

# Community Document

Haldimand & Norfolk



# ! The Bullying Unplugged 2008 Youth Festival was a blast

The Bullying Unplugged 2008 Youth Festival was a blast. This was a day where over 50 youth from across Haldimand and Norfolk Ontario and neighbouring communities came together to unplug bullying in their community. They got down to how bullying


works, the tricks it tries and lies it tells. They tuned into the ways youth resist and undermine bullying and lastly came up with proposals for community action to lessen bullying's influence in our community and world.

“  
The following experiences and thoughts are from the youth in the words of the youth.  
”

## A conversation about ...



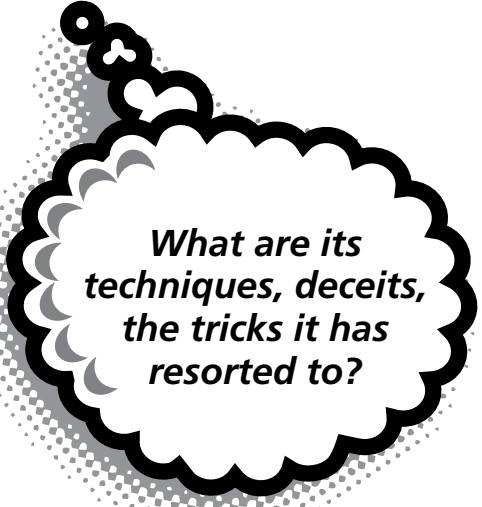
## Bullying Successes



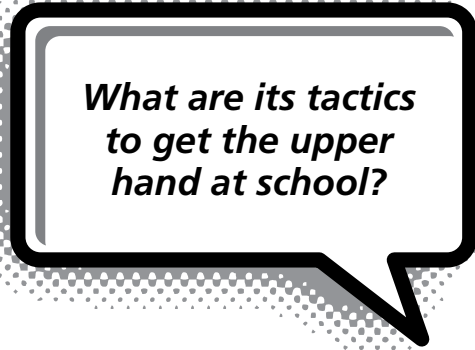
***What are bullying's effects on relationships?***

- Bullying always destroys relationships, makes them weaker and shallow.
- Bullying reduces confidence, ability to trust, affects healthy relationships
- Bullying ruins lives.
- You try to change who you are.
- Losing friendships – you're sad or angry so you push your friends away – self pity makes people reluctant to hang out with you.
- Bullying in relationships – you don't feel like you can be yourself
- Prevents you from making new friends, affects your sociability.
- Excluding you, making you feel guilty
- Bully ends up nowhere – or maybe jail. The problem wins

- Blackmail, dirty looks, sarcasm, pranks (shoving in lockers).
- Act nice in public and bad when no one is watching.
- Groups pick on one individual.
- Uses media to sensationalize aggression
- Perpetuates itself through parents and adult interactions.
- Divides, keeps people separate
- Uses hurtful words and disabilities to make target feel bad.
- Bullying tricks others into doing deeds by telling them the reward is power.
- Makes us think that one religion/race is better than another
- "Frenemies" – acts like they think you're cool and then takes it away, leaves someone alone and weak.
- It can be someone who you don't expect them to be – they don't always look like you think they might.



***What are its techniques, deceits, the tricks it has resorted to?***



***What are its tactics to get the upper hand at school?***

- Tactics at school – electronic bullying, gossiping, threatening, cheating, harassing
- Encourages you to "put on masks in front of teachers"
- Bullying uses intimidation, name-calling, belittling, pressuring
- Tricks people with immediate reinforcement
- "What are you going to do about it?" – makes you think that you can't do anything about
- Bullying preys on kids feeling bad about himself or herself – may be abused at home so abuse is used at school; more put-downs, physical abuse and threats of abuse.
- Bullying uses its gang to make it more powerful, and uses economic power.
- Bullying uses a secret and will manipulate a person.
- It hides in dangerous areas such as locker rooms, smoking areas, out of school, change-overs, breaks.

***What kinds of things does bullying want youth to THINK about themselves and the world?***

- We are powerless, we're nothing, worthless, failures, stupid, we should doubt each other and ourselves.
- Feeling powerless is great.
- I'm not good enough.
- Nothing will ever change.
- You are a loser; a nobody. You're vulnerable.
- We can't make a difference, that our lives are not important; it dulls life.
- Be afraid, feel inferior, remain weak, be silenced
- You're being judged.
- You should be afraid to do anything or say anything because if you make a mistake, the bullying will use it as an excuse to torment you.
- It "wants you to feel different from what you really are."
- It wants the victim to begin to believe what is said about them.
- You're little. I'll destroy you.
- The world is unfair, that bullying always wins and if you can't beat 'em, join'em. Bullying tears down your confidence.
- Makes you ashamed,
- Bullying interferes with one's thoughts because it's hard to get over and while you are thinking about the negatives the bullies have said, you cannot think of anything else.

