



PREVENTING BULLYING IN AND THROUGH FOOTBALL

PINBALL

Activity 1 – “Tell me more”

General description of the activity

This activity will have the goal to inform youngsters about bullying and its consequences. The activity is two-folded: first, youngsters are indirectly asked to share their perception of bullying by representing it. Secondly, they will be able to gather more information about it, thus discovering that bullying involves different actors (the bully, the victim, bystanders and allies), has certain characteristics (e.g., a power imbalance, is repeated in time, can be based on both the victim's individual features and/or their belonging to a certain social group...) and can lead to very dangerous consequences, not only for the victim but also for the bully and the involved bystanders.

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Age group: 10-14 years old

Offering information on bullying	60 minutes
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STEP 1 – If we were actors

TIME: 20 minutes

To start the training session, the coach will ask some players (5-6 players: one bully, one victim and 3-4 bystanders) to become actors by enacting three bullying scenarios that can happen at football: one group will have the task to depict a bullying scenario during training (social isolation: where a child is excluded by peers who won't pass them the ball), another in the locker room (verbal bullying: where a child is made fun of) and the last one during a game (physical bullying: where a child is pushed by a bigger child). The coach must be available for support and advice during the exercise and inspire the group to try out their proposals, so they are not spending too much time trying to come up with the “perfect play”. Moreover, the coach must monitor all the scenarios, making sure that nothing truly harmful happens to the children.

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To do so, some precautions should be observed:

- In the three scenarios, roles should be shuffled so that different children interpret the bully/victim;
- In the second scenario, the coach should take care that the victim is played by a child who is not potentially hurt by the play itself, possibly asking beforehand “In this scenario, we'll pretend that one of you is made fun of by the bully. I want none of you ever feel uncomfortable when we do these games. The purpose here is to show you things so that we can discuss them and better understand them, not to bother any of you.



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Who is ok with playing the victim?”. (if none is ok with it, the coach can ask for other volunteers).

- In the third scenario, the coach should make sure that players understand that the push should be fake, and none should get hurt.

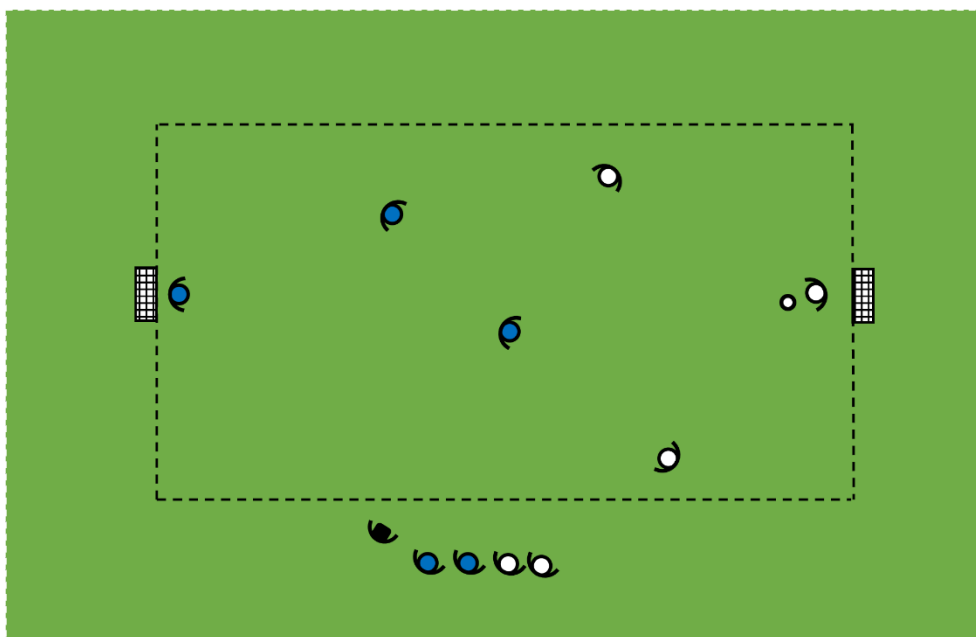
While the scenarios are playing, all the other children will be asked to look at them with great attention and to try and notice similarities and differences. After this, in a 5-minute discussion, the players will have to discuss all the similarities and differences between the scenarios, e.g., “There was always someone who was maltreated, and there was a perpetrator”, or “The bully was bigger/stronger, etc.”, as well as “In one case a child was excluded, in another they were yelled at, and in the last, they were pushed but it was still bullying”. The coach can stimulate the discussion with the following questions:

- Who is/ are exposed?
- Who exposes?
- Who is /are passive?

