

# The No Blame approach to bullying.



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# Defining the terms.



# What is bullying?

- Bullying is long-term regular disturbing of someone with the intention to hurt the victim with physical, emotional or psychological harm. Behaviours like exclusion, name-calling or the threat of physical aggression if the victim does not provide favours to the bully.

- There is always a power difference between bully and victim.



# What is brawling?

- Brawling on the other hand is of short duration and takes place between equals.
- This does not mean that brawling can not be vexatious.
- The term to bully is too rapidly used when it concerns in fact brawling or another naughty behaviour.
- The children can generally solve it itself.



Bullying we consider as  
TAP, TAP, TAP, TAP....  
(Continuously drops on the same head).

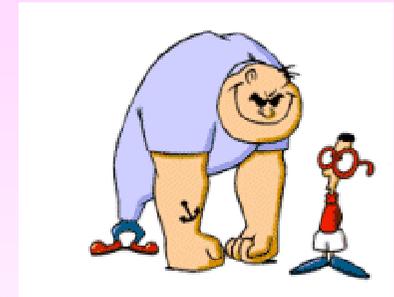
Brawling consider we rather as :  
TIK TAK TIK TAK TIK TAK...



# The bully



- You find bullies everywhere.
- Generally the bullies are physically or verbally stronger than the victim.



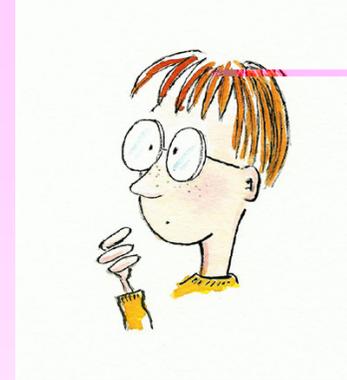
- He or she is a bad loser who is in search to power and to the appreciation of the group.
- The bully occur itself-certain, but are that for this reason not.

- Commonly is notable that bullies have little respect for borders and they have problems with empathy.
- They have thus few conscience problems at their behaviour. In some cases the bully find that the victim asks to be bullied.
- Bullies often don' t know the effect they have on victims. They even don't see their behaviour as teasing .

# The victim



- The victim generally deviates from one or other group standard.



- Opposite it happens also that a child who lies seemingly well in the group is suddenly chosen to target.
- They miss often a number of social skills.

- Children who are bullied frequently, are average physically weaker, can defend itself not well, have few friends and feel themselves as a result, very solitary.



- Nevertheless we can never state that children provoke plague behaviour. Absolutely no child wants to be hurt consciously.

# The witnesses



- Bullying is very often a group event.
- When a child becomes bullied, there are often neutral witnesses.
- They say or do nothing for fear to become itself the target of annoyances.



- By not reacting, they make the bully clear that they permit the behaviour.

- Beside the neutral witnesses there also children who help the bully with its plague behaviour.



- But fortunately there also children who dare to help the victim.

Bullying can adopt a lot  
of forms.

- Physically: pushing, beating, drawing to the hair, breaking things to pieces



- Verbally: using nicknames, telling stories



- Emotionally: ignoring someone, excluding, hiding property

# Consequences of bullying

# Consequences on the victim.

- Children who are teased become generally unhappy and frightened.
- They are suspiciously and their self-confidence decrease.
- Frequently they do not go to school gladly and they invent excuses to remain at home.



- Their social, emotional and cognitive development is obstructed and the chance on a depression increases. Sometimes it is accompanied by physical complaints and in some cases tend these children to suicide.



# Consequences on the bully.

- A teasing child that can do what he wants to do, makes more and more abuse of power and learns that teasing is the only manner to maintain himself in the group. To stop bullying is difficult because the child admits then that he was wrong.



A child that plagues has little or none real friends because it misses the social skills to handle friends in a positive manner.

