# TREBALL FI DE MÀSTER

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# How can an action plan focused on empathy, respect and reflection help to prevent bullying in Catalan schools?

Realitzat per  Marc Briansó González

Tutoritzat / Dirigit per  Maria González Davies

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**Abstract (English)**

Bullying has always been a challenge for both schools and teachers and has been proven to have serious sequels on its victims. Its dangers are relevant enough to propose new and innovative solutions in order to prevent it as much as possible. This project focuses on an action plan over the first two years of secondary education where students will learn and do activities in relationship to bullying and the values of empathy, respect and reflection, as the first two have been proven to be useful in previous bullying prevention programs and the latest could help the students learn about this topic while keeping their own perspective and opinion. These activities are not evaluated and would be done in tutorials, as they are not part of the curriculum in any subject. This decision allows for the students to have no pressure while learning about bullying and its prevention. In order to maximize the effectiveness the activities are focused in being innovative, group oriented and motivating, as the students need to feel accomplishment while working on them in order to keep their focus as high as possible.

Key words: Bullying, Prevention, Empathy, Respect, Reflection.

**Abstract (Catalan)**

El bullying sempre ha estat un repte per professors i escoles i hi ha estudis que demostren que poden impactar seriosament les seves víctimes. Aquest perill és tan rellevant que cal continuar proposant noves solucions innovadores amb l'objectiu de prevenir-lo tant com sigui possible. Aquest projecte es centra en un pla d'acció durant els dos primers anys d'educació secundària on els alumnes aprendran i faran activitats en relació al bullying als valors d'empatia, respecte i reflexió, ja que els dos primers valors han estat demostrats útils en programes de prevenció de bullying previs i el darrer podria ajudar als estudiants a mantenir el seu criteri personal i opinió mentre aprenen sobre aquest tema. Aquestes activitats no avaluen els estudiants i no formen part del currículum de cap assignatura. Aquesta decisió permet que els estudiants no tinguin cap tipus de pressió mentre aprenen sobre el bullying I la seva prevenció. Amb l'objectiu de maximitzar l'eficàcia de les activitats, aquestes tindran una base innovadora, motivadora i orientada al treball en equip, de forma que els estudiants es sentin realitzats mentre treballen i la seva atenció sigui la més alta possible.

Paraules clau: Bullying, Prevenció, Respecte, Empatia, Reflexió.

**Abstract (Spanish)**

El bullying siempre ha sido uno de los mayores desafíos para profesores y escuelas y hay estudios que demuestran lo serias que son las secuelas de sus victimas. Este peligro es tan relevante que hay que seguir proponiendo nuevas e innovadoras soluciones que puedan ayudar a prevenirlo. Este proyecto se centra en un plan de acción durante los dos primeros años de educación secundaria donde los alumnos aprenderán y harán actividades en relación con el bullying y a los valores de empatía, respeto y reflexión. Los dos primeros han sido demostrado eficaces en anteriores programas de prevención de bullying, y el último podría ayudar a los estudiantes a mantener su criterio personal y opinión mientras aprenden sobre este tema. Estas actividades no evalúan a los estudiantes y no forman parte del currículum de ninguna asignatura. Esta decisión permite que los estudiantes no tengan ningún tipo de presión mientras aprenden sobre el bullying y su prevención. Con el objetivo de maximizar la eficacia de las actividades, éstas tendrán una base innovadora, motivadora y orientada al trabajo en equipo, de forma que los estudiantes se sientan realizados mientras trabajan y así su atención durante las sesiones sea lo más alta posible.

Palabras clave: Bullying, Prevención, Respeto, Empatía, Reflexión.

**Introduction**

"A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself" (Olweus, 1993). This will be the criteria used through this project to identify bullying acts. It has always been one of education's hardest challenges to suppress bullying from schools and allow students to express themselves freely without fear.

As stated by Wolke et al (2015), "bullying occurs in settings where individuals do not have a say concerning the group they want to be in. This is the situation for children in school classrooms or at home with siblings, and has been compared to being 'caged' with others. In an effort to establish a social network or hierarchy, bullies will try to exert their power with all children. Those who have an emotional reaction (eg, cry, run away, are upset) and have nobody or few to stand up for them, are the repeated targets of bullies. Bullies may get others to join in (laugh, tease, hit, spread rumours) as bystanders or even as henchmen (bully/victims)."

However, bullying is not easy to detect, as it is not always related to physical violence. It is extremely difficult for teachers to notice if a student is being threatened or is a victim of cyberbullying, which consists in being bullied on social media, instant message services, emails and other kinds of digital services, as there is no physical evidence that can be used. Since teachers can not really control everything their students do on their day to day lives, specially outside of the school, I think the best way to fight bullying is to prevent it in the first place. To do so, I will design an action plan aimed to 1$^{st}$ and 2$^{nd}$ of ESO groups focused on empathy, reflection and respect, which are some of the values that successful antibullying programs like Olweus Bullying Prevention Program or KIVA focus on. All of these programs share one key aspect: to work with

students individually, as a classroom, as a school and as a community (involving parents, teachers and school workers).

