school? Get your thoughts down on paper! All it takes is a long roll of paper and colored markers to make a graffiti mural—it's that simple!

Contact the art teacher at your school, community center or local business and ask if you can cover a wall with poster paper. You may want to see if your city or a

business will donate an actual wall for this cause. Try to get a wall that people frequently walk by so that your mural can be seen by many. Describe ideas about what sorts of things you'd like people to write on the wall. Personal feelings? Stories about when their feelings were hurt by bullying? How they helped someone who has been bullied? A fact about bullying prevention? All of these ideas would greatly contribute to your mural. Make sure you keep a close watch on the wall as the days go by to make sure everything written on it is appropriate.

Lastly, consider taking pictures of people as they're writing on the wall and of the whole mural once it's finished. These pictures could be sent to the local paper to include with a story about youth activism! (See p. 11 for quick tips on working with your local media.)

### **Create a Pledge Wall**

Whether you've been bullied, bullied others, or watched it happen, everyone needs to lend a hand and get involved to stop bullying. Organize a pledge wall at your school or community center for youth to pledge that they will make a commitment to stop bullying themselves, help others, or stop others from bullying.

Be sure to take lots of pictures and pass them on to your local paper to let others know about your efforts. Remember, this is your chance to show everyone that there is no tolerance for bullying in your community and that everyone should pledge to help stop bullying now!

### **Work With Your Local Radio Station**

#### *Create a Public Service Announcement*

Want to reach hundreds and potentially thousands of people in your area? Create a radio public service announcement (PSA).

Most radio stations dedicate a certain amount of "airtime" to public service messages—you probably have heard them on your favorite news or talk radio station.

How do you go about creating a message about bullying prevention for your radio station? Here are some tips to help you get started:

- Gather some creative youth at your school or after-school program who are interested in helping to spread the word about bullying prevention.

- Define the goal of the PSA and who your target audience is. Is the goal of the PSA something that you believe would be more appealing to youth, parents or teachers?

- As you consider your target audience, decide upon a radio station that is popular among your audience. Let the radio station know about your cause. Send a letter describing what you are doing and what you want them to do. You are working for a great cause and radio stations love working with youth!

- Take time to outline the PSA and start writing the script. For help on bullying prevention messages, try the SBN! Web site: [stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov). Remember, there is not only youth content on the site, but adult content as well. It is very important that when you read your PSA it is no longer than 30 seconds. And lastly, be creative! The more creative and catchy your PSA is, the more likely the station will want to play it.



- Test your PSA with a group of people from your target audience. This will help you make sure they understand the message you're trying to deliver and make any necessary adjustments.
- Now that you've written a script, and practiced it until it's perfect, set up a time to meet with the radio station staff to record the PSA. Be flexible when you deal with the radio station; while radio stations love the exposure of working with youth for such a great cause, they are still providing a free service to you.

*Have the Local Radio Station  
Air a Bullying Prevention  
Message*

If you can't find a local radio station to air a PSA, another great idea is to ask them to air bullying prevention tips. Offer to send a few of them to choose from and see if they will have various deejays announce them as a "tip of the day" or "tip of the week." For sample tips check out the SBN! Web site ([stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)). Radio stations are also a great way to get the word out for other bullying prevention activities, such as the carnival.

**Billboards & Marquee Signs**

Want an easy way to reach thousands of people daily? Engage local schools, organizations and businesses in your community to help spread the word about bullying prevention through billboards and marquees. Perhaps they can help promote other anti-bullying activities or include messages or quotes related to bullying prevention. A poster contest that involves numerous youth would be fun. Talk to businesses about displaying the winning posters on their billboards or in their offices/buildings.

**Cheer On!**

Ask your cheerleading squad or pom squad to create and perform a cheer about bullying prevention. Perhaps they can use their cheer at football or basketball games, school pep rallies or assemblies, or even at one of your bullying prevention events (e.g., carnival, battle of the bands, back to school night).

**Battle of the Bands**

Everyone loves music, so why not organize an activity that incorporates live music? Your event can be fun and entertaining while at the same time involving the whole community.



