

# Take A Stand:

## Preventing Bullying, Interpersonal Conflict and Violence

### **First Grade**

Teacher Guide

Developed and written by

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“What we do to children  
they will do to society...”

Karl Menninger

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# INTRODUCTION FOR TEACHERS

The **Take A Stand** Program has been created to teach specific interpersonal skills to children and their parents. Reflecting the direct experience and concerns of children and their families, it has its roots in who children are, what they can do and what they need to know to grow up feeling safe and valued.

**YOU PLAY AN ESSENTIAL PART.** As one of the most important and trusted adults in their lives, children will look to you for understanding and support in handling these issues. To assist you in this process, this manual walks you through what to say, what responses to expect, what role-plays to use and how to follow up. Each day's lesson plan includes a statement of the objectives for the day, discussion outlines, role-plays and follow-up activities.

This guide, however, is only a tool. You should feel free to use the curriculum in a way that is consistent with your own style and comfort level, and the needs of the children in your group. For example, you may break the presentation down into smaller parts, adapt the role-plays to your community, or change some of the language to make it more appropriate to the developmental level of your group.

Children are directly affected by their perception of their own well being in their environment. If we talk to them in a way that makes them feel fearful or insecure, we heighten their sense of vulnerability. Understanding this is central. Children who are frightened have fewer options and less self-confidence to handle life events effectively. On the other hand, when we talk to children in a way that makes them feel confident, capable and informed, they can actually be more effective in protecting themselves.

# Teacher's Guide

To make the process of teaching the **Take A Stand** Program as easy as possible, the manual walks you through what to say, what responses to expect, what role-plays to use and how to follow up. It covers all the common - and some not so common - concerns children express, with the accompanying explanations.

The actual manual is divided into a number of sections to minimize preparation time and maximize your ability to work with the children on the day's objectives.

- Objectives: serve to crystallize the lesson's purpose. These will help you determine the children's readiness to move ahead to the next concept.
- Lesson Plan: the layout of each day's lesson is designed to make the successful presentation of this material as effortless as possible so that you can give your full attention to the children. You may use these as a script.
- **Teacher statements to children appear in bold.**
- Expected comments appear in normal typeface.
- *Notes about what to look for or coaching comments appear in italic.*

Once again, this curriculum guide should be used as a tool. You are the teacher. Your instincts and knowledge of the children in your group is as important as the curriculum guide in shaping the learning process. You should feel free to use the curriculum guide in a way that is consistent with their own style and comfort level and the needs of the children in their group. Feel free to break the presentation down into smaller parts, adapt the role-plays to the community or change some of the language to make it more appropriate to the developmental level of your group.

**The Program is most effective when the five sessions are presented about once a week. This allows time for the children to utilize the skills and begin to see changes. Change over time is the goal, and the Program should be conducted on an annual basis. This allows the children to learn new skills as they mature and keeps the concepts fresh for all age levels every year.**

## Parental Involvement

Parents who are informed about the content and approach of The Take A Stand Program will be more supportive and parental support is a key element in making a difference in the lives of children. The techniques taught in the program will be much more powerful if parents understand and support their use at home and in the community.

A Parent Seminar is one powerful way to make parents aware of the Program. However, most schools will have a maximum attendance of 25% of parents at any parent meeting. Other ways to let parents know about the Program is and how they can support it include the Parent Handbook and take-home activities. The Parent Handbook should be duplicated and sent home with all children prior to beginning the Program. Take home activities area as much for the parents as for the children and should not be skipped.

Parents who have questions should be invited to come and see a session of the Program, or to review the teacher materials. They can also be referred to the Coalition for Children website to learn more about the Program. [www.safechild.org](http://www.safechild.org)

## Adult Role in Prevention of Bullying

As soon as children begin to interact with others, we can begin to teach them not to be bullies and not to be bullied. We can give them words for their feelings, limit and change their behavior, and teach them better ways to express their feelings and wishes. **Children do not learn to solve these kinds of problems and get along by themselves. We need to teach them.**

When preschoolers begin to call people names or use unkind words, intervene immediately and consistently. In kindergarten, children learn the power of exclusion. We begin to hear things like, "She's not my friend and she can't come to my party." Respond with, "You don't have to be friends with her today, but it's not all right to make her feel bad by telling her she can't come to your party."

