

When Friends Are Not Friends



When Friends Are Not Friends

Dear Girl Scout Junior Leader,

As a Girl Scout leader and role model, you are in a great position to help Girl Scouts learn how to have healthy relationships. This is a good time for Girl Scout Juniors to practice being respectful and kind. This skill will impact a Girl Scout for the rest of their life. As a values-based organization, Girl Scouts finds its foundation in the Girl Scout Promise and Law. You can always rely on the principles found in the Girl Scout Promise and Law to help make decisions or relate to one another.

According to the National Education Association, every day in the United States, more than 160,000 children miss school for fear of being tormented by their peers. The American Medical Association has identified bullying as a “public health issue. Your understanding of how to identify and respond to bullying and potential bullying situations is important in helping Girl Scouts in your troop understand how to create healthy friendships. We are not expecting you to be an expert on bullying, but what we are expecting you to do is to gain awareness and an understanding of what bullying is and respond in a positive way when you are aware of a bullying situation. The activities provided will help you teach Girl Scouts the importance of interacting with each other in a respectful and kind way. Girl Scouts need to know that it is okay to not like everyone, although we still need treat others with respect.

See the Resources section at the end of this guide to find materials and resources on bullying and creating healthy friendships.

To begin, you will want to read over the following definitions and examples of bullying and relational aggression behaviors to familiarize yourself with the terms.

Bullying is harmful or hurtful behaviors, actions, or words that are intentional, have an imbalance of power, and are often repeated. Targets of bullying often have a difficult time standing up for themselves. Bullying is different than conflict in that conflicts involve two people of equal power, each with a different point of view. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or relational.

Relational aggression/bullying (also called covert aggression, social aggression, and emotional bullying) is a form of bullying that includes such behaviors as exclusion, social isolation, rumor spreading, malicious gossiping, ignoring, creating “clubs” to leave others out, cyber-bullying, etc. Relational aggression is behavior that is intended to harm someone by damaging or manipulating their relationships with others. Children as young as preschool age use relational aggression as a means of power or control over their peers. Examples of bullying and relational aggressive behaviors may include:

Exclusion

- Not inviting someone to a party/event and letting everyone else know
- Forming groups (cliques) with strict “membership” requirement
- Saving seats so others have to leave
- Saying “You can’t play”

Alliance building

- Saying “You can’t be my friend if you spend time with them”
- Spreading gossip to be accepted in a group
- Choosing sides in a fight
- Getting others to agree with you and be “against” another person

Rumors and gossip

- Telling someone’s secrets
- Talking about others’ problems
- Making fun of how another person is dressed, what they like, etc.

Physical aggression

- Pushing someone
- Knocking someone’s supplies onto the floor
- Kicking something someone has dropped on the floor

Verbal aggression

- Calling someone hurtful names
- Making fun of someone (hurtful teasing or taunting)
- Laughing at someone

Cyber-bullying

- Sending hurtful or threatening text messages
- Posting negative photos or videos of someone online
- Creating a web page to embarrass someone
- Creating an online profile of someone without their permission and/or knowledge

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Level: Juniors

Time: 2.5 hours

Materials not included:

- Poster board
- Writing supplies
- Writing paper
- Coloring supplies
- Scissors
- Ball of yarn
- Staples or tape

Activity 1: Making a Mission Statement

- Poster board
- Writing paper
- Writing supplies
- Coloring supplies

Activity 2: Rumors (Telephone Game)

- None

Activity 3: Friendship Web

- Ball of yarn
- Scissors

Activity 4: Cyberbullying

- None

Activity 5: Kindness Chain

- Coloring supplies
- Stapler or tape
- Yarn from the friendship web
- Paper strip template (located at the end of the booklet)
- Scissors

Activity 1: Making a Mission Statement

Time: 45 minutes

Say: Has anyone ever heard of a mission statement? (Give the Girl Scouts time to respond.)

A mission statement is the aims and values of an organization. We are going to create a mission statement today about our troop being a kind, bully free, and safe space for all. I will read off a few mission statements and then we will create one as a group.

Girl Scouts: Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place

Nike: To bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world

Target: To help all families discover the joy of everyday life

Starbucks: With every cup, with every conversation, with every community - we nurture the limitless possibilities of human connection

To write a mission statement we will need to do some brainstorming as a troop. We will need to come up with the purpose of our troop. We will also need to come up with values of our troop, who we want to serve, and have a goal.

Directions:

1. Have the troop get into small groups and give each group writing paper and writing supplies.
2. Have each group brainstorm ideas for the mission statement. You can either have them do general brainstorming or give each group a topic to focus on. Topics can include values, who your troop serves, and the goal of the troop.
3. After a little bit of time brainstorming have the groups come together and share the ideas they came up with. Have them vote on what they want included in the mission statement. Make sure the mission statement includes something about being a bully free space.
4. Once voting is completed, have a leader take the poster board and help write out the mission statement.
5. On the bottom of the mission statement the Girl Scouts sign it to show that they agree with the mission statement.
6. Bring the mission statement to every meeting and have it on display.