However, this dissertation will focus on working as a classroom and how ten hours over the span of two academic years can be used to teach these values to the students and prevent the possibilities for bullying incidents to happen as much as possible. It will be ideal to attach this action plan to individual tutorship with the students as well as events aimed to the whole school, but I felt it would be too broad a topic so I decided to dedicate this project exclusively to studying how these values are taught at a classroom level and design ten hours that can impact students' perception of bullying.

The objectives of this dissertation are the following ones:

- To study the current situation of bullying in Secondary in Catalan Schools.
- To design ten hours of tutorship to teach the values of empathy, reflection and respect to prevent bullying.
- To design instruments as a way to study the efficacy of this action plan and evaluate how the students' perception of bullying changes through the two years.

**Theoretical framework**

Before we start focusing on how we can prevent bullying we must first determine how bullying affects children and how common it is in Spain.

A research made by the United Nations in 2016, *Ending the torment: tackling bullying from the schoolyard to cyberspace,* states that bullying has been for a long time part of the social, community and school life of children. This statement is supported by several different surveys that analyze different acts and frequencies of bullying all over the world. Spain appears in one specific survey focused on the numbers of children that have been bullied at least once. The average is that over 50% of children have been bullied and Spain is slightly below the average at 39.8%.
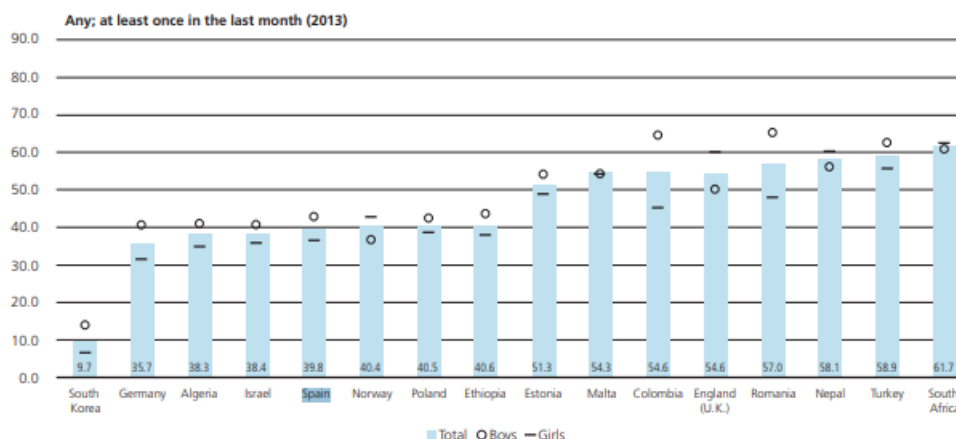


**Figure 1**

The prevalence of children being bullied is much lower, hitting a 12,1% average and just 6,3% of the cases for Spain. While many children are bullied at least once, it is relatively rare for it to become a persistent factor in their lives.
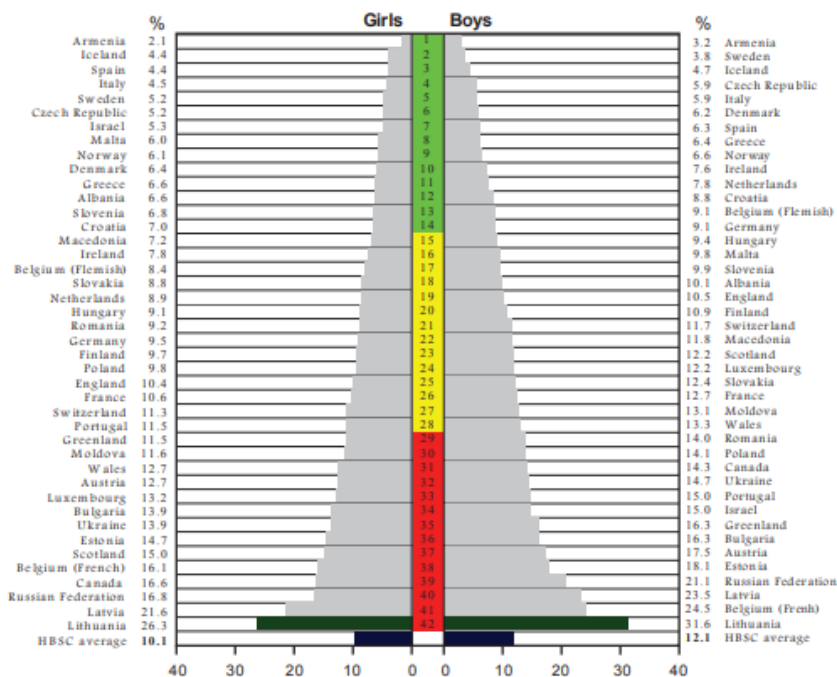
**Prevalence of children being bullied. Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study, 2013/2014[469]**