The comments can be noted on a cardboard divided by the topic by the coach [ACTORS-FEATURES-CONSEQUENCES] and kept to be used during the second step of the activity.

The activity is graphically represented below.





STEP 2 – Characteristics of bullying

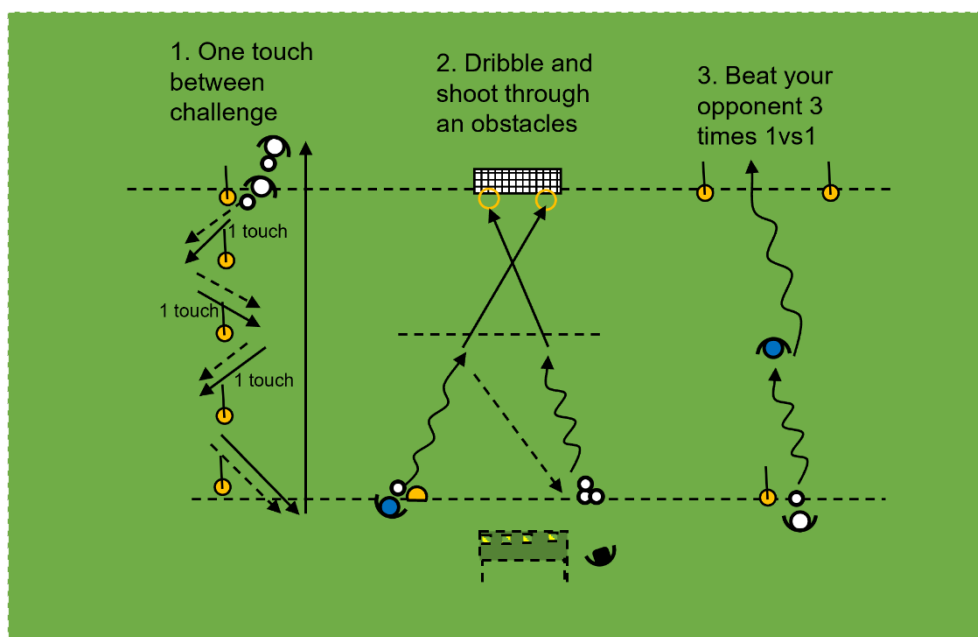
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TIME: 30 minutes

In this 15-minute game, the players will be divided into three groups and asked to complete three challenges to collect a prize: these challenges (as well as the group assigned to each challenge) can be designed by the coach based on what they think each player should improve more (e.g., to improve fast reaction, a challenge could be having a teammate kicking a ball from behind and having to reach and stop it before it crosses a line at least four out of five trials). Whenever a member of a group reaches their goal, they can collect their prize, a card pertaining to a certain bullying-related category ([see Annex 1.1 – age 10-14](#)), namely ACTORS, FEATURES or CONSEQUENCES, that will help them learn more about the topic.

A graphical representation of possible activities is provided below.





At the end of the activity, all cards will be put together and matched to the topics already raised by the players during step 1. The coach will lead the discussion by asking:

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- Did you know all this information on bullying?
- What surprises you the most?
- Do you think you learned something new about this phenomenon?

The coach can raise awareness on the severity of the problem by stimulating youngsters with the following questions:

- Have you ever heard of the convention on the rights of the child?
- Did you know that the convention states every child has the right to be protected from all sorts of violence, including bullying? Why do you think that is?

If the players go more in-depth, here are some more challenging questions and reflections you can propose:





- Did you think that bullying happens a lot or not? Did you happen to witness it?
- It is important that we acknowledge this happens more frequently than we knew. Some times people struggle even if we don't know it. This is why it is important to be gentle and respectful with others.