**In the early elementary grades, cliques and little groups develop which can be quite exclusionary and cruel. Children need to hear clearly from us, "It's not all right to treat other people this way. How do you think she feels being told she can't play with you?" Kids don't have to play with everyone or even like everyone, but they can't be cruel about excluding others.**

Boys who are physically small or weak are more prone to victimization. Making fun, picking on and other forms of bullying need to be identified in their earliest stages. The message needs to be crystal clear. "This is not okay. Think about how he must feel. How could you include him and let other kids know it's not all right to treat others this way?"

Children who are not bullies or victims have a powerful role to play in shaping the behavior of other children. **Teach children to speak up on behalf of children being bullied.** "Don't treat her that way, it's not nice." "Hitting is not a good way to solve problems, let's find a teacher and talk about what happened."

While the Take A Stand Program methodically introduces concepts and skills that are age appropriate and can be used daily as children learn to address interpersonal conflict more effectively, adult intervention and guidance is a necessary part of that proves.

## **RP** Role-Play

Children learn by doing. Role-play is what makes prevention of bullying and interpersonal conflict real for children. There is a fundamental difference between a “concept” and a “skill.” This is important for parents and schools to understand because stories, videotapes, coloring books, etc. only teach concepts. Concepts don’t change the nature of interpersonal conflict.

**Role-playing takes concepts and turns them into skills. Actually walking through situations and having the children practice different responses is what takes the information from the level of a concept – or an idea – to a skill that is learned in the “muscles” and will never be forgotten.**

It is like the difference between understanding how to ride a bicycle and actually being able to ride a bicycle. Classroom role-play, merged with discussion and activities, enables the children to learn the skills in their muscles. This is what allows them to actually intervene on behalf of themselves or others in real life situations.

The process of teaching role-playing is one of discussion first and then actually walking through a scenario, applying the concepts to real situations and learning how to implement the concepts with skill. This is usually a process of successive approximations based on your coaching.

Most children begin a role-play not being able to implement the very thing they were just talking about. As you act out a situation, you want to coach the participants to communicate effectively, utilizing eye contact, clear and straightforward language and consistent body language. Each time they role-play, the children will improve and feel more comfortable taking action. This comfort level – advance preparation for life – is what will enable them to use the skills in their peer group and community.

Most people are uneasy about role-play in the beginning. But it is really what we do every day. We walk through how to handle a business meeting or a conflict with a family member. We think through how to handle getting the baby and the dog and the groceries into the house. The difference in the classroom is that we act out solutions rather than just thinking about them.

The role-play suggestions in this Program are just that. You should feel free to modify scenarios or create new ones that work for your group of kids. The point is only to create opportunities to practice for life in such a way that kids are really prepared to be effective advocates for themselves and others.

# Intervention With Bullies

Children who are bullies need to be dealt with consistently and effectively. Bullying should not be overlooked or excused. We know bullying behavior only escalates as children get older and the ramifications for bullies and the group as a whole are significant.

**DO NOT BLAME.** Do not get into a discussion about the "whys" of what happened. Your discussion with a bullying child should focus on several key points:

- Bullying is not acceptable in our school, family or in society.
- If you are feeling frustrated or angry or aggressive, here are some things you can do. Then provide concrete examples based on the current situation.
- Role-play or act out the new behaviors so your teaching is experiential. Remember that role-play is the key to changing behavior!
- Ask, how can I help you with this? Who could you go to in school if you see yourself getting into this type of situation again?
- Specify concretely the consequences if the aggression or bullying continue.
- Your objective is to stop the behavior, understand the child's feelings, then teach and reward more appropriate behavior.



# No More Secrets Rule

The No More Secrets Rule taught at the younger age levels is particularly important because intimidation and secrecy keep young children from telling about bullying and other abusive behavior, particularly at the hands of older children or adults. This rule is central to protecting younger children and the rule should be applied in the classroom as well as at home.

