

ON A ROLE

Smart responses to verbal teasing

Materials: Worksheet copies, timer

Directions: Read the worksheet, complete the activity and discuss as a group.

Bullying frequently starts out as teasing. That's why it's important to understand the differences between teasing and bullying.

Teasing is annoying, hurtful and random. Bullying is intentional, abusive and repetitive.

Bullies act mean for multiple reasons. They may hold a sense of entitlement. They may feel powerless and seek control over others. They may have been bullied themselves. Because they are miserable, they look for someone they can make miserable.

Let's read some tips on how to respond to verbal teasing or bullying. Then, we'll use the tips to role-play three situations.

TIPS ON RESPONDING TO VERBAL TEASING*

- Stay where you are, don't ignore the person and initially handle the situation yourself.
- Don't tease back.
- Act like you're unaffected by what the person says.
- Say a brief comeback suggesting what the person said was lame. For example:

Whatever.	Who cares?
Anyway.	(Shrug your shoulders)
Yeah and?	Was that supposed to be funny?
So what?	Am I supposed to care?
Big deal! (Roll your eyes)	And your point is?

- Walk away from the situation.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Choose one of the situations below.
 - Situation 1: A bully makes fun of something you say.
 - Situation 2: A bully makes fun of something you're wearing.
 - Situation 3: A bully makes fun of something you did.
- 2 Using the tips, devise and role-play a response to stop the bully from teasing you. You'll have 5 minutes to practice your role-playing.

(Set the timer for 5 minutes.)
- 3 When the timer sounds, we'll take turns role-playing our response for the group. After each turn, let's discuss why the response worked or didn't work.
- 4 The next time you're bullied or see someone else being bullied, respond using the tips we learned today.

* Tips for dealing with verbal teasing, Kidsinthehouse.com and PEERS guidebook