Possible addendum. *If there's still time after this activity, the coach could propose to re-play the role play with a twist. This time, the audience can replace any of the "passive" bystanders in the scene. The players in the audience can shout "stop" at any time and switch any of the passive character. Then the scene continues with a new actor, who shall try to improve, avoid, or change the situation into a better experience for the exposed persons.*

In the end, the coach can close the conversation by saying something like: "We discuss this topic because we, as Club, think it's very important to tackle bullying, and we want you to understand this phenomenon and how to fight it. If some of you are triggered by this topic or feel like you want to talk with somebody, you can come to me at any time. If I don't have the answers for you at that moment, I'll try and redirect you to someone who has them" [beforehand, each coach should look for the contact of an anti-bullying agency on the territory].

TAKE-HOME TASK

For the next week, before making a joke, try and think if it might hurt the person you have in front of you.

COACH TO COACH: SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

Here are some practical suggestions from coaches who already implemented the activities within their teams.



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1. In STEP 1, if the group is large (30 players or more) you should divide it into several small groups that can play the role-play in parallel.
2. It is important to provide a strong guidance during the activity so that the players feel safe during the role-play: Show your presence and be heard.
3. In STEP 2, you can adapt the materials if printing and cutting out the cards is challenging. For instance, you could utilize tokens to be collected during the game and just print a single set of cards to be “traded” in the end of the game. This way, you will still be able to discuss the materials but you won’t have to cut out the cards or craft them.

Age group: 15-18 years old

Offering information on bullying	50 minutes
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STEP 1 – The bullying role play

TIME: 20 minutes

The coach will ask 4-5 players to enact a bullying scenario in football for their teammates: the scenario should feature a bully, a victim and some bystanders. Moreover, it should show how all the actors feel and behave AFTER the bullying episode itself. They will have 5 minutes to prepare it and 5 to interpret it. In the meantime, the other players will be asked to answer the following questions:

1. Who are the actors involved in this scenario?
2. What allows the bully to act as they do?
3. What are the consequences of bullying for all the actors involved?

If the players go more in-depth, here are some more challenging questions and reflections you can propose:

- Did you think that bullying happens a lot or not? Did you happen to witness it?





- It is important that we acknowledge this happens more frequently than we knew. Some times people struggle even if we don't know it. This is why it is important to be gentle and respectful with others.

A subsequent 10-minute discussion will allow the players to find the similarities among their answers, which will be eventually recorded on cardboard.

STEP 2 – Characteristics of bullying

TIME: 30 minutes

Similarly to the above, in this 20-minute game, the players will be divided into three groups and asked to complete three challenges to collect prizes. The challenges can be designed by the coach based on what they think each player should improve more: in this case, the player will have the possibility to set their own goal (e.g., completing 15 around-the-world dribbles). Whenever a member of a group reaches their goal, they can collect their prize, a card pertaining to a certain bullying-related category (see Annex 1.1 – age 15-18), namely ACTORS, FEATURES or CONSEQUENCES, with more information about the topic. Each player can get the chance to compete multiple times within the 20 minutes by raising the bar of their challenge (e.g., 20 around-the-world dribbles).

At the end of the activity, all cards will be put together and matched to the answers gathered during step 1. The coach will lead the discussion by asking:

- Did you know all this information on bullying? Did you ever witness it?
- What is new to you? What surprises you the most out of all this information?





- How do you feel after learning all this?

REQUIRED MATERIALS	
10-14 years old	15-18 years old
Annex 1.1	Annex 1.1
Marker	Marker
Envelopes	Sheets and pens
Footballs	Envelopes
Materials needed for the challenges	Footballs
	Materials needed for the challenges

Activity 2 – “How does it feel?”

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General description of the activity

This activity is meant to foster perspective-taking and affective empathy towards those who experience bullying. By being randomly assigned to a certain “label”, players will experience how it feels to play either with friends who include and support or with peers that bully and offend. Both sides will be tried out by each player so that they can feel and compare the difference between being treated with kindness or being harassed and mistreated. The subsequent discussion will allow a) understanding how people feel when they are bullied (through both direct verbal violence and/or social exclusion), and b) reflecting on how our behaviour can influence others’ well-being.



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Age group: 10-14 years old

Fostering empathy towards the victims	50 minutes
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STEP 1 – Look at my forehead!