The No More Secrets rule is an agreement you make with your family that you won't keep secrets anymore (not even in the family) and if asked to keep a secret, your children will say "No, we don't keep secrets in our family and I'm going to tell." Younger children can simply say, "No, I'm going to tell."

Surprises are okay. Surprises are things that make people happy that get told sooner or later, whereas secrets are never told. Children quickly learn the difference, and by age four can respond to a request for secrecy about a birthday gift with "That's not a secret, it's a surprise."

Young children often confuse secrecy with whispering. Explain to them that telling something you only want one person to hear is different from keeping a secret. A secret is when they promise not to tell anyone else.

By age five or six, children can learn that there are many ways to be asked to keep a secret. They enjoy making a game of trying to trick Mom and Dad into keeping a secret without using the word secret. For example, what if someone says any of the following: "This is just between you and me." "Do you promise not to tell anyone else.?" "You don't need to tell your mom and dad, I'll tell them later." "We won't tell them about our little game." Your children should respond to all of these requests by saying, "No, I don't keep secrets and I'm going to tell."

By age seven or eight, secrecy is such an integral part of children's lives with their friends that they are reluctant to give it up. This includes friendship clubs, secret bonds, oaths, pacts, etc. Essentially, we're allowing and expecting secrecy with peers and discouraging it with anyone older.

If a request for secrecy, whether or not the word secret is actually used, seems confusing or odd or compromising, one option open to older children is to say "I really don't like keeping secrets and I don't want to start now," or "I don't like this idea, let's do something else," or "I'd like to go home now."

**Privacy is not the same as secrecy.** Privacy means you can be by yourself or keep something to yourself. Secrecy means you're bound not to tell. **Privacy respects individual needs. Secrecy creates shame and keeps children from getting help when they need it. It's important that children know the difference.**

## **Recommended Materials**

Flip Chart

Markers

Tape or Tacks to post lists

Family Handbook duplicated

Duplicate Activity Sheets

# **FIRST GRADE OVERVIEW**

## **Day 1**

### **Objectives**

To identify what a bully is

To recognize the behaviors of bullies

To recognize feelings generated by bullying behavior

To establish the three elements of effective communication:

- Eye contact,
- Say what you mean, and
- Consistent body language

To use these skills in role-playing

## **Day 2**

### **Objectives**

To discuss what they observed about bullying at home and at school

To introduce and role-play ways of handling being bullied

## **Day 3**

### **Objectives**

To role-play intervention and being advocates when they observe bullying.

To recognize bullying behaviors in themselves

To act after they have been a bully to clean it up.

## **Day 4**

### **Objectives**

To acknowledge that adults have problems.

To acknowledge that they sometimes take their problems out on their children

To introduce the concept of hitting which is excessive

To introduce the concept of words that hurt

## **DAY 5**

### **Objectives**

To give permission to tell someone when they're being hurt

To discuss resources for getting help

To discuss the importance of truthfulness and thoroughness when telling

To introduce No More Secrets Rule

To teach children how to tell effectively

To encourage children to tell and list resources for telling

# FIRST GRADE

## DAY 1

### OBJECTIVES

- To identify what a bully is
- To recognize the behaviors of bullies
- To recognize feelings generated by bullying behavior
- To establish the three elements of effective communication:
  - Eye contact,
  - Say what you mean, and
  - Consistent body language
- To use these skills in role-playing

## Teacher-Directed Discussion and Role-play

Who can tell me what a bully is?

What are some things that bullies do? How do they treat other people?

List behaviors

Physical	Verbal	Emotional
Hitting	Name-calling	Exclusion
Pushing	Teasing	Talking about
Kicking	Being mean	Can't play
Shoving	Making fun	Don't like
Pinching		

What about bullying that hurts your feelings? Can you think of any examples?

Have you ever been around a bully? No names – just talk about the behavior.

Which of these types of behaviors have you seen? (no names)

## Communication

Communication has three parts:

Words - saying what you mean

Body language - having your body mean the same thing you're saying

Eye contact

Practice using each of these in the following role-plays: *(Coach them to make all three elements effective.)*

## ROLE-PLAYING

We're going to act out some stories about bullies and see what we can learn. I'm going to have two or three of you come up here with me. I'm going to give you a part to play. You'll pretend to be that person and act the way that person would act.

