

ARE YOU A DEFENDER OR PART OF THE PROBLEM? THE BULLY CIRCLE

Purpose: Introduce students to (or remind them of) the various roles of individuals in a bullying situation. Helping students understand that it is his or her choice what role they have; they can either be a defender (which stops someone from being hurt) or they can be a follower (which allows the problem to continue.)

Materials:

1. Colorful "Bully Circle Roles" cards that have been laminated
2. Space to create the "Bully Circle" – you may need to move desks or find a location outside your classroom

To do:

1. Act out a scenario in the Bully Circle using the colorful "Bully Circle Roles" cards.

Ask 8 volunteers to assume the "roles" of the Bully Circle for A – G. The teacher should sit in the chair acting as the "student who is bullied." Please don't allow a student to volunteer to play this role (G) during the demonstration. Students should arrange themselves in a half circle around the "victim", hold their card up for the class to see, and read the words in bold on the back of the card.

2. After acting out the scenario, facilitate a discussion about the bullying situation. Below is a list of potential questions to urge kids to talk.

How do you think the "bullied student" felt being ganged up on?
Who had the power in this situation? Why do you think he or she had the power?
Why is it really hard to be F (possible defender) or G (defender)?
How do you think being a "follower" of "a person who bullies" makes a person a part of the problem?

3. Act out the same scenario again. This time have each student, EXCEPT "the student who bullies", take one or two steps over towards the side of the circle with "the defenders."

4. After acting this out again, facilitate a discussion about how the dynamic of the "Bully Circle" changed. Below are a few potential questions.

How do you think the "bullied student" feels now with more support on his/her side?
Who has more power in this scenario compared to the last?
What might change if more students at Waldon were "defenders" as opposed to "followers"?
Why is it so hard to be a defender?
What would it take to make students feel safe/comfortable to defend someone else?