| Girls | % | | | Boys | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Armenia | 2.1 | 1 | | Armenia | 3.2 |
| Iceland | 4.4 | 2 | | Sweden | 3.8 |
| Spain | 4.4 | 3 | | Iceland | 4.7 |
| Italy | 4.5 | 4 | | Czech Republic | 5.9 |
| Sweden | 5.2 | 5 | | Italy | 5.9 |
| Czech Republic | 5.2 | 6 | | Denmark | 6.2 |
| Israel | 5.3 | 7 | | Spain | 6.3 |
| Malta | 6.0 | 8 | | Greece | 6.4 |
| Norway | 6.1 | 9 | | Norway | 6.6 |
| Denmark | 6.4 | 10 | | Ireland | 7.6 |
| Greece | 6.6 | 11 | | Netherlands | 7.8 |
| Albania | 6.6 | 12 | | Croatia | 8.8 |
| Slovenia | 6.8 | 13 | | Belgium (Flemish) | 9.1 |
| Croatia | 7.0 | 14 | | Germany | 9.1 |
| Macedonia | 7.2 | 15 | | Hungary | 9.4 |
| Ireland | 7.8 | 16 | | Malta | 9.8 |
| Belgium (Flemish) | 8.4 | 17 | | Slovenia | 9.9 |
| Slovakia | 8.8 | 18 | | Albania | 10.1 |
| Netherlands | 8.9 | 19 | | England | 10.5 |
| Hungary | 9.1 | 20 | | Finland | 10.9 |
| Romania | 9.2 | 21 | | Switzerland | 11.7 |
| Germany | 9.5 | 22 | | Macedonia | 11.8 |
| Finland | 9.7 | 23 | | Scotland | 12.2 |
| Poland | 9.8 | 24 | | Luxembourg | 12.2 |
| England | 10.4 | 25 | | Slovakia | 12.4 |
| France | 10.6 | 26 | | France | 12.7 |
| Switzerland | 11.3 | 27 | | Moldova | 13.1 |
| Portugal | 11.5 | 28 | | Wales | 13.3 |
| Greenland | 11.5 | 29 | | Romania | 14.0 |
| Moldova | 11.6 | 30 | | Poland | 14.1 |
| Wales | 12.7 | 31 | | Canada | 14.3 |
| Austria | 12.7 | 32 | | Ukraine | 14.7 |
| Luxembourg | 13.2 | 33 | | Portugal | 15.0 |
| Bulgaria | 13.9 | 34 | | Israel | 15.0 |
| Ukraine | 13.9 | 35 | | Greenland | 16.3 |
| Estonia | 14.7 | 36 | | Bulgaria | 16.3 |
| Scotland | 15.0 | 37 | | Austria | 17.5 |
| Belgium (French) | 16.1 | 38 | | Estonia | 18.1 |
| Canada | 16.6 | 39 | | Russian Federation | 21.1 |
| Russian Federation | 16.8 | 40 | | Latvia | 23.5 |
| Latvia | 21.6 | 41 | | Belgium (French) | 24.5 |
| Lithuania | 26.3 | 42 | | Lithuania | 31.6 |
| HBSC average | 10.1 | | | HBSC average | 12.1 |

**Figure 2**

While the Spanish numbers are slightly lower than the average they are still quite worrisome numbers that we should be reduced as much as possible.

With the constant presence of bullying in secondary school, how the victims are affected by it has been a popular study field in the recent years to determine if there are any negative effects on children's health, both physical and mental.

Wolke et al (2015) established a collection of data of different studies about the effects bullying can have on its victims. Victims of bullying are more likely to experience self-harm and to think about suicide, to develop anxiety disorder or depression disorder, to have less academic success, to be more exposed to diseases like colds and headaches and even pick up bad habits like smoking.

It has also been proven by the same author that bullying can have long-term effects on the victims that will still be present on their adult lives. Anxiety and depression disorders are the most common issue. There's also a clear connection between people that have been bullied as children and that have tried to commit suicide or have completed it. Bullied adults are also less likely to be able to make friends with ease or to live with a partner, as well as to have lower education than their peers as well as earning less than them. There is, however, no indication that bullying victims are more likely to consume illegal substances.

On the other hand, bullies do not show any kind of health problem both neither at school nor in their adulthood. However, adults that used to be bullies are more likely to not have jobs and to display anti-social behaviour, so there are some negative characteristics of being a bully, although they are heavily outnumbered by the problems the victims face.

In conclusion, the effects of bullying can not only heavily impact the school life of its victims; it can negatively impact their future in a meaningful way. Because of this, it is imperative that schools and teachers do everything that is in their power to avoid this kind of situations. After looking at this data, it is safe to assume that not only would preventing bullying greatly protect its victims and their futures, it would also be useful for the bullies and their futures to avoid getting in this kind of trouble. As Sullivan (2011) says, schools are a model of the world outside and it is where people develop a large part of their morality. If bullying cases go unnoticed, victims will continue to allow themselves to be abused while bullies while have a skewed perception on how our society works.

It is important to notice that bullies aren't likely to have a conduct disorder as researched by Woods et al (2009). It is actually the other way around, as it is something found in all societies and is considered an evolutionary adaptation in order to survive, gain higher status or impress the opposite sex (Olthof et al, 2011). In fact, bullies tend to have good social and emotional understanding so they are able to see the benefit of their actions and exploit others in order gain different advantages.