**RP** I need two people to help me. (1 bully, 1 victim)

Bully: I'd like you to be the bully, to act out saying to the other child  
"You're fat!"

Victim: I'd like you to be the child being bullied. Show us what you would say and do?

Have them act this situation out.

POSSIBLE RESPONSES
Hide
Run or walk away
Tell someone
"Don't do that."
"I'm going to tell if you do that again."
Go play with someone else

**Discussion:** Was that a good way to handle this situation? Why or why not?

*Thank the role-playing children and have them return to their seats.*

**RP** I need two more people now. (1 bully, select one who wears glasses to be the victim.)

Bully: Now let's pretend you are the bully and you say to the second child  
"Four eyes, four eyes, can't see a thing!"

Victim: I want you to respond with "That's not a nice thing to say." and walk away. Be sure to look at the person, stand up tall, and speak clearly.

**Discussion:** Was this a good way to handle this problem? Why or why not?

**RP** Let's try one more. I need four people. (3 bullies, 1 victim)

Bullies: You are going to get together and point at \_\_\_\_\_. You are going to say, "Your ideas are stupid and you can't play with us."

Victim: **You are going to say, “I don’t care what you guys think.” And walk away.**

Have them act this out.

**Discussion: Did this solve the problem?**

**If you were bullied in our role-play situations, how did it make you feel? (List as they think of feelings – see example below)**

**How did it feel to be the bully?**

**If you saw someone else being bullied, how did you feel?**

<b>Feelings of Person Being Bullied</b>	<b>Feelings of Bully</b>	<b>Feelings Seeing Someone Else Bullied</b>
Pain	Powerful / Taking Over	Sorry
Want revenge	Superior / Justified	Mad / Angry
Shocked	Lonely / Isolated	Confused
Hurt	In control	Scared / Afraid
Want to bully back	Tough	Worried / Anxious
Get bully in trouble	Sadness / Depression	Vulnerable / Uncertain
Want to die	Pain	Want to defend person
Embarrassed	Guilty	Dislike / Hatred
Afraid / Terrified	Afraid / Cowardly	Guilty
Sad / Depressed	Mean	Revengeful
Explosive	Getting attention	

**Raise you hands if someone else has ever bullied you.**

**Raise your hands if you think you might have been a bully at some time.**

**Raise you hands if you don’t like how being a bully (or being bullied by someone else) made you feel.**

**Raise your hands if you would like to find a way to not have this kind of behavior in our school.**

**We’re going to spend some time learning about bullies, ways to not be a bully, ways not to have people bully you and ways that you can stand up for each other when you see someone being a bully.**

**For now, I want you to start noticing bullying behaviors here at school and at home. Notice how it makes you feel or how it makes other people feel.**

**Later, I'll have some booklets for you to take home to help you start talking to your family about bullies.**

## **Activity**

Send home Family Handbook

## DAY 2

### OBJECTIVES

To discuss what they observed about bullying at home and at school  
To introduce and role-play ways of handling being bullied

### Teacher-Directed Discussion and Role-play

Who can tell me about bullying that you saw happening at school, at home or on television? Remember no names.

Have any of you had a bullying situation since our last class that you handled well?

What happened? How did you feel?

Let's talk about some other ways to respond to bullies.

Ways to respond to bullies
"Don't do that."
"I'm going to tell if you do that again."
"That really hurts my feelings."
"That's not a very nice thing to say."
"That's mean."
"Give that back or I'll tell the teacher."
Tell someone
Stay away from bullies
Make a joke – "Whatever" "No kidding" "So what"
Go play with another group of kids

**RP** I need two people to help me. (1 bully, 1 victim)

Bully: **Take his coat and throw it on the ground**

Victim: **What are your choices?**

Bully says: **"Go ahead and tell, I don't care."**

Victim says: **What are you going to do now?**

Desired response: Tell anyway.



**RP** Some bullying hurts your feelings. I need two more people to help me with this one.

First child: I want you to say “You’re dumb, you don’t know how to do anything!”