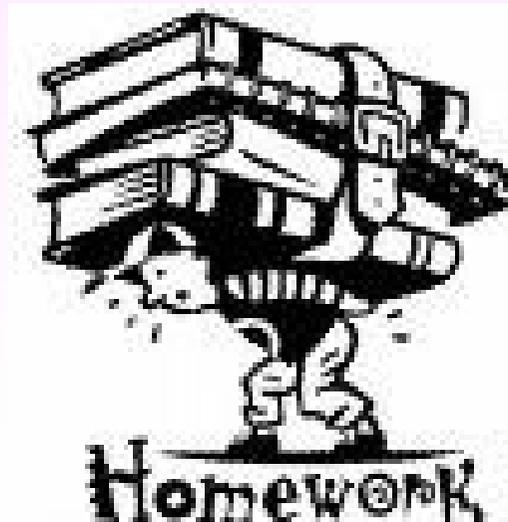
The children who hang around the bully do this generally only because off fear to be teased their self.



# From which age we can talk about bullying?

- Around the age of 6 till 8 years arise forms of social aggression, such as teasing and excluding children.
- From research becomes clear that bullying happens mostly around the age of **10 and 14 years**. Around the time most children move from primary to secondary school.

- The child is moving from an environment in which she has become one of the older and more important pupils into a much bigger and unknown place. In the new school she will be amongst the youngest and the weakest, unfamiliar with the social patterns and physical surroundings.



The NO BLAME  
treatment

# Main points

## Bullying is normal!

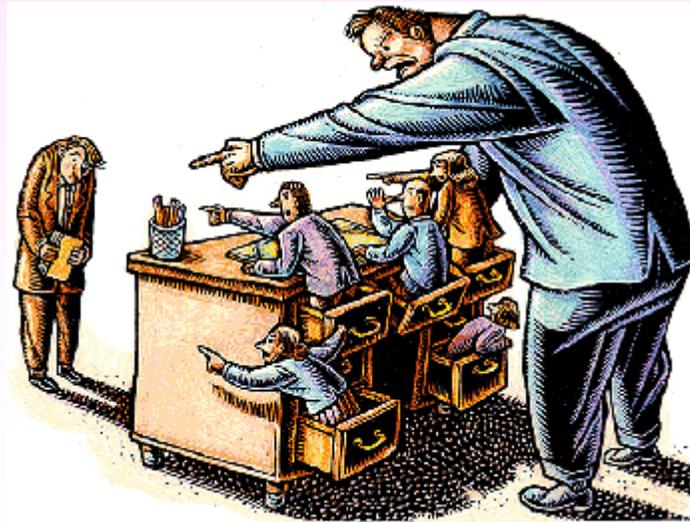
- It will be always part of living.
- Many of us remember moments on which we did not intervene, perhaps only looked or participated with bullying. Bullying is not abnormal; it is normal.

## The bully must get aid.

- The bully must get the chance to recognise that there is a problem, he must get aid to realise which pain and misery he causes. This you can only reach if you approach the bully on the base of faith.

# Is bullying a group problem?

- Sometimes the bully works alone, but generally there is a group of bullies and witnesses.



- It is the group which supports and permits teasing. It is also the group which has the power to condemn teasing and to tell about it. As the bully gets no more support of the group, its plague behaviour will become less interesting and also will decrease.
- The group is defied to solve the problem, but with the necessary support.

# Increase of the empathy.

- It's difficult for the bully to imagine oneself themselves in the feelings of the other one and they have been frequently shocked by the impact of their behaviour.



- It is thus important that empathy is learned yet in the primary school.