For some time bullying has been defended as a normal and social event, like a ritual the victim must complete in order to stand up for themselves and grow up as a person. Fortunately, Swearer et al (2009) refuted this myth with a thorough study. The consequences of bullying are real and we must act accordingly to avoid them.

There are multiple reasons to work on a prevention program over just reacting to bullying incidents. For starters, one of the main reasons bullying is hard to fight is because it is usually invisible. While physical bullying might be easier to detect, victims are still likely to invent an excuse as to why they have injuries or some of their property has been damaged. Bullying victims feel threatened and will not tell anyone about their bullying, even if it is clearly visible and a parent or teacher asks them about it. It may be even harder to find out about it if it is psychological bullying or cyberbulling. These two kinds of bullying are in no way less threatening than the physical kind, but they are harder to detect without any kind of help. If the school focuses on how to act when a bullying case appears, most of them will go unnoticed. Besides that, even if a bullying case is successfully identified and stopped, the effects on the victim are not confirmed to disappear and as seen before could still be present in their adult life. Once again, it is better to prevent any kind of bullying from happening than to wait for it to happen and then act. It is for this reason that this action plan is not specifically addressed to a school with a heavy presence of bullying but any kind of secondary school.

On the one hand, victims are often too scared to ask for support, even if it is offered to them. On the other hand bullies think they are about the school rules and that they will never be caught, so they are not that affected by anything that teachers try to explain to them. The rest of the students however, are the main target of a bullying prevention program. They are a silent group who knows who the victims and bullies are and either take part on the bullying as well or just silently watch how it develops.

The KiVa program (2007) is one of the most successful bullying prevention programs, present in 90% of Finnish schools and in almost ten countries. Their solution focuses on educating the rest of the students about their responsibility. They can stop bullying if they support the victims and frown upon it. The main focus behind the ten lessons over the school year plus the videogame that will be provided by KiVa to each student is to improve the empathy of each student so they can better understand what is going on through the mind of a victim.

Empathy is defined as the capacity to understand or feel what another person is experiencing from their point of view. Van Noorden (2014) states that while bullying was negatively associated to empathy in his studies, defending was consistently positively associated with empathy, while there were contradictory findings on bystanders who did not bully but did not defend the victim either. It is likely that some of the bystanders with high level of empathy refused to help because of the same fear the victims face when they decide to not tell anyone about their bullying incidents. However, this study shows a clear relation between how students are more likely to become defenders if they show high levels of empathy.

Because of this study, one of the main aims of this bullying prevention action plan will be to try to make the students more empathetic as a way so they can defend each other and be more prepared for society. Once again, this is aimed to all the classrooms, not just the bullies. In fact, as said before, the bullies are among the students that better understand social interactions and as such are more than likely aware of what they are doing. While it is possible that this action plan can have a positive effect on bullies, the main idea is to strengthen the whole classroom and have them protect each other.

The second key value of the action plan is respect. A study by Langdon et al (2008) suggests that bullying victims are among the less respected children in school, while contrary to popular believe, the bullies are among the most respected students. This happens because victims are stripped of their dignity when they are bullied. They are dehumanized by the bully in front of the class in a way that all the students lost respect for them. Bystanders follow the logic that if the popular child has no respect for the other student it is because they do not deserve it at all. Besides that, the bully exposes their strength, demanding respect by the bystanders, who get a message of what could happen to them if they decided to go against the bully.

There will also be activities for all students to learn more about respect. It is not only the bullies who should be taught about it, because as the study suggests, bystanders are likely to not help victims if they do not respect them. Going through activities that teach that all human beings have dignity and deserve to be respected with all the class will be effective for bullies, bystanders, and even victims, as one of bullying effects is to inflict low self-esteem in the victims; it is intended to help the abused children respect themselves. An important component about the activities involving respect is the ability to accept others who are from different a different race, gender, age, body build, intellectual capacity, religion or sexuality among other possible differences. This is

remarkably important as bullies tend to target children who are different to them or to the majority of the class (Juvonen et al, 2001).

Finally, the third and last value that the action plan is going to focus on teaching is reflection. Unlike empathy and respect, reflection has not been shown to be directly related to bullying. However, it is accepted by researchers like Leming (2001) that reflection can promote personal and sociomoral development. Rejecting and preventing bullying shows maturity by the students, so not only is it important to teach them the necessary values to frown upon bullying, but also the skill needed to think about their own actions and act accordingly to their believes. Bystanders should not prevent bullying because they have been told to, but because they understand it is a horrible experience for the victim and they are equally responsible for it if they refuse to help. It is also an important skill for abusers so they can analyze their actions properly with the other two values in mind and see if there is anything wrong. Finally, it can also help the victims cope with what happened to them so they can realize they are not at fault for being different or for being abused.

