

How To Stop Bullying



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Our guest blogger today is G. Harvey, Virtual Training Manager at Sandy Hook Promise. Here he shares his personal story of overcoming social isolation. Additionally, you'll learn three ways students today can help stop bullying and bring students together.

I was once a student in a classroom just like you. I felt alone, unseen, and not included. Feeling left out in middle school was an experience that I'll never forget. Watching groups of students gather at lunch, I felt there was no place for me to sit. It was on my mind everyday as soon as the bell rang for us to go eat in the cafeteria. I came up with every excuse not to go. Some days I ate in the hallway by my locker.

This all changed when a new student walked up to say "hello" and asked where his class was. Fast forward 15 years, I am the godfather of his children, and was the best man in his wedding. He changed my life for the better by simply saying "hello".



What It's Like to Be Bullied

At Sandy Hook Promise, my teammates and I work with young people to help make sure students like you are safe from all kinds of violence. One of the main types of violence we hear about in schools is bullying.

My guess is that you found my blog because you've seen bullying in your school. You might even be getting bullied yourself. If you aren't sure what bullying is, it's when someone does mean things to someone else over and over again. These mean things could be starting rumors, sharing embarrassing pictures, leaving someone out on purpose, or teasing someone.

Whether you're getting bullied or witnessing bullying, it's hard to have that at your school or in your community. I hear from a lot of students that they want to feel like they can do something about it. They especially want to decrease the amount of bullying they see. That's why we're working to help students like you learn three ways to stop bullying.

1. Preventing Bullying in School Communities

Firstly, if you're being bullied or see bullying happening, talk to a [Trusted Adult](#). Let them know what's happening. You shouldn't have to confront a bully on your own. Adults can help make sure that everyone is safe and stop what's happening.

If someone is being bullied or is being left out, connecting with other people can be a game changer. Even if it's only one other person. If you or your friends see someone who is having a hard time finding people to sit with or talk to, extend an invitation for them to join you. So long as you offer, that can be a big deal – even if they say no.

2. Helping Classmates Feel Included

Secondly, you can make a difference by making your school culture inclusive. That way, if someone is being bullied or left out, they'll still feel they have people to rely on. While it may be true that changing your school culture can feel like a big thing to do. The good news is that there are small actions you can take to make this change happen.

Some of these actions are things you can do on your own or with a group of friends. Reaching out to help someone alone is important. There are also some things that you can encourage your whole school to do. You can organize events that will get people who don't normally interact to mix it up and talk to each other. Creating more ways for people to connect with each other will start to break down some of the walls that can make it hard for people to relate to each other.

3. Wave Goodbye to Bullying Through "Start With Hello"

Thirdly, you can also encourage your school to bring in a free program. Sandy Hook Promise's *Start With Hello* is no-cost and helps reduce bullying in schools. Students learn how to do all the things we just talked about in three simple steps. See someone alone, reach out and help, and "start with hello".

Whether you decide to [take action](#) on your own, with your friends, or to get your whole school on board, I want to let you know that you can make a huge difference. You can help make your school a kinder and more inclusive place to be. Start waving goodbye to bullying one "hello" at a time.

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