Second child: I want you to look right at the person, use a strong voice and say, “That’s not a very nice thing to say,” then walk away.

How did that feel?

Now reverse roles. This time try saying, “That’s mean!” and walk away. How did it feel to be playing the other person this time?

**RP** I need two more people to help me.

First child: I want you to say, “You can’t be on our team.”

Second child: I want you to look right at the person, use a strong voice and say, “Okay, maybe next time,” then walk away.

How did that feel?

Now reverse roles. This time try saying, “That’s not very nice.”

How did it feel to be playing the other person this time?

**RP** Now who wants to come up and role-play? I need two people.

First child: Take this box of blocks away from the other person.

Second child say, “We could build something together.”

Would that work?

First child says, “I don’t want to play with you.”

Second child says, “Give the blocks back or I’ll tell the teacher.”

First child says, “Go ahead and tell, I don’t care.”

Now what would you do?

Now you need to get an adult to help.

**RP** Who has an example of a situation you have been in that we can role-play?

Act out one or two situations suggested by the children as time allows.

**Discussion:** How many of you can think of a time when you were a bully, or made someone feel bad with your words?

Discuss specific instances including feelings of bully and bullied.

**Did anyone tell you your behavior wasn't nice?**

**How did that make you feel?**

**Did you apologize or do something else to make the other person feel better?**

**How did that make you feel?**

**I'd like you to pay attention to how you treat other people and practice making up after you've hurt someone else.**

## **Activity**

Think of one person in this room you want to apologize to for something you did. Take three minutes to let people walk around and apologize for past behaviors.

## DAY 3

### OBJECTIVES

To role-play intervention and being advocates when they observe bullying.  
To recognize bullying behaviors in themselves  
To act after they have been a bully to clean it up.

## ADVOCATE

Who knows what an Advocate is?

When you stand up for someone else you are being an **ADVOCATE**. Being an advocate is:

- being a friend,
- being a good leader,
- helping our school be a place where people are treated with respect and kindness.

**RP** I need three people to help me. (1 bully, 1 victim, 1 advocate)

Bully: “You’re so stupid, you’ll never get to second grade.”

Victim: Pretend you don’t really know what to do.

Advocate: Walk up to the bully, look her in the eye, stand up tall and say clearly and firmly: “Don’t do that, that’s not nice.” Then take your friend’s hand and walk away.

How do you think your friend feels if you are an advocate?

## Group Bullying

Does bullying ever happen in groups? List them

Group Bullying
Teasing
Making fun
Not letting someone play

**RP** Now I need five people. (3 friends, 1 excluded child, 1 advocate)

**Three children are telling the fourth child she can't play with them.**

Excluded child: **What could you say?**

Possible responses:

"That hurt my feelings."  
"That isn't a very nice thing to say."  
"Okay, maybe next time."

Advocate: **You know this is wrong and makes the excluded kid feel bad. What could you do?**

Possible responses:

"That's not very nice, let's invite her to play."  
"I think we hurt her feelings. I'm going to play with her."

**RP** Now I need five more people. (3 friends, 1 excluded child, 1 advocate)

**Three children are picking on a fourth child, poking and pushing him.**

Teased child: **What could you say or do?**

Possible responses:

Walk away and join another group  
Get away and tell  
"I'm going to tell if you do that again."

Advocate: **You know this is wrong. What could you do?**

Possible responses:

"Picking on other people isn't nice." Leave with bullied child  
"I don't want to play with kids who are mean." Leave with child.

**Discussion: How does it feel to be left out, to be excluded?**

**How does it make you feel when you see someone else being excluded?**

**How does it make you feel to stand up for what you know is right, to be an advocate for someone else?**

## **Activity**

Draw a picture showing three different bullying situations.

## **DAY 4**

### **OBJECTIVES**

To acknowledge that adults have problems.