TIME: 30 minutes

In this game, which will be a regular 10+10-minute football game (with a 5-minute break in between), all players will be wearing a forehead band. Before the beginning of the game, each player will go to the coach, who will paste an adhesive label on their band (see Annex 2.1), indicating a rule of conduct for other players to adopt. The possible labels will be the following (half of them are “bullying labels”, and the other ones are “inclusion and support labels”):

- Never pass me the ball.
- Always pass me the ball as soon as possible.
- Comment unpleasantly on my plays.
- Give me lots of compliments on how much effort I put into my play.
- Console me if I make a mistake.
- If I make a mistake, make me feel worse.

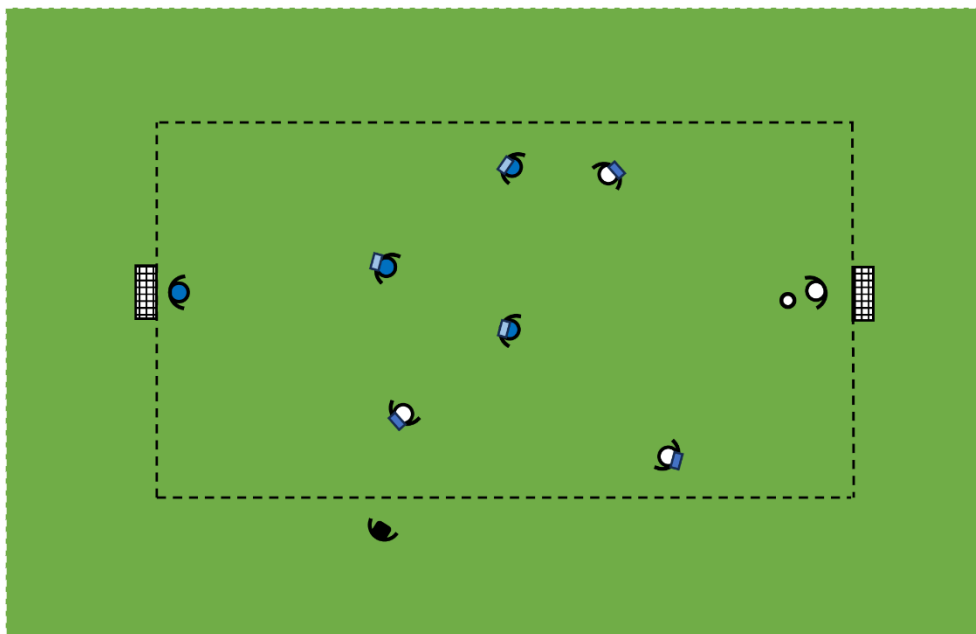
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Some time will be given to the players to look at each other labels, and the rule will be placed not to reveal someone else’s label. During the game, the players will have to act towards a certain player accordingly to their label. After the break, labels will be changed and those who





had a bullying label will get an inclusion label and vice-versa. The activity is graphically represented below.



STEP 2 – Let's talk about emotions

TIME: 20 minutes

After finishing the game, youngsters will play a 5-minute game before starting the discussion. The purpose of the game is to practice techniques to promote a good atmosphere, as well as to demonstrate the consequences of invisibility and exclusion. In the game, players will get to assume different roles, and thus try to portray both invisibility and visibility. To play:

- Divide the group into couples.





- One member of the couple starts talking (about anything at all, e.g., the summer holiday, favourite food, a good book etc.) for one minute. The other one is asked to show disinterest during the minute that the partner is talking.
- Switch roles. The one who started talking shall now spend one minute showing disinterest.
- Repeat (talk about the same thing) but this time the partner who is not talking shall genuinely show that they are interested.