- Bullying wants us to throw our dreams away, wants us to treat ourselves like our lives don't matter, and makes us afraid to consider our own needs.
- Bullying wants you to dream small.
- Can lead to suicidal thoughts and self-harm.
- Makes people feel lower, not like themselves, and they end up with fewer opportunities because they are less willing to put themselves out there; it becomes harder to make friends, everything seems less important;
- You stop talking, stop taking care of yourself, you hurt yourself and want to crawl under a stone.
- You want to change schools because the other school may be kinder – feeling smothered; rumors spread.
- Target feels scared and anti-social – doesn't want to go to school or talk to others.
- You don't want to hang out as much in case you screw up.
- You don't want to go to places; you want to stay alone and in the background.
- You avoid leaving the house.
- You want to take your life.
- Victims get the 'poor me' outlook on life and can carry this through life.
- Bullying hopes the victim can see only bad things about themselves.

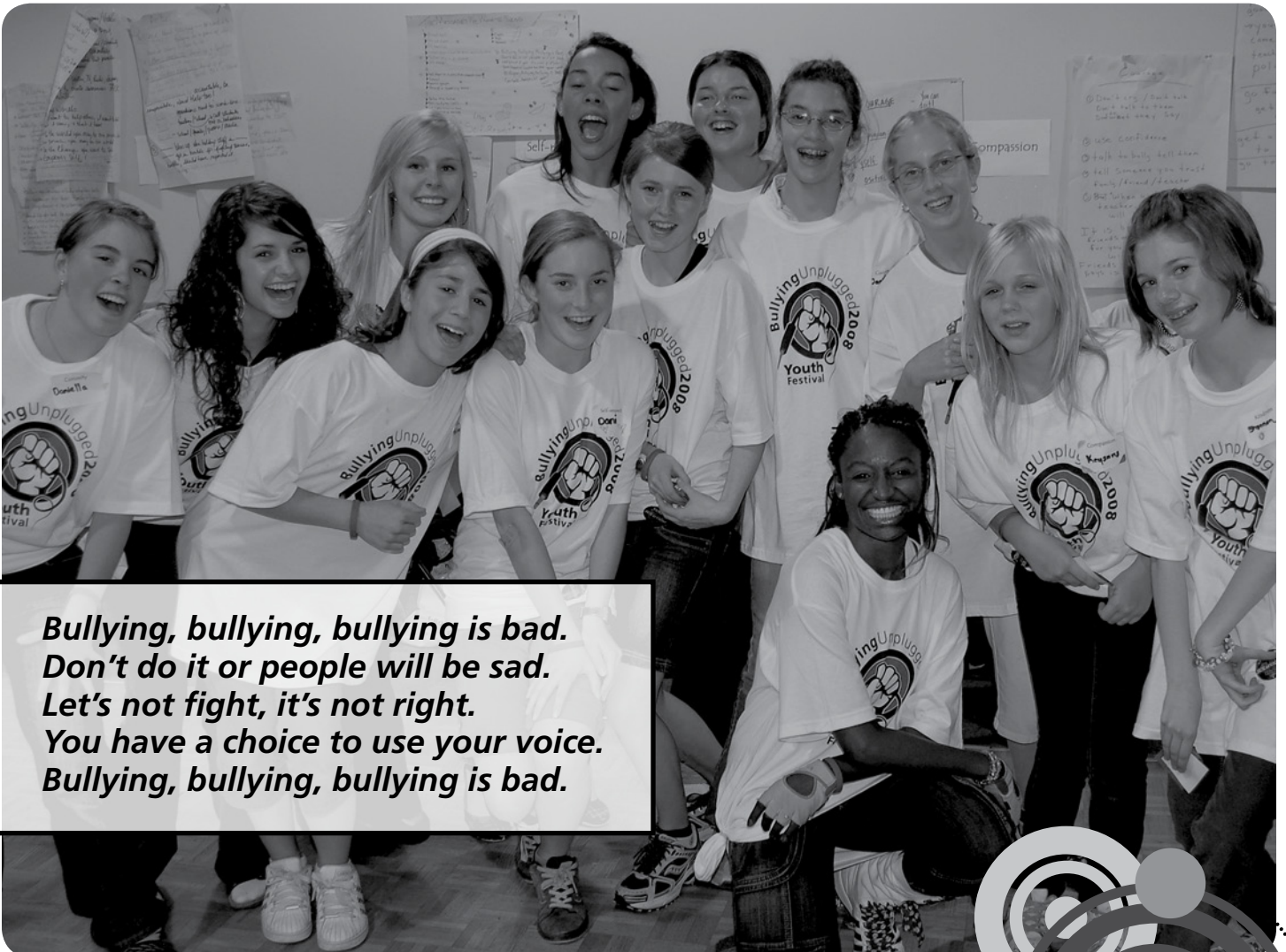
***How does it want youth to treat themselves and their life?***