**Method**


**Action plan context**


This project will be split in two years, 1st and 2nd of ESO, for a total of 14 hours, seven in each year. The idea behind splitting these hours over such a long period of time is to be able to measure student's progress in value acquisition and opinion towards bullying while they are growing. It would be easy to forget or not pay much attention to an intensive session that was done in the spawn of a week. Instead, it would be better to leave time from session to session, allowing the students to think about what they see each time and form their own opinion. Besides that, from a logistics point of view, it would be much easier for any school to assign certain tutorial sessions to the bullying prevention plan than to cancel classes for a week so it can be dedicated to it.


Having the action plan take place over two years also allows new students who may join the school in 2nd of ESO to catch up, and makes it so that students will never feel overwhelmed by these classes. While they will not have homework or evaluation of any kind, it is desired to avoid the students from feeling saturated, as they already have plenty of subjects to focus on. Tutorial sessions can be rearranged to fit in good dates for students, separated from exams as often as possible.


Lastly, these two years allow checking and evaluating the effectiveness of the action plan multiple times. The progress will be checked over the course in order to make sure that the action plan is working and to detect which activities have a bigger impact on them.

This plan is aimed to any kind of secondary school, and tries to be equally useful without needing too many resources, keeping in mind schools that cannot afford to spend much or that are in poor areas.

**Instruments**

Besides the sessions, additional instruments will be used to measure the effectiveness of the action plan. The first one is the self evaluation that students will do at the end of both years, where they are asked to explain both their opinions on the action plan and their experiences and opinion of bullying. Their opinion of bullying is also asked on the first session, allowing the teachers to evaluate the evolution of the students on these topics. How they manage their emotional intelligence, how they see bullying and what are their opinions on the action plan. Comparing the students' opinions at the start point, half way and at the end of the action plan is a clear way to discover how effective it can be at improving bullying prevention.

However, it would be inaccurate to measure the quality of the action plan with just one instrument. For this reason, a focus group will be created through the two years, featuring the tutor and a small group of three or four students. These students are volunteers who are invested in the topic and will gather with the teacher after every few sessions to discuss the direction of said sessions, how they feel about the overall success of the action plan, what do other students think about it, suggestions they may have and other action plan related discussion. These observations will be noted down by the teacher and will also act as a secondary way to track the progress of the activities and which ones seem more relevant to the students, with the difference being that it is regular feedback instead of information at the beginning, half-way and at the end.

Lastly, the third and final instrument to properly analyze this action plan is to interview students. Each student will be interviewed twice by the tutor, once each year. These interviews will be short sessions where students will be asked the same questions: both about bullying, the three values that are being worked on, and about the different activities they have done. In order to be able to ask questions about most of the sessions, these interviews will be realized at the end of both academic years, so students will have plenty to talk about.

Combining these three instruments, it is possible to determine how effective the action plan is, which improvements it bring to the table of bullying prevention and which short comings have been found in it as well as how can these be solved.

**Participants of the action plan**

The action plan is aimed to any 1st of ESO classroom, which usually has between 25 and 30 students. Some of the activities included can involve the participation of multiple classrooms if the school has more than one line per grade and there should be no problem if there are slightly less or more students for different activities, even if it is made with those numbers in mind.

Most of the activities are group oriented so groups that can split in teams of four or five students are ideal, although it is not a problem if there are groups of different sizes, either for logistic reasons or personal ones, like students working better or worse with certain partners. Regarding this situation, the activities will mix allowing the students to choose their partners and forcing different teams to be created through the year, but teachers should try to avoid allowing the existence of groups that can be conflictive or unproductive if possible.

**Special needs detection**

This action plan features a few adjustments that must be kept in mind at all times for students that may require special needs:

Students with hearing problems will be allowed to use headphones when any kind of audio materials are used. Anytime the PC and the projector is used the teacher will make sure to display all the information as large as possible in order to facilitate reading from students who may have eyesight problems. Students with mental capacities will have individual tutorials at their disposal in order to guarantee they grasp the main concepts behind the action plan in a way that they can have the individual attention that they require.

Lastly, special attention is needed in this case for both victims and bullies. On the one hand, victims need as much special attention as possible. Some students may be comfortable talking about their experiences, but others may prefer not to even take part in the sessions at first. It is highly encouraged that the school's psychologist has regular meetings with known victims in order to confirm their feelings towards these activities and to gauge their progress as being self-confident. If the psychologist sees no trouble, these students should take part in these classes in order to learn more about bullying and how they should act if they happened to be a victim again or a witness instead. Understanding bullying, its dangers and how it can be prevented can help both their lives and their peer's, so as soon as it is confirmed that they are able to be in sessions about this topic, it is ideal that they join in.

On the other hand, bullies can pose a challenge to this action plan, specially since they can act in unpredictable ways. The recommendation on this action plan is to at first treat known bullies as everyone else, instead of trying to alienate them. Other students may also be cruel to them, and for this reason is important to focus on condemning the act more than the person behind it. This works both as a way to not have all the students hate a known bully and as a message to the bully that tells him that he is not the problem, their actions are. Taking this approach can redirect hate and make the bully more aware of what they are doing than just being mistreated or accused of being a bad person.