When looking for a concert venue, be sure to contact your school, local community center or park where you can hold events for free. Keeping the cost down on an event like this could be a challenge, so look to local or student bands, music stores and county recreation departments early on to sponsor the event and perhaps donate space,

equipment and prizes.

You should also start talking to some local bands in your high school, middle school or community that may be interested in performing at your event. The more bands you involve, the more people who will attend, the better the event! Most bands are looking for exposure, so it may be easier to recruit bands than you think. Use local music stores or venues where local bands frequently play to put up recruitment flyers.

Start recruiting volunteers and local school counselors or health and safety professionals who would be interested in promoting, participating in or

chaperoning your event. Ask them to set up booths with information on bullying prevention at the event. You will want to look to some of the same groups that would be interested in having information booths at your SBN! Carnival.

A great way to incorporate SBN! Campaign messages is within the songs. Even though each band will play their songs for most of the event, have each band come up with a creative song about bullying prevention. The creativity of these songs can be what the crowd ultimately uses to judge who should win the battle of the bands. Make sure that throughout your event you also provide facts and tips on bullying prevention. Play the SBN! PSAs. A good time to do this is between band performances. You could decorate the stage and background with bullying prevention quotes, tips or Campaign posters. Remember, the SBN! Web site ([stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)) has posters you can download. A key to this event will be getting inventive! Find other ways to decorate your stage and venue, communicate the Campaign messages and promote your event to the general public and media.

### **Chalk it Up!**

Write bullying prevention messages on sidewalks and asphalt with sidewalk chalk. (Be sure to get permission first and use the kind of chalk that washes off!). Think of frequented public spaces such as local parks or in front of your school and other schools and parks in your district. You may want to consider coordinating with other schools in your district so that this activity happens at each school in your area simultaneously. You may also want to coordinate with local businesses and ask if they'd be willing to have you write messages in front of their establishments.

### **Teen Town Hall Meeting**

Arrange a meeting during school hours to bring together school administrators, staff, students, parents and community leaders

to discuss bullying and bullying prevention. This would be a great opportunity to contact the media and let them know about your school's bullying prevention efforts. A Town Hall meeting is also an excellent forum for showcasing PSAs, winning essays on bullying prevention, student-designed posters and more. Civic leaders can be invited to recognize students and the school, and businesses could be contacted to donate prizes.



### **More Ideas for Schools and After School Programs**

#### **Lights, Camera, Action!**

*Create a Commercial Public Service Announcement (PSA)*

Are there any aspiring actors who would like to be involved in your efforts? Why not cast them in your very own commercial PSA about bullying prevention.

*Here are a few ideas to get you started:*

- Gather some creative youth at your school or after-school program who are interested in helping you spread the word about bullying prevention.
- Define the message of the PSA and who your target audience is. Is your message something that you believe would be more appealing to youth or adults? Will you show the PSA at school? Will you send it to a local TV station or to the school district media office?

- Start writing the script. For help on bullying prevention messages, try the SBN! Web site ([stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)). It has a great deal of bullying prevention ideas you could use in the PSA. Remember, there is youth related content on the site, and adult-focused content. Both areas of the site can help you get a start in writing your script. Be creative!
- Test your PSA with a group of people from your target audience. This will help you make sure they understand the message you're trying to deliver and make any necessary adjustments.
- Now that you've written a script, gather the actors you'll need and practice until it's perfect. Create or borrow the props you'll need to make the PSA seem as real as possible. Ask the teacher and students in a film class or drama club, a friend or a parent if they'd be willing to tape and act out the PSA.

You may be thinking: now that we have done all of this work, where should we play this PSA? Talk to your school principals and district officials and see if they'd be willing to air your PSA in district wide school and community meetings. Many malls and large stores also have closed-circuit television, where, if the PSA is high-quality enough, they may be willing to play it. Remember: local organizations are always looking for ways to support their youth, so asking them to run your PSA may not be as difficult as you think!