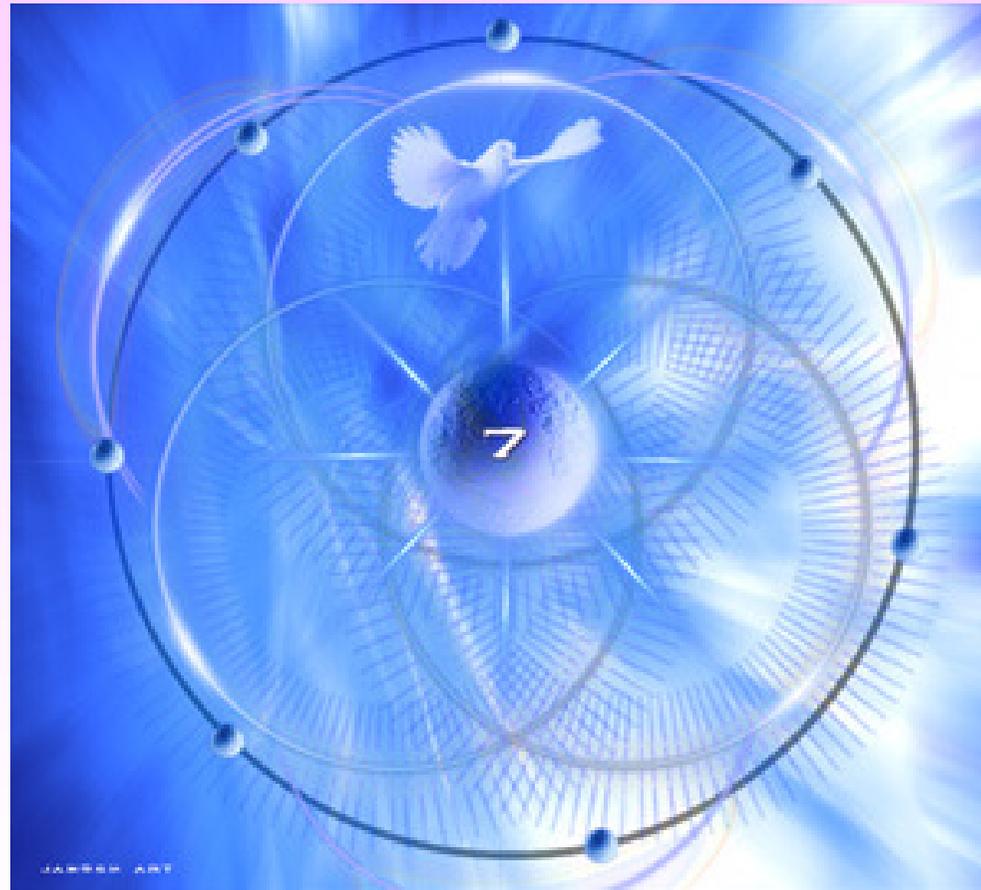
# The feelings and not the facts are important.

- By laying the emphasis on the bad feelings of the victims and not on the facts, the bullies and the group will not feel themselves be punished or reprimanded. And the chance grows that their empathy is encouraged.
- Facts you can discuss, feelings you have them.

# Problem solving character

- When you actively involve children in the treatment, there arises an environment which is much more positive than at punishing methods.
- Nobody becomes angrily, nobody needs to be frightened. Children mostly will be proud on what they have reached as an individual and as group.

# Seven-step procedure.



# Step 1.

- A conversation with the victim
- During this conversation you try to put the negative feelings from Rudy.
- What is the consequence and its impact of teasing so far?



- It is not the intention to collect facts.
- A second aim of the conversation is to make Rudy clear how the NO BLAME approach works. It is important that he trusts you and that he gives you his authorisation. Sometimes the children are frightened that teasing will become still more terrible, but you have to tell clearly that nobody is accused or punished.

- Then you ask Rudy to compose the group which will help him.
- This needs to be done carefully so that there are equal numbers of bullies, watchers and friends of the victim.



For isolated victims, the group should include those with whom the victim would like to be friends. The watchers should be popular and respected students who can influence the others in a positive way. 6 Or 7 members is a good number.



- At the end of the conversation you ask Rudy if he wants to sign or write something that illustrates his unhappiness. Your barrel the tale of Rudy such as you will do that in the group. Thus he trusts you.