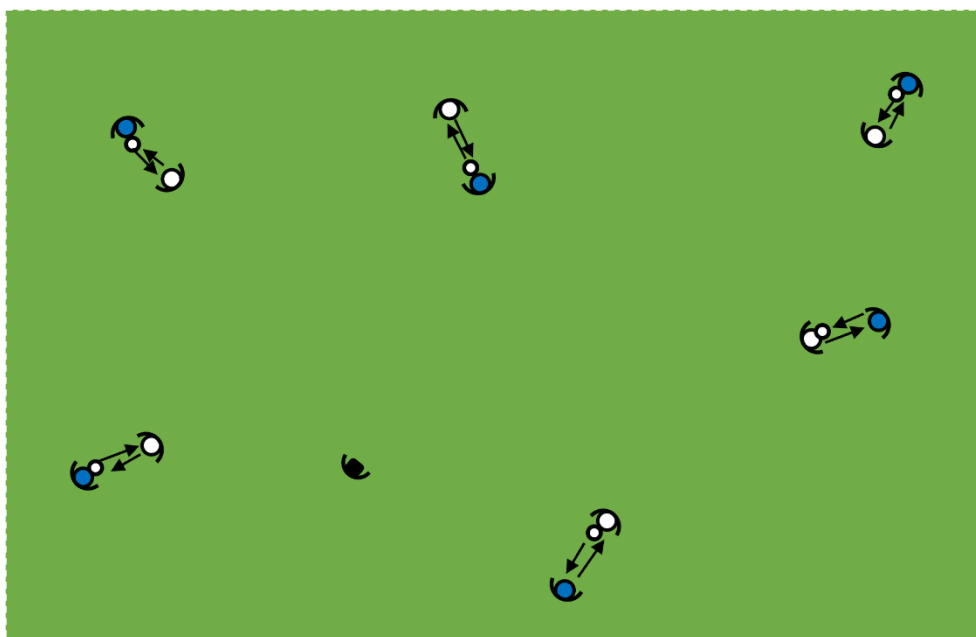
The coach will quickly collect the players' first reactions:

- How did it feel to talk to someone who showed disinterest? What happened to you, to the story?
- How did it feel to talk to someone who showed interest? What happened to you, to the story?

12

The activity is graphically represented below.





Then the players will be asked to connect this quick game to the football activity and discuss their feelings related to being bullied and being treated with kindness. The coach will be able to collect their thoughts and opinions (if wished, on cardboard).

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- How did it feel when you were bullied, or none was passing you the ball?
- How did it feel when everyone was kind and supportive?
- Do you think it is important to be kind to other people? Why?
- Can you give specific examples of what you can do or say to show support or kindness towards another player?
- According to Convention on the Rights of the Child, all youngsters have the right **to be who they are**. How do you think you could make a difference for your peers by having that in mind?



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TAKE-HOME TASK

For the next week, make the commitment to deliver a kind word to one person per day, and just look at their reaction.

COACH TO COACH: SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

Here are some practical suggestions from coaches who already implemented the activities within their teams.

- 1. If necessary, instead of printing and pasting the labels of the players' forehead, you can paste tape on the players' back and write their "role" with a mark.**
- 2. The take-home tasks are important! They help the players in keeping the information in mind between activities.**

Age group: 15-18 years old

Fostering empathy towards the victims	45 minutes
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The game will be the same as in the 10-14 age group. However, the discussion questions will be more in-depth.

- How did it feel when everyone was kind and supportive?
- How did it feel when you were bullied or none was passing you the ball?
- Did you ever feel like this at football? Did you ever feel like this outside football?
- How would you wish others behaved with you in football and outside?
- How does it make you feel when you see someone else being bullied?
- Do you ever think about how YOUR behaviour will make people feel?
- How do you think you could make a difference for other people?



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REQUIRED MATERIALS	
10-14 years old	15-18 years old
Footballs	Footballs
Bibs to divide the teams	Bibs to divide the teams
Goals	Goals
Whistle	Whistle
Forehead bands (one for each player)	Forehead bands (one for each player)
Annex 2.1	Annex 2.1
Marker	Marker





Appendix

Activity 1 “Tell me more” materials









Annex 1.1 (age 10-14)



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Verbal bullying  Bad words, insults, making fun of someone for their dressing, physical appearance, or family situations - for example	Bully  Someone strong that is aggressive towards weaker peers trying to show power or to obtain something from them	Victim  Someone who is repeatedly mistreated by the bully and feels weak and scared	Bystanders  People that witness bullying. They can either be supporters to the bully, silent observers or victims allies («defenders»)
Physical bullying  Kicks, punches, pushes but also ruining other people's belongings on purpose	Social isolation  Speaking badly of someone behind their back to isolate them	Interpersonal bullying  Bullying is based on someone's personal features (such as being overweight or shy)	Bias-based bullying  Bullying happens because the victim belongs to a certain group (for example, because they are foreign)