For more fun: You can share your mission statement in the community.

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Activity 2: Rumors (Telephone Game)

Time: 30 minutes

Say: Rumors spread like wildfire and once a rumor is out there it is hard to stop it. When we start a rumor it can hurt people's feelings, cause confusion, and can even be a very serious issue. Spreading rumors is considered emotional bullying. We are going to play a game to see how a simple phrase can be changed and manipulated as it gets passed from person to person. After the game, we will reflect on it and talk about what you can do if you hear a rumor or a rumor is being spread about you.

Directions:

1. Have the Girl Scouts spread out around the room making sure they are at least an arm's length away from the nearest person.
2. Select a person to start with the rumor. Read them one of the below phrases.
3. Have them then go to another person in the room and retell the same phrase.
4. Then, that person will go to a new person and tell them the phrase.
5. Keep repeating this step until everyone has had a chance to hear the phrase.
6. Once the last person hears the phrase, they will say it out loud.
7. The goal is to end the game with the same phrase. If the phrase has changed as it was passed along, that's okay. Girls Scouts will reflect on this later.
8. Repeat the steps above and try to complete another three phrases making sure to always start with a new Girl Scout.
9. Once all the phrases have been gone through, have the group come back together and go over the reflection questions.

Phrases:

1. Find four funny fish
2. A guppy in a shark tank
3. Can you say what I see and see what I say
4. Bacon and eggs

Reflection:

If the Girl Scouts got any of the phrases wrong: When we started the game the first person was given the correct phrase, but by the time the phrase got to the last person it was said incorrectly. This is often how rumors work. The rumor is started and when going person to person, it can be twisted, changed, and end up being more hurtful than the original rumor.

If the Girl Scouts got every phrase right: Congratulations on getting every phrase correct. When we were going person to person repeating the phrase, this is exactly how rumors are spread. One person will start a rumor and it usually ends when the person the rumor is about hears it.

Say: How do you think we can stop the spread of rumors? Possible answers: If you hear a rumor do not continue to spread it. Tell the person you heard it from to stop spreading the rumor. Tell an adult.

Say: What should you do if you hear a rumor about you? Possible answers: Tell an adult. Tell the person who started it to stop. Do not retaliate and start a rumor about the person who started one about you. Practice self-care to take care of yourself.



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Activity 3: Friendship Web

Time: 20 minutes

Say: What are some things you value or look for in a friend?

Possible answers: Kindness, laughter, honesty, loyalty, silliness, caring, trustworthiness, patience, encouraging.

Say: Why do you look for these things in a friend?

Possible answer: Because they are values you hold for yourself. You want to feel good about your friendship and feel valued in your friendship.

We are going to make a friendship web and see how values we all have connect us in our friendship web.

Directions:

1. Have the Girl Scouts stand in a circle about shoulder width apart. Have one person start with the ball of yarn and hold on to the end of the yarn.
2. The person with the end of the yarn will pick another Girl Scout in the circle and throw the ball of yarn to them while still holding onto the end of the yarn. While passing the ball of yarn they need to say the person's name and say something that the value about that person (examples: kind, nice, artistic, loyal). They cannot pass the yarn to someone next to them though.
3. Keep having them pass the yarn ball to a new person while holding onto a part of the yarn and saying a value of the person they are passing it to.
4. The last person to get the yarn will then throw it to the person who started with the yarn, and they will say their name and a value they like about that person.
5. The goal is to have a big web of yarn that is connecting all the Girl Scouts.
6. Cut the yarn that made the web off the yarn ball, untangle it and save it for a future activity in the kit.

Reflection:

Say: When we were making our friendship web with the yarn, it was a great way to visualize that all of our friendships intertwine and are connected to each other. This activity also showed that maybe a value you did not know you had or something that you try to hide about yourself might be a value that someone else likes about you.

Ask: Who here has ever tried to change things about yourself to fit in with a certain group of people? Have them raise their hands. Girl Scouts do not need to say what they changed.

Ask: Did you feel like you had to change things about yourself for those people to be your friend? Have them raise their hands. Girl Scouts do not need to say what they changed.

Ask: How did you feel after you started to change yourself? (Now is when you want them to answer. They may say they feel better about themselves, or they may say that they did not like the person they became)

Say: No matter if you liked the person you were becoming or you didn't, the point is we should not change things about ourselves to just fit into the bubble that certain people want us to fit. Being your true self in friendship is important and having a true friendship means that those friends value everything about you.



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Activity 4: Cyberbullying

Time: 30 minutes

Say: We are going to talk about cyberbullying today and what to do if you are being bullied online or if you witness bullying online.

Say: Does anyone know what cyberbullying is?

Answer: Cyberbullying is bullying that happens on the computer, cell phone, or any other device connected to the internet.

Say: What games do you like to play? What websites do you like to visit? What kinds of things do you like to do? (Allow time to respond.)

Say: Have you ever seen people being mean to each other when they are playing games or chatting online? (You can make this a show of raise hands or they can answer with what they have experienced.)

Say: What kinds of mean things might kids see while playing a computer game?