### **Skits/Role Play**

A great idea for an activity in the classroom is skits and role playing. Skits allow youth to depict real-life scenarios that they may encounter every day around school. Role playing is also a great way to think through appropriate ways to intervene in or to prevent bullying. Check the SBN! Web site ([stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)) for ideas on situations that can be acted out, particularly in the SBN! Webisodes section. Be sure to schedule a discussion period after the skits and role playing where students can discuss what they've learned. It's important to be able to talk about what the students have seen and learned. You can also video tape your skits to show to students and parents later. You may also want to consider involving drama club and film class members to help make the production a school wide activity.

### **Morning Announcements**

Ask your school administrator who is in charge of morning announcements to incorporate bullying prevention messages or tips either daily or weekly. Offer to provide them with the bullying prevention messages. Ask if they will play the SBN! PSAs or the PSAs you have developed.

### **Mentoring Programs**

We know that young people who bully are more likely than those who don't bully to have problems in school. They are also more likely to run into troubles later in life, such as getting into aggressive fights or vandalizing property. In order to help prevent these effects of bullying, it's a good idea to spread the word to as many youth as possible. Because younger kids usually look up to middle and high school students, you should use this as an opportunity to share positive messages with them about the effects of bullying and create a mentoring and leadership program.

### Acts of Kindness Award

Active bystanders are one key element in preventing bullying. Start a “Gold” award (you can create your own name that fits in with your school colors or mascot).

Ask students to nominate their fellow classmates who they believe have played an effective role in preventing bullying. This award would be designed to highlight the day-to-day actions of students who may often go unrecognized. The award would help remind students that even the smallest gesture, such as standing up for someone who is being bullied or being there for a friend, is an important one.



### Start a Stop Bullying Now! Club

Is bullying prevention something you’re passionate about? Do you know other students who share that same enthusiasm? Well, start your own club! The SBN! Club can be in charge of planning monthly activities to raise awareness around bullying prevention. Many clubs also receive funding from their schools, so this may be a smart way to hold multiple activities throughout the year with the support of the student body. Often clubs also serve as a strong student voice that can be heard by members of the PTA, school personnel and community leaders, which is another great way to spread the word about the importance of bullying prevention.

### School Newsletters, Newspapers, Web sites & Yearbooks

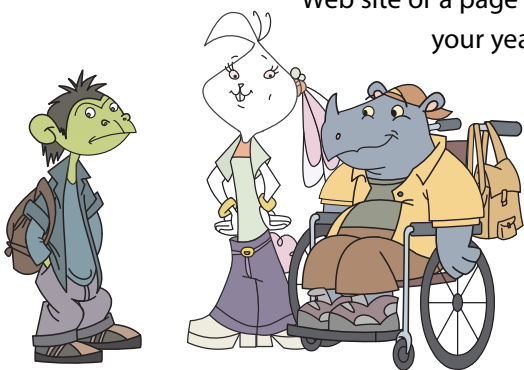
Reach out to your school newsletter committee, newspaper staff or webmaster and see if they’d be willing to reserve some space for content related to bullying prevention. This could take the form of a small “tip sheet”, a “question and answer” about bullying prevention, or an “ask the expert.” Check the SBN! Web site ([stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)) for ideas on potential content. In addition, if you hold any school-wide activities around bullying prevention, such as a pledge wall or poster contest, be sure to get an article or report about it included in your school newsletter, newspaper,

Web site or a page devoted to it in your yearbook.

### SBN! Contests

There is no better way to engage students than with a competition! A great way to start a school-wide or district-wide competition is a t-shirt design or poster contest where students write or draw a creative bullying prevention message. A bumper sticker design contest is another great idea. Depending on the scope of who’s involved in the competition, you can ask local school district officials, local officials, school board members, and youth to be the judges.

To provide incentives for the contest, think of a creative way to reward the winners. Talk to your local businesses about possible rewards—they’re always looking for ways to be more involved with their community’s youth. You can also display the posters at school or at a prominent public place in the community. If your community has a local school calendar, find out if the winning poster can be placed as the “artwork of the month,” or, if you have 12 winners, for the year!





### **SBN! Shirt Day**

Ask students to take a stand in solidarity against bullying. Coordinate with your school officials to name a shirt day where all students who support bullying prevention wear the same color shirt to school. Consider holding a school-wide assembly that day to talk about issues surrounding bullying in your school and its effects on students. Don't forget to make sure you spread the word beyond your own school—take a picture of your class out on the school lawn that shows the extensive number of t-shirts and send it to your local paper!