However, a problem arises if the bully does not want to cooperate in the class. If they refuse to take part in class activities and try to obstruct the progress of the class, they should be removed from the classroom and have personal lessons with the psychologist until the professional feels the student is ready to be exposed to the action plan again, as it would worsen the learning process for the other students meanwhile. This is the solution only for an extreme situation, if a known bully does not seem to care about the activities but does not disrupt the rhythm of the classroom they should not be removed, although private sessions with both the tutor and a psychologist are highly recommended in that case.

**Action plan phases**

The first phase of the action plan is the preparation. Before classes start to get planned, the teachers and staff of the school should all go through some formation on bullying prevention, its dangers, and the purpose and methodology of the action plan. If the teachers are not prepared and well educated on the topic it is impossible to expect them to correctly lead their class to a good understanding, specially when they are asked

questions by the students. That teachers are knowledgeable and confident in their explanations is the key to the success of the action plan, so this first step should not be skipped at all if possible.

Once the staff of the school has been prepared, session preparations should start, deciding on a calendar where each session will be. There are 10 sessions per year, so it should be relatively easy to avoid having sessions near exams. It is important to have the students focused on the activities of the tutorials, if they are tasked with some activities at the same time they are stressed about exams they might not be as involved as otherwise. It is best to leave the less demanding sessions like the movies for these times, in a way that students will feel more relaxed in the classroom. Besides that, a notification to the parents about this action plan is also recommended, informing them about what their children are going to do in school and providing them with extra information in case they want to know more about the topic.

Even though all 20 sessions are already planned beforehand, students will produce feedback about the action plan at the end of the first half. Based on the results of this feedback teachers may opt to modify the action plan in a way that students may enjoy it more or find it more productive. At the end of the second year students once again are asked for feedback and teachers should gather after the end of the action plan in order to discuss the feedback and evaluate the progress the students have made. At that point, teachers should decide if this experience has had a positive influence on the students and what it could be done to improve it.

Lastly, teachers should discuss the progresses of the students on a monthly basis; they can not wait until the end of the school year to do minor changes. This is specially aimed at students that may have been bullied or that are bullies themselves. Teachers

should act fast in these situations and as said before, try to provide sessions with the psychologist as soon as possible.

**Activities defined**

Most activities in this action plan have one main focus in common: to avoid just giving the student the information. The main aim is for the students to discuss the values and information that is being taught and to reach their own conclusions. For this reason, plenty of activities will include debates, opinions and expositions by the students in a way that their critical thinking skills are constantly being worked on and improving.

Besides that, making the activities interactive and motivating for the students is also a core element of the action plan, as one of the main objectives is to get the students to want to learn as much as possible about this topic. Just explaining the theory behind these values would not be as effective, as they are not really being exposed to them. For this reason, most of the activities are done in groups. As said before, there is no evaluation in this action plan and it wants to avoid the students from feeling pressured, so letting them work in group allows for them to be in a more relaxed environment.

One of the highlighted activities consists on looking up for real examples using a trending topic search in Twitter. This is one of the most innovative activities from the action plan, as instead of presenting an example to the students, which is already effective, they use social media, which is something they use on a day to day basis, to look up for other real examples.

This is effective for several reasons: first off, they get to research their own examples; students can see how real of a problem bullying is. At times, examples chosen by the

teacher may not connect with the students or feel as real that an example the students themselves have found. Besides that, this discovery is done through social media, which connects with the students' daily lives. Doing so shows that bullying is not something that is far away from them like a video showing footage from a distant school could feel. Lastly, being able to reach so many examples within seconds allow for students to easily identify with some of the victims. Maybe the situation shown in a single video does not resonate with them, but with a website with so many users like Twitter it is certain that most students will be able to relate to at least a few of the victims.

Watching a movie is also one of the main activities of the action plan, with one movie to visualize each year the students will dedicate a number of hours to watch it, talk about the movie and do some activities around it. The chosen movies are Cybebully (2011) and Wonder (2017). These movies feature two different cases of victims and situations, trying to show the students how broad a bullying case can be. While on Wonder the story focuses on physical appearance and takes places in school, Cyberbully has the victim being bullied for other reasons like their actions, and also takes place outside the school. It is important for the students to understand that while bullying originated at school, it can now happen outside of it and even appear exclusively there. Showing the dangers of social media will be done in the activities after the movie, and it sets a good example for the students to observe how dangerous it can be.

Both movies work on different values and solutions to the bullying cases, which together with the discussions and activities done in class, will promote critical thinking and reflection by the students in order to better grasp the values that the action plan aims to teach. Wonder is chosen for the first year because it is a more typical bullying situation, while Cyberbully is left for second year, not only because it is more

specialized on how bullying acts in social media instead of bullying itself, but also because it has a more mature tone.

Lastly, the last highlighted activity is the final project of the action plan, which consists in the students themselves being the teachers for a primary school classroom. The idea behind this activity is to allow students to show what they have learned with an extra purpose: to briefly introduce younger children to this topic. In a way, this motivates the students to work harder on the project, as its purpose is no longer to show what they have learnt, but also to teach younger generations about this problem and how to fight it.