To acknowledge that they sometimes take their problems out on their children

To introduce the concept of hitting which is excessive

To introduce the concept of words that hurt

### **Teacher-Directed Discussion and Role-play**

**How many of you have recognized times that you were being a bully, or being unkind to someone or making someone else feel bad?**

**How did you feel when you realized you were doing that?**

**Did you go back and apologize or do anything to make up for your behavior?**

**How did you feel after that?**

**How do you think the other person felt?**

**How many of you have been advocates for yourselves when someone was bullying you?**

**How did that feel?**

**Did it work?**

**Did the bullying stop?**

**How many of you have been advocates for someone else?**

**How did that feel?**

**Did it work?**

**Did the bullying stop?**

# Adult Bullies

**Are adults ever bullies?**

Discussion without names.

**How many of you think grown-ups have any problems?**

Most kids know their parents have problems and have no reluctance about saying so.

## Emotional bullying

**Do grown-ups ever treat you differently because of their problems?**

**Sure they do. Everyone gets cranky sometimes; everyone gets frustrated sometimes.**

**But just because an adult gets upset and says things that aren't very nice, that doesn't make what they say true.**

**RP** I need someone to help me. *Teacher will play role of adult in all these examples.*

**If I say to you, "You're an idiot." Does that hurt?**

**Is it true just because I say it? Of course not!**

**This time, I want you to practice saying "That's not true about me" inside your head when I say something that isn't very nice.**

**"You're an idiot." Did you remember to say "That's not true about me?" How did it feel?**

**RP** What if an adult says to you, "You can't get anything right." Does that hurt?

**How do you handle it?**

**RP** What if an adult says, "You're a very bad girl." Does that hurt?

**Discussion:** If someone hurts you with his or her words, and it happens to you a lot, you should tell someone about that. Grown-ups sometimes need help with handling their problems just as kids do. You might need to be the person to ask for that help. Who would you tell?

## **Physical bullying**

**What if someone injures your body, like hitting you too hard, because they say you were bad?**

**Is that all right?**

**Would you tell someone?**

**What if someone spans you so hard it leaves bruises and marks that are there the next day.**

**Do you think that would be too much?**

**It's not all right for kids to be punished in a way that leaves bruises or marks that are there the next day.**

**If that happened to you, who would you tell?**

**Next time we're going to talk about how to tell so you really get help when you need it.**

## **ACTIVITY**

**Make a list (and draw pictures) of all the people you could talk to if you had a difficult problem.**



## DAY 5

### OBJECTIVES

To give permission to tell someone when they're being hurt  
To discuss resources for getting help  
To discuss the importance of truthfulness and thoroughness when telling  
To teach children how to tell effectively  
To introduce No More Secrets Rule  
To encourage children to tell and list resources for telling

### Teacher-Directed Discussion and Role-play

**We've talked about speaking up for yourself and being an advocate when you see other kids in trouble.**

**But what if you need to get adult help. Who are some of the people who can help you if you have a problem? Who loves you and cares about you?**

List people.

**Who else could you talk to if you were having a problem?**

List people.

**What if you had a problem and you tried to tell someone in your family, but they didn't listen or didn't understand what you were trying to say?**

*It's important that children learn how to effectively get attention when they need help. Often parents, teachers or other adults are too busy or preoccupied to really listen to what children have to say. Role-playing helps children learn appropriate ways to get attention when they need it.*

**[RP] I need someone to help me role-play the steps of getting someone's attention**

*NOTE. Role-playing this is fun and involves several steps. Allow them to do all the things they normally do that are ineffective so they can see how funny they are before you introduce steps 2 - 7.*

**1. Try to get someone's attention when they're doing something else. Talk when they are not listening, pull on the person's clothes, and put your face in their face. (All of these are more annoying than effective.)**

**2. Actually get someone's attention by asking for what you need: "Please stop reading and look at me, I have something important to tell you."**

3. The person actually stops what they're doing and looks at the child.
4. Child says what needs to be said using the three elements of communication.
  - Eye contact
  - Say exactly what you need to say
  - Consistent body language
5. The person understands and does something about the problem.
6. Also practice having the person not be interested or not helping.
7. Finally, practice having the child go and tell someone else.

**RP** Now who wants to help me put this into practice?

What if someone who is taking care of you is always mean to you? She pinches you and twists your ears to make you do what she wants you to do. You want to tell your mom. What would you say and do if she was reading a book?