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Consequences for victims (1)

Victims of bullying can feel very sad and scared to the point they cannot leave their homes on their own

Consequences for bullies (1)

When grown up, bullies have less friends and worse jobs than other people

Consequences for victims (2)

Victims of bullying tend to feel insecure and stop going to school

Consequences for bullies (2)

When grown up, bullies are more likely to have illnesses than other people

Consequences for bystanders

People who witness bullying tend to feel worse than peers in their everyday life





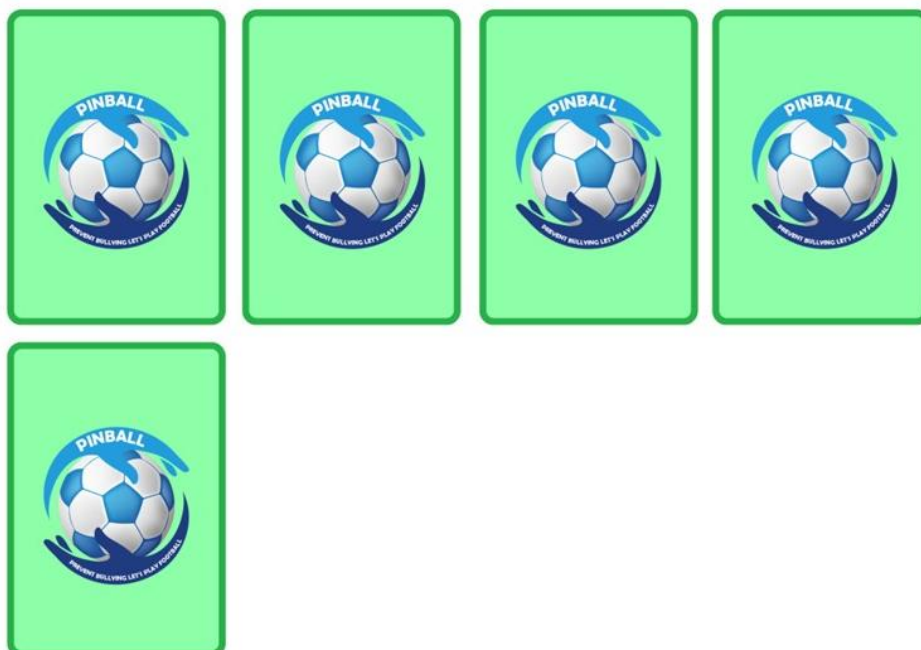
Annex 1.1 (age 15-18)

Verbal bullying Humiliating by insulting, for example, their dressing, physical appearance, gender or family situation	Bully Individual, often more physically fit than the victim, who acts on aggressive behaviours to assert their powers, taking advantage from that situation	Victim Individual characterized by physical or mental weaknesses, who cannot defend themselves and is subject to the aggressiveness of the bully	Bystanders Individuals who witness the bullying phenomenon. They can either be supporters to the bully, silent observers or victim's allies («defenders»)
Physical bullying Direct physical acts (e.g., kicks, punches, pushes), but also theft of objects and/or voluntary damages to other people's belongings	Social isolation Isolation, spread of gossip and slandering	Interpersonal bullying The aggressive behavior is perpetrated due to the individual characteristics on the part of the victims (e.g., being overweight/shy)	Bias-based bullying The aggressive behavior is perpetrated due to the victim's belongings to social groups (e.g., ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or religion)




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Consequences for victims (1)




Victims of bullying tend to develop anxiety and depression

Consequences for bullies (1)




Research shows that bullies are more likely, when adults, to work failure, poor relationships and physical illness

Consequences for victims (2)




Victims of bullying tend to have a deterioration in school performance and can even end up abandoning their studies prematurely

Consequences for bullies (2)



Bullies, when adults, can manifest very aggressive behaviours and have mental illnesses (more than average)

Consequences for bystanders



A recent study showed that bystanders of bullying are more likely to report lower satisfaction than youngsters who are not bystanders





Activity 2 “How does it feel?” materials

Annex 2.1