## Step 2

- If possible you organises still the same day a meeting with the group.
- Foresee a sociable space where the children can talk open.



## Step 3

- You tell that you have a problem because Rudy feel himself unhappy and that you want to help him.
- To make clear the unhappy feelings of Rudy, you show the picture he has made. You tell no facts and you accuse nobody.



## Step 4

- Share the responsibility.
- It can be that children in the group after the tale of Rudy, feel themselves guilty, and maybe they are frightened to be punished. Then you tell that nobody has problems. The group is together to find a solution.
- You tell also that you trusts them as a group. The power of the bullies is moved to the group as a whole.

## Step 5

- Ideas of every member.



- Question the children for actions that can mean a step in the direction of a solution.
- The children formulate their proposal in the I-form.

- "I will walk to school with him.
- I will ask him to sit with me at dinner."
- For each proposal, how small also, show your appreciation.
- Leave it up to them.



## Step 6

- As the children formulated their proposals you thank them and repeat that you give the responsibility at the group and that you trust them.
- You tell the children that you meet them again to see how things are going. You say also that you are always contactable for a conversation.

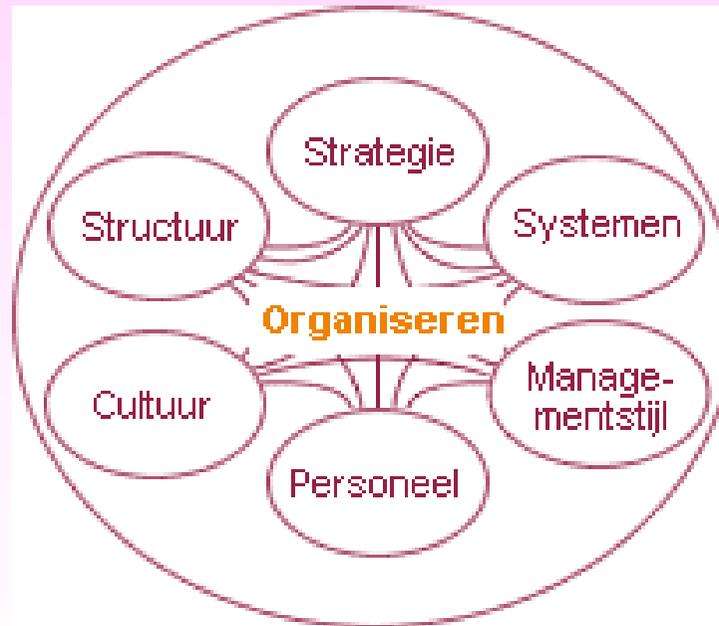
## Step 7

- About a week later, the teacher discusses with each student including the victim, how things have been going.



- These meetings are with one group member at a time so that each can give a statement about his contribution without creating a competitive atmosphere. It does not matter if everyone has not kept to his intention. As long as the bullying has stopped.
- The victim does not have to become the most popular person in school. The most important is that he is safe and happy.

# Organise in school?



## A choice of the team.

- The complete team stands behind the choice to work with the NO BLAME treatment.
- If not you can still use the no blame in your class as an individual teacher.
- But the qualification chances are larger when the complete school team stands behind the method.

# Who becomes NO BLAME speculator?

- In principle everyone can be that. In the first place choose a person who have a good relation with the victim. Teachers, care persons...
- However, its also important that the chosen one can carry those things.
- Not everything can be slid on the shoulders of one teacher. That is very important for bigger schools!



# Practical organisation of the conversation.

- The conversation takes place in the same sociable space.
- The conversation can have place both within and outside the hours. You make also clear agreements with the students concerning the place and time of the conversations.

# As from which age?

- As from the age of 9.



# Information for students and parents?

- You give the information at the beginning of the school year.
- Explain it in a short way.



- When there is a case. Than you inform the teachers who works with the child.
- You inform the parents of the children you work with.
- Parents and pupils are encouraged to discuss any worries they might have, with a promise that they will be heard.