**How does bullying use age, and size to advance its position?**

- Bullies tend to be bigger, older, and stronger than their victims.
- Picking on little kids.
- As we get older we continue to put people down and make them feel bad.
- Groups pick on one individual.

**When its dominance is threatened, what plans does it put into play?**

- When dominance is threatened, bullying gets more extreme/violent
- Gets you to think it will get worse if you tell



***Bullying, bullying, bullying is bad.  
Don't do it or people will be sad.  
Let's not fight, it's not right.  
You have a choice to use your voice.  
Bullying, bullying, bullying is bad.***

# A Conversation About Bullying's Failures

*What are the COUNTER TECHNIQUES and STRATEGIES that youth have developed that have been effective in undermining "bullying"?*



- Using technology to avoid or block
- Stay around authority figures
- Think how the bully wants you to react and then act in the opposite way.
- Peers, students to talk to
- Hang out with people who like you for who you are.
- Get involved with an activity you are good at.
- Choose your battles – sometimes it's better to just ignore it.
- Turn the comment around.
- Appear confident, even if you are not.
- Have school staff visible in areas where bullying occurs.
- Talk to school staff/counselors about your feelings and bullying
- Do a safety map of your school; get teachers to change their routine so the dangerous areas are safer.
- Invite the bullies, include them, ask them to join – if they feel better about themselves, they may be less likely to put others down.
- Do good things to make you feel good about yourself.
- Effective counter-techniques: journaling and expressing yourself, stand up for yourself when it's safe, learning self-defense, telling someone – Kids Help Phone, getting confidential support.
- Confront the bully – be blunt and respectful.
- Don't retaliate.
- Talk to your friends about your feelings; stop peer pressure.
- Use humour
- Avoid "bullying" spots (or reclaim them)
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Have someone go with you if you have to go to a dangerous spot.
- Try not to let it bother you.
- Getting parent councils involved.
- Make it public – BE LOUD!
- Be Proud, Be Loud, Persevere!
- Guidelines for bullying need to be developed.
- Putting a committee together,
- Stay in public places, change your schedule
- Go to an adult, or ignore them.
- When you can talk to the bully alone, try to find reasons for the bullying, or find something you might have in common with the bully.

***What are the special knowledges and skills youth have that have proven difficult for the problem to undermine?***

- Letting it out is not ratting it out – in serious situations, tell teachers and the principal.
- We resist by being ourselves, knowing who we are and feeling good about ourselves.
- Peer facilitators – help students to feel less alone, have someone to talk to.
- You need someone to talk to, to get it off your chest, or it eats away at you.
- Don't give in.
- Strength in numbers
- No audience, no problem.
- Make everyone feel included.
- It's okay not to like somebody, but it's not okay to make someone not like themselves.
- Be in control of your emotions.
- Confidence, maturity, assertiveness, responsibility, not make excuses, common-sense, accountability.
- Stand up for yourself, be assertive.
- Concentrate on the positives.
- Being confident and able to accept criticism
- Treat others as you would want to be treated.
- Confidence – control of your emotions, courage, pride, dignity, friendship, happiness, feel better about yourself, tell good things about yourself.

- Bullying Fails when teachers or others call you on your behaviour
- School anti-harassment groups
- Family is important, and peers and teachers.
- Friends tell you that what the bully says is not true
- Peer support- they understand, parents, siblings, close friends, cousins, teachers, counselors, STAR, principals – for different reasons – team coaches, crisis lines, community support.
- How have they made a difference? - They help raise self-esteem, think positive, listening and talking, doing well in school helps, being part of groups – sport, drama, community improvement; teach us to face our problems head-on, tell you that you are a good person.
- Stand up with the victims and stand by them so they know they are not alone.