**Conclusions**

Unfortunately the action plan has had its limitations and it has been impossible to put it into practice as of now, as it is something that should be planned beforehand and not classes that can be added in the middle of the academic year. As said before, it would require extra planning and the formation of teachers and staff before even starting to implement the action plan, so it just is not possible to put it in practice in a school in short notice.

Some problems that may arise were already handled previously like students refusing to participate because it is not an evaluated activity or having trouble fitting all these sessions through the school calendar. As said before, the use of a psychologist is clearly needed for this plan, and together with the tutor they would try to solve any personal problems students might have with the action plan. As for calendar trouble, once again it is something that needs to be addressed at the beginning of the academic year, making sure to fit sessions outside of exam seasons.

While empathy and respect have been confirmed to help prevent bullying and there are some action plans that already promote these values, there is no defining answer as to how effective it would be to combine these two values with reflection in order for students to not only acquire these two values, but to do so in a critical way, being aware as to way they are important. Based on the use of other programs it is likely that this action plan is at least useful in a moderate way, but until it is not tested exhaustively it is just impossible to determine how much better or worse it is to other action plans and

how it could be improved in order to both teach these values to the students and motivate the students to be more active in these sessions.

In conclusion, there is plenty of preparation and resources needed in order to carry a successful action plan on bullying prevention, but even if as of now its efficacy has not been proven, just by watching the data introduced the theoretical framework it is clear that something must be done regarding bullying. Maybe this program is not the best posible solution, but there is nothing to lose by trying to use these values and sessions to fight bullying. The best possible outcome is that bullying ocurrences decrease, even if it is slightly, which would already be a huge success. Furthermore, even if there is no immediate change, it would still be worth it to commit to this action plan for a few years in order to get the necessary feedback to improve it or gather new ideas that could be extremely helpful to keep battling bullying.

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**Annex**

| Programming | Bullying Prevention | **Timing:** 10 sessions (55' each) | **Class:** 1st and 2nd of ESO |
|---|---|---|---|
| Specific content objectives | | | |
| 1- To define what bullying is and how it can affect the lives of its victims.<br><br>2- To learn the value of empathy and try to understand how a victim of bullying can feel.<br><br>3- To understand the meaning behind respect, and how the differences between people should not affect it.<br><br>4- To learn reflection strategies in order to think about what is taught in the tutorials and form a personal opinion.<br><br>5- To learn how a student should act if they happened to be a victim of bullying.<br><br>6- To learn how a student should act if they happened to be a witness of bullying. | | | |

**1<sup>st</sup> year**

| Session # | Activity | Resources / Material | Grouping | Time | Objectives |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Previous knowledge test | photocopies | I | 30' | - |
| | Previous knowledge discussion: What is bullying? How would you define it? | Blackboard | WG | 10' | 1 |
| | Slides show explaining what bullying is and how it affects student's lives followed by discussion on ways it could be prevented. | PC | WG | 25' | 1 |
| 2 | Visit from a bullying prevention program specialist with a short presentation and a questions and answers session. Among other things, the specialist will teach the students about a support line where they can send anonymous messages to the school staff in case of being bullied or witnessing bullying. | PC | WG | 30' | 1, 5, 6 |
| | Students will now play a Kazoo game where both questions about the previous presentation and questions with new content yet to be explained about bullying will appear. The expert will have students who get the correct answers explain their point of view and add additional information if necessary. | PC, mobile phones | WG | 25' | 1, 5, 6 |
| 3 | Short video about different people being bullied for a variety of reasons. | PC | WG | 10' | 3 |
| | In groups of 4, each group will work on | PCs or | SG | 20' | 3 |

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| | research how a certain characteristic like sexuality, religion, appearance, hobbies or race can be targeted by bullying. | mobile phones | | | |
| | After the groups have done their research, they will expose it to the class, saying which characteristics can be looked down or be bullied and try to come out with a reason as to why. Students should learn that the less liked characteristics by society happen to be those that are not common. | Blackboard if the group needs it | SG | 20' | 3 |
| 4 | Introducing the value of respect: Each student will write up to three things they do not like about themselves and these will be passed anonymously. | papers | I | 10' | 3 |
| | After that, one by one, students will go to the front of the class and pick a paper that is not theirs. They will read what they see and they will discuss these bad points and argue what they think about them. | Previous papers | WG | 15' | 3 |
| | In small groups, students will create different murals about respect, defining it in their own words and explaining why is it important to respect and be respected. | Cardboard | SG | 30' | 3 |

| 5 | Visualization of the first half of the movie Wonder (2017). | PC | WG | 55' | 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | Visualization of the second half of the movie Wonder (2017). | PC | WG | 55' | 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 |
| 7 | After having watched the movie, the class will briefly discuss what they have learned about it, what they liked and other impressions. | Blackboard | WG | 10' | 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 |
| | In groups, students will be assigned different characters of the movie. They will have to analyze them, how they act towards the main character and explain why they act that way | - | SG | 25' | 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 |
| | The groups will expose their analysis to the rest of the class and each character will be debated. | Blackboard if needed | SG | 20' | 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 |
| 8 | Students will be asked to decide who is at fault for the bullying incidents seen on the movie. The bully and his mother are expected sides to be formed, but if | Empty papers | SG | 20' | 1, 2, 3 |