# Critical questions and objections.



## Does it work?

- In all countries the method is applied successfully. The bully stops generally after one or more group meetings. Sometimes the situation remains the same, but we never heard that teasing gets worse.



# You must nevertheless know the facts.

- What happened?
- Children are frequently contradictory in telling what has happened.
- Remember that the feelings and not the facts are important.

# Have problems been solved in the long term?

- NO BLAME is a short term treatment.
- Bullying must be tackled as soon as possible. That is the wish of everybody.

- But don't forget the long term!

On the one hand you continue succeeding the situation and you are accessible for the children.

On the other hand it can be that you realize that the victim or the bully needs necessary support. For example: training in social skills. Then you refer.

# The parents want a hard treatment.



- If anyone is hurting more than the victim it is likely to be the parents who may present, initially, as angry, blaming and needing revenge.
- When they are allowed to express these feelings we have always almost found that it is possible to reach agreement about the first priority...everyone wants the bullying to stop.

## Can you put always the same children in the group?

- It could be that the most empathic children are always chosen for the group. This is not always interesting for those children. Are they able to give the problems a place? They must also have enough time play to care freely or to go with their friends.

# What as the bulliers make no proposals?

- The positive strength of the group is as large that they will help with finding a solution. That does not mean that all children also carry out their proposal.

- That teasing stops is most important.
- At the individual conversation you can discuss their action. But again without condemning .
- For some children is the changing of their behaviour an enormously large step.

## And what if the victim doesn't want the NO BLAME approach?

- Only when the victim agrees with the NO BLAME, you can start. So you need his faith.
- Stay talking to the pupil, stay watching carefully to ensure that things are all right.

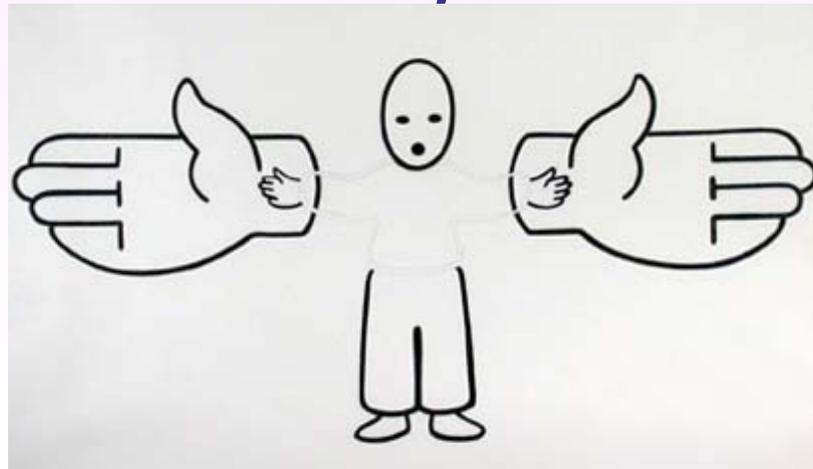
- If a student obviously needs help, but is not happy by revealing names because he is frightened of retribution, ask him to speak to someone you have helped previously.



- A student telling him that it does work is often a greater influence than a teacher.

# What if teasing after course of time starts again?

- Then you can always apply the NO BLAME with a new group. Sometimes you can see that there is a specific accompaniment necessary for the bully or the victim. Then you must refer.



# Extending the no-blame approach!

That is what I like the most of the  
NO BLAME.

NO BLAME is not simply a method for dealing with bullying. What I have found to be a most appealing aspect of No BLAME is the strategy of helping children to help each other.

- Why limit this co-operation to bullying? Some pupils come into school with heavy baggage, others need help because of an event in their home lives such as bereavement, divorce... Whatever the circumstances, those best placed to offer support, are other children.



For at least one pupil, the No Blame approach made a difference for life!



Thank you for listening!

The NO BLAME APPROACH to bullying.

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