### **Create a SBN! Quilt**

Provide students with a permanent fabric marker and square of colorful fabric on which they can draw or write anti-bullying messages. Allow flexibility in the assignment: the more diverse the pictures, sayings and stories told on the patches of fabric, the more beautiful the quilt. We recommend that students look to the Campaign Web site ([stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)) for inspiration or ideas. They may want to recreate a scene from one of our Webisodes or feature their favorite character on their fabric square.

Once you've collected all of the squares, find someone who would be willing to help sew the quilt. Involve the home economics teacher to see if it can be a project for a home economics class. Perhaps a few local parents would be willing to help.

When the quilt is done, find a prominent wall to hang the quilt. Make sure you take pictures and send them to your local media!

### **Stop Bullying Now! School Assembly**

A great way to get the school together around one cause is with a school assembly, so why not devote an entire assembly to bullying prevention! Talk to your school administrators about the importance of this cause and your ideas for what could go into this activity. Many of the ideas in the activities guide could be part of your assembly: You may want to consider having a speaker talk about bullying prevention, have the cheerleaders or pom squad do a bullying prevention cheer, honor those who've won in a t-shirt contest, or present the "acts of kindness" awards. You could even present your bullying prevention skit or PSA to the entire school. Get creative—the more engaging your assembly, the more success you'll have in spreading the word about bullying prevention!

### **Stop Bullying Now! Theme Week**

Are there so many great ideas here that you can't possibly just choose one? Well, if you have the resources and time, consider choosing numerous activities that have been suggested in this guide for a SBN! theme week. You may want to start out with some of the smaller ideas and culminate the week's activities with a SBN! Carnival or Battle of the Bands. Think about inviting media to come to your school for one event or several: providing them with choices will increase your chances of getting covered by the local press.



## Ideas to Engage Teachers and School Staff

### Brown Bag Lunch/Teacher In-Service

Teachers are crucial in helping to identify and stop bullying at school. Organize a brown bag lunch for teachers that focuses on bullying prevention or add a workshop at your next teacher in-service day. A great way to make this lunch or workshop more interesting would be to invite a local expert. Whether it's a local researcher, psychologist or health professional, providing a speaker from outside of your school environment would be interesting for them. Also, refer to the SBN! Web site for fact sheets that specifically address what teachers can do to help.



## Ideas to Engage Parents and Families

One of the best ways to stop or prevent bullying is for adults to be educated about, and sensitive to, the issue. Parents and families are critical to teaching their children about respecting others and bullying prevention, as well as a great resource.

### Provide Materials on Bullying and Bullying Prevention

There are many ways to reach parents/families with information about bullying prevention. To get started, check out the adult sections of our SBN! Web site ([stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)). Pass out the appropriate tip sheets and information at parent-teacher conferences, back-to-school nights, sporting events, and any other parent/family-related events. You may want to plan a night specifically around the topic of bullying prevention, such as a spaghetti dinner where you can have a host of information present and invite a local expert, health and safety professional or school psychologist to speak.

### School Newsletters

Often school newsletters are sent home to parents with information about what's happening in the schools and community. Ask the newsletter staff if they'd be willing to put in a blurb on bullying prevention in the next edition or if they'd be willing to do a series of bullying prevention tips over multiple editions. This is a great way to communicate with parents and families in your community!

### Talk to Your PTA or PTO

Local PTAs and PTOs are great resources and can help you spread the word to many parents/families. Perhaps they'd be willing to send materials to their mailing lists, email or pass out materials at their local events. Ask them if they would include a statement about bullying prevention in their next newsletter or on their website. Many PTAs and PTOs send packages home to parents at the beginning of summer or at Back to School time and are always looking for more information to add—draft up a quick tip sheet using our Campaign Web site ([stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)) and see if they'll add it!

Remember to be resourceful: engage your local legislator or county official (e.g., county attorney, police chief) and see how they can help you.