***Who stands with a youth? What difference does that make?***

***What options are available to youth to reclaim their lives from bullying?***

- To Reclaim Our Lives – stand together and support each other; counteract the affects of bullying; talk about feelings.

# Proposals for Community Action



## *What is the message we want to send about bullying?*

- Don't stand by – Stand UP!
- Revenge solves nothing – it makes things worse.
- No violence.
- Bystanders learn to speak up – learn how to prevent bullying.
- Target is not alone – there is help.
- If you don't acknowledge, you can't confront it.
- The messages we want to send:
  - It's not nice,
  - It's not fun.
  - It's hurtful.
  - Bullies aren't better than anybody else.
  - Bullies aren't in charge.
  - It's mean!
  - You have the power to change.
  - Empower yourself.
  - Be accountable and responsible for your own actions and behaviour.
  - Be kind and understanding to others.
- Treat others as you would want to be treated.
- Tell yourself "I will not be picked on today!"
- Get involved, join a club or a team
- If you send out messages that you don't want to belong, people will make sure that you don't.
- Remember, the person doing the bullying is hurting, too, but that is no excuse.
- We want bullying to STOP – it doesn't have to be part of life.
- Bystanders need to stand up to injustice.
- To the world you may be one person, but to one person you may be the world.
- School goes beyond the day, into the home.
- We're not going to take it!
- Be yourself, be true to yourself.
- Bullying affects all of us (universal problem) - try to be open-minded – things can be different even though bullying has been happening for a very long time.
- "Don't be a bully because it's mean, instead go to college and make some green."
- Stand up for yourself, be happy with who you are.



## *How do we reach the different age groups?*

### **For kids 0-6**

we need to teach kids early that bullying cannot be tolerated – if they learn at this age, it will stick; use simple messages that they will understand; cartoons, toys, books; fun presentations and activities; share, respect and care; be friends with good people; know your limits with your friends;

- o Puppet shows for younger kids.

### **For kids 7-11**

presentations in person; skits, role-playing, realistic scenarios, try not to judge; demonstrations, student-involvement; must remind them repeatedly; educate children and capture their attention.

### **For kids 12-18**

techniques in education must change to capture their attention; have groups and committees to get the message across; discussion groups; youth festivals; teach others; don't be hard on yourself; hands-on exercises; assembly; guest speakers; marketing; free stuff.

**B U L L Y I N G**

BAD

USELESS

LAUGHTER

LOSER

YELL

I MESSAGES

NAUGHTY

GO AWAY!

~ Cassie S ~



## What kinds of campaigns/ activities would be effective?



- Workshops, group discussions.
- Getting a celebrity involved.
- Friendship games – pay it forward.
- Music videos, songs, TV shows
- Demonstrations on city streets.
- Carnival, derby, film-fests, poster contests.
- Skits, show how far bullying can go.
- Sky-writing – Blimp that reads, 'No Bullying'
- Sign language – research all languages and cultures.
- Reach out to seniors.
- Mediation.
- Protest and boycott media that promotes violence and abuse.
- Student-driven grass-roots foundations.
- Public statements based on data.
- Sporting events.
- Using art to help you.
- Reach out to all ages in schools, community/public spaces,
- Advertise on radio, TV, newspapers, U tube, Facebook
- FBI – Federal Bullying Investigators Committee, run after school
- Declare bullying no longer acceptable.
- Start bullying education early.
- After-school activities.
- Dances for older kid “No Bully Dances” - art,
- It's better to have students involved in planning the activities, so they are more likely interested in it.
- Clear consequences for bullying.
- Anti-bullying committees.
- Billboards, posters, flyers, etc.
- Take kids more seriously.
- Run some kind of classroom programs.
- Teach people how NOT to bully.
- Anti-bullying awareness games, videos, pep-rallies, posters.
- Documentary for kids and youth.
- Websites. TV commercials.
- Anti-bullying clothing line

“

### Leaving words:

I want to  
help others,

I want to feel  
that I can,

and that I have.

”



Part of the Name It 2  
Change It Community  
Anti-bullying Campaign

[www.nameit2changeit.ca](http://www.nameit2changeit.ca)

**Special thank you to the following organizations and people for their contribution to this important initiative.**

The Trillium Foundation  
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Ontario Early Years Centre Haldimand-Norfolk  
Youth Justice Services - H-N REACH

Big Brothers/ Big Sisters H-N

NI2CI Community Anti-bullying Committee  
Saidat [www.saidat.ca](http://www.saidat.ca)

**THE ONTARIO  
TRILLIUM  
FOUNDATION**



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DE L'ONTARIO**