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| | there are more opinions more groups will be created. Each group will have some time to prepare their reasoning and then a debate will take place | | | | |
| | After talking about the problems, students will now think about the solutions. Do they agree with how teachers, family and partners act? Would they suggest other possible solutions? | Blackboard | WG | 15' | 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 |
| | Each student will be asked to individually write down a short essay imagining how they would feel if they were the main character | Empty papers | I | 20' | 2 |
| 9 | Presentation of empathy: The teacher will read the most common feelings depicted in the essays that the students wrote in the previous lesson. Try to define empathy with the whole class | Blackboard | WG | 15 | 2 |
| | Students will be put in groups and will log into twitter to search for the hashtag #acosoescolar. With this they will look through real stories of bullying cases. Each group will select one story, explain it to the class and try to describe how the victims feel after being bullied. | - | SG | 40' | 2 |
| 10 | Self evaluation: students will write down their experiences with bullying individually and anonymously. They will also explain if they feel the action plan has had a positive impact in their | Evaluation paper | I | 55' | - |

| | school lives and if they would recommend keeping it for future years as well as pint out any kind of feedback they may have. Students will have the rest of the hour to ask questions related to bullying. | | | | |
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**2nd year**

| Session # | Activity | Resources / Material | Grouping | Time | Objectives |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Previous knowledge test to compare the students' opinions and knowledge about bullying prevention with last year's results. | photocopies | I | 30' | - |
| | Reflection strategies: PMI (plus, minus, interesting) strategy to help students better analyze a situation | PC | WG | 10' | 4 |
| | Students will read an article containing stats and information about bullying. Different groups will analyze different parts of the article | PC | WG | 25' | 1, 4 |
| 2 | Visualization of the first half of the movie Cyberbully (2011). | PC | WG | 55' | 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 |
| 3 | Visualization of the second half of the movie Cyberbully (2011). | PC | WG | 55' | 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 |
| 4 | Discussion of the movie using the reflection strategies previously learnt. | Blackboard | SG | 20' | 1, 4 |

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| | Groups will analyze what they found was positive, negative or interesting about the movie. | | | | |
| | After each group has done their analysis the conclusions will be discussed with the whole group. | Previous papers | WG | 20' | 1, 2, 3, 4 |
| | Presentation for a project. In groups, students will have to reproduce the same bullying situation in a play and come up with a different ending where they show what they have learnt about bullying prevention. Use the last minutes of the class to create the groups. | - | SG | 15' | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 |
| 5 | This class will be used entirely to write down the script. Students will be allowed to have their script checked by the teacher in case they need help. | Paper | SG | 55' | 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 |
| 6 | Students will have some preparation time to rehearse their plays. There is no evaluation so they are allowed to read from their papers. Each group will have around 10 minutes maximum in order to have time for everyone. If needed, a group or two can be delayed for the next class. | Anything the students may need for their plays | SG | 10' | 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Plays take place one after another | Anything the students may need for their plays | SG | 45' | 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 |
| 7 | Discussion on the plays: which one did the students enjoy the most? Do they have any suggestions to improve the solutions for some groups? Have them vote for the solution they liked the most. | Blackboard | WG | 15' | 5, 6 |
| | Presentation on cyberbullying: can the students define it? Do they know examples? Explanation about security in Internet and social media. Do the students know the dangers of new technology? Have them figure them out. | Blackboard | WG | 10' | 1 |
| | Ask the students to take stances in social media and their regulations, once sides are established, have them debate in two sides after a short time to focus on their main ideas with help from the teacher. | Blackboard if needed | WG | 30' | 1, 2, 3 |

| 8 | Students will be asked prepare a lesson explaining bullying and what its dangers are. They will be the teachers for a younger group in Primary School and will have to cram in as much of the knowledge they have acquired about bullying and its prevention as possible. Students will work in groups and each will go to a different Primary school class. | Anything the students may need for their lesson | SG | 55' | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | Students will continue to prepare their lesson, getting help from the teacher when needed as well as constant feedback through the session. | Anything the students may need for their lesson | SG | 55' | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 |
| 10 | Students will go in groups to present their lessons, guided by the tutor of each Primary school class. These tutors should have good knowledge on the topic in case they need to support the students. The lessons are expected to last around 15 minutes more or less, but some additional time is allotted to this activity in order to get to the classrooms and go back and to have preparations done. | | | 30' | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 |
| | Self evaluation: Just like last year, students will write down their experiences with bullying individually and anonymously. They will also be | Evaluation paper | I | 25' | - |

| | asked to explain if they feel their knowledge on bullying has improved over these two years and if they consider their emotional intelligence to have changed. Once again, they will be asked if they would recommend that this action plan continues to be implemented in the school and which changes they would make to improve it if possible. | | | | |
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