Role-play getting attention and telling,

**RP** What if your grandmother is really crabby and yells at you every day when she gets home from work? You're upset and don't know what to do. You want to tell your aunt, but she's always watching the television. How would you get her attention and what would you say?

*Pretend to be watching television and have the child ask you to stop and look at her.*

**RP** What if your uncle yells at you all the time when you're visiting, telling you "you're stupid." Who would you tell?

What if your dad says, "Oh, he's always like that, just ignore him?" Would you tell someone else? Who?

If the grown-up doesn't understand or help you with your problem, who else could you tell?

# No More Secrets Rule

Kids have lots of rules. One rule that is important for us to learn is the No More Secrets Rule.

The new rule says: we're not going to have Secrets anymore!

If someone asks you to keep a secret, you're going to say, "No, I'm going to tell."

Surprises are okay! Surprises are things that get told pretty soon and usually make people happy.

After school, you'll get a letter to take home to discuss the No More Secrets Rule with your family.

## Getting help

Can the school help with problems at home?

*Most young children think school problems are for school and home problems are for home. They rarely think of overlapping their resources.*

Can your family help with problems at school or at the neighbors?

Do your teachers care about what happens to you at home?

What grown-ups do you have in your life that care about what happens to you wherever you are?

So, you really have lots of people who care about you that you could talk to.

Why is it important to always tell the truth when you're asking for help?

*Possible discussion points: importance of honesty, consequences of lying (both current and future), impact of lying on the person you've lied about.*

Whenever you have something you need to talk about, a problem that you need help with, if the first person you tell doesn't believe you, you need to keep telling until someone does,

In the same way I help teach you new things, there are grownups that help other grownups with their problems so they don't have to feel so bad.

But, if you don't tell, no one will know and they won't be able to help.

## **Conclusion**

**Having a community where we are kind to each other, where we treat each other with respect, where no one gets hurt is a job we need to keep working on.**

**Raise your hand if you promise to keep being an advocate, for yourself and for your friends. It will take every single one of us to be sure we are standing up for ourselves, for each other and making sure we don't have bullying in our community.**

**As your teacher, I promise to be someone you can come to with problems, that I will help us have a community without bullies.**

## **Take Home**

No More Secrets Handout

# No More Secrets Rule

The No More Secrets rule is an agreement you can make with your family stating that you won't keep secrets anymore (not even in the family) and if asked to keep a secret, your children will say "No, we don't keep secrets in our family and I'm going to tell." Younger children can simply say, "No, I'm going to tell."

Surprises are okay. Surprises are things that make people happy that get told sooner or later, whereas secrets are never told. Children quickly learn the difference, and by age four can respond to a request for secrecy about a birthday gift with "That's not a secret, it's a surprise."

Young children often confuse secrecy with whispering. Explain to them that telling something you only want one person to hear is different from keeping a secret. A secret is when they promise not to tell anyone else.

The No More Secrets rule does not say everyone must know everything. It says your children will not agree to keep something in particular from anyone else in particular.

By age five or six, children can learn that there are many ways to be asked to keep a secret. They enjoy making a game of trying to trick Mom and Dad into keeping a secret without using the word secret. For example, what if someone says any of the following: "This is just between you and me." "Do you promise not to tell anyone else" "you don't need to tell your mom and dad, I'll tell them later." "We won't tell them about our little game"? Your children should respond to all of these requests by saying, "No, I don't keep secrets and I'm going to tell."

By age seven or eight, secrecy is such an integral part of children's lives with their friends that they are reluctant to give it up. This includes friendship clubs, secret bonds, oaths, pacts, etc. Essentially, we're allowing secrecy with peers and discouraging it with anyone older.

If a request for secrecy, whether or not the word secret is actually used, seems confusing or odd or compromising, one option open to older children is to say "I really don't like keeping secrets and I don't want to start now," or "I don't like this idea, let's do something else," or "I'd like to go home now."

**Privacy is not the same as secrecy.** Privacy means you can be by yourself or keep something to yourself. Secrecy means you're bound not to tell. **Privacy respects individual needs. Secrecy creates shame and keeps children from getting help when they need it. It's important that children know the difference.**

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