## Working With Your Local Media

Want to reach thousands of people in your community with your Stop Bullying Now! message? Well, get them to talk about it by working hard to let the media know about your exciting activities! Getting noticed by your local media, including newspapers, radio and television, is just as important as planning your activity. Being covered by the press is the best way to make sure you reach as many people as possible. Media coverage can help publicize your upcoming event, educate people on this issue and possibly encourage others to get involved in bullying prevention. Now that we know why media coverage is so important, check out the tips below to help you make the best of your outreach to local media!

### Develop a Plan for What You Want to Say

You need to make sure you have a strong and clear message before you contact your local media. As a group, think through the two or three most important pieces of information you would want everyone to know. These messages should be short, easy to understand, and simple enough so you can explain to reporters exactly why they should cover your activity or event. The messages should be specific so the reporter knows immediately why you're supporting this cause.



A good example of a specific message would be, "Studies show that young people who bully are more likely than those who don't bully to skip school and drop out of school. They are also more likely to smoke, drink alcohol and get into fights."

A less specific message would be, "Bullying prevention is important because it can mess up a kid's future."

Check out the SBN! Web site ([stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)) for some help with important and interesting things you can tell your local reporters. Once you have developed your plan for what you want to say, make sure everyone knows how to say the messages clearly and in their own words.

### Make a List of Whom to Contact

Start out by making a list of all of the local newspapers, radio stations and TV stations in your area.

Each station and newspaper has many reporters who cover different types of news. Think through which types of reporters would want to cover your event. Most likely it will be the "metro," "city," or "community affairs" reporter. In some instances, it could be a reporter who covers "education." At TV stations, you will also be looking for producers who would be interested in your story.

There are a couple different ways to get contact information for the people you'll need to reach:

- Once you've identified what type of news person should cover your event, call the front desk at each of these outlets and ask them who the appropriate person is.
- Head to your local library. Most libraries have local media directories that are like giant phone books of all media contacts. The most common directories are Bacon's, Hudson's, Gale's, or Burrelle's.
- Go online. Now that many publications or radio and TV stations have their own Web sites, some even include a directory.

Many news organizations have a community affairs director whose responsibility is to make sure their newspaper reports on local community activities.

### **Contacting the Media**

Now that you've got your messages and media list, you will need to prepare an effective way to tell your story.

To increase your chance of getting covered, you can approach them in several ways.



To approach them in a more casual manner, you can call them (see tips on page 12) or send them a letter or email on your activity.

To package your story in a more standard way, you can create a media advisory or press release. An advisory tells the media about an upcoming event and provides

the "who, what, when, where, why" information. The important part of an advisory is to give the media enough information so they know about when and where the news will be, but not too much information that the details are given away and you don't catch their interest! A press release announces news or information that will come out as a part of your activity. Be sure to include details of your event and frame it as if it is the news story itself. Many journalists write their stories using just the press release itself. You can find sample press releases all over the Internet, which can give you a good starting point.

Also, you may want to ask students to write letters of invitation to community leaders (e.g., county attorney, police chief, mayor, school board members). Having community leaders at your event will help attract media attention.

### Tips on Talking With the Media

You may have different opportunities to speak with the media, whether it is your own follow up or an interview. Either way, it's smart to keep a couple of key points in mind:

- Be prepared. Reporters talk to many different people every day and don't want their time to be wasted. Make sure you know in advance what you're trying to accomplish by calling them and tell them of your purpose early on.
- Introduce yourself to the reporter and make sure you haven't caught them at a time they can't talk. If they aren't available then, ask when might be a better time.
- Remember to rely on the messages you crafted early on. Use them naturally and speak clearly.
- Be honest and helpful. If you don't know an answer to a question a reporter may ask, tell them you're not sure, but you'll find out and let them know the right answer. If they need further information on something, offer to help them or suggest outside resources. You may also refer them to the Stop Bullying Now! Web site ([stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)) if it's something they may find there.
- Remember, everything you say to a reporter may be used in their story unless you tell them otherwise. If you discuss information (such as the names of individuals) that shouldn't be published, don't share it with the reporter or ask that part of your conversation be "off the record."
- When the conversation has ended, thank the reporter for his or her time. Make sure they know how to contact you if they need any further information.





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