Possible answers: Excluding people when they try to play; Intentionally ignoring other kids in games; Saying untrue things about others; Name-calling

Say: How do you think it makes people feel when people do these things to them online?

Possible Answers: Sad; Like they don't want to play anymore; Angry; Hurt; Embarrassed

Say: Does anyone know what a cyber-bystander is?

Possible answer: A person who sees cyberbullying happening to someone else.

We are going to go over some scenarios about cyberbullying and you will have an opportunity to respond to some scenarios.

Directions:

1. Read through the following scenarios and have the Girl Scouts answer the follow up questions.

Scenarios:

Scenario 1: Ericka is playing on her gaming system with her friends. Her friend Joy starts to be mean to one of the other people they are playing with. Joy is telling them they are awful at playing the game, they are a loser, and should just log off. What should Ericka do?

Possible answers: Ericka should tell Joy to stop. Ericka could check in on the person who is being bullied and ask if they are ok. Ericka could also let Joy know that she may not play with her next time she logs in to play the game if she is going to be mean to others.

Scenario 2: Emma is texting with her friend Heather. Heather tells Emma about a rumor she heard about Mary. What should Emma do?

Possible answers: Emma could let Heather know that it is not nice to spread rumors about others and ask Heather to stop. Emma could also report it to an adult.

Scenario 3: Mary and some of her friends were having a sleepover. They were all logged onto Mary's Instagram page looking at posts. Mary got up and left her phone with the friend's group while she left the room to get a snack. Her friends decided to message mean comments on others posts under Mary's account. What should Mary do?

Possible answers: Mary should have logged out of her account before leaving the room or had taken her phone with her. Mary could also let her friends know that it isn't nice to write mean comments on others' posts. Mary can also go back and delete them.

Scenario 4: Eliza posted a new video on her social media account. Some of her classmates commented on it saying Eliza was weird and that her videos are stupid. What should Eliza do?

Possible answers: Eliza could tell an adult and show them the comments. Eliza can also remind herself that if making videos is something she likes to do then keep doing it.

Scenario 5: Megan logged into her Facebook page and saw that some of her friends were writing mean things on June's wall. They were making fun of her and calling her names. What should Megan do?

Possible answers: Megan could comment back saying that it is not nice to say these things. Megan could also report the comments to an adult.

Say: When we put things on social media, they are there forever. When we say mean things to friends online, whether we write it out or say it on a video game, it can hurt others' feelings and affect them in a negative way. Remember, if you are being bullied online, report it to an adult right away. If you witness someone being bullied online check on them and report it.

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Activity 5: Kindness Chain

Time: 30 minutes

Say: We are going to make a friendship chain to show how we are all connected and the things we value in each other.

Directions:

1. Print out as many paper strips as you think you will need to make a chain the length of the yarn from the friendship web activity.
2. Give each Girl Scout paper strips and coloring supplies. Have them write down kind words or phrases on the strips of paper.
3. Take one of the paper strips and make a loop so the writing is on the outside of the loop and staple or tape the ends together. Then take another paper strip and loop it through the other existing loop and staple or tape the ends of the paper strip.
4. Continue this until you have a paper chain the length of the friendship web yarn.

You can hang this kindness chain up in your meeting space so the Girl Scouts have a way to look back at it.

For more fun: You can see if the Girl Scouts' school, community center, or a public area wants to display it to promote kindness in those areas.



Congratulations, you have completed your When Friends Are Not Friends patch!

Resources:

Children's books:

Cosby, Bill. *The Meanest Thing to Say*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 1997.
DePino, Catherine. *Blue Cheese Breath and Stinky Feet*. Washington D.C.: Magination Press, 2004
Estes, Eleanor. *The Hundred Dresses*. New York: Scholastic, 1973.
Ludwig, Trudy. *My Secret Bully*. California: Tricycle Press, 2005
McCain, Becky. *Nobody Knew What To Do: A Story About Bullying*. Florida: Magnetix Corporation, 2002.
Moss, Peggy. *Say Something*. Maine: Tilbury House, 2004.

Resources:

Adult books:

Deak, JoAnn and Teresa Barker. *Girls Will Be Girls: Raising Confident and Courageous Daughters*. New York: Hyperion, 2002.
Coloroso, Barbara. *The Bully, the Bullied and the Bystander: From Preschool to High School, Parents and Teachers Can Help Break the Cycle of Violence*. New York: Harpercollins, 2004.
Dellasega, Cheryl and Charisse Nixon. *Girl Wars: 12 Strategies That Will End Female Bullying*. New York: Fireside, Simon & Schuster, Inc., 2003.
Freedman, Judy S. *Easing the Teasing: Helping Your Child Cope with Name Calling, Ridicule, and Verbal Bullying*. New York: Contemporary Books, McGraw-Hill, 2002.
Simmons, Rachel. *Odd Girl Out: The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls*. San Diego: Harcourt Books, 2002.
Simmons, Rachel. *Odd Girl Speaks Out: Girls Write About Bullies, Cliques, Popularity, and Jealousy*. San Diego: Harcourt Books, 2004

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