

## Be Upstanding

According to the [PEW Internet Research Center](#), “90% of social media-using teens who have witnessed online cruelty say they have ignored mean behavior on social media, and more than a third (35%) have done this frequently.” This is unfortunate, because according to [DoSomething.org](#), **more than half the time bullying stops within ten seconds of someone intervening**. It is critical to teach students *what they can do* should they witness cruelty, online or off. In this lesson students learn how to become “upstanders.”

Key Standards—Common Core ELA, 5th: RI.5, RI.5.2, RI.5.4, RI.5.8, RI.5.10, RF.5, RF.5.4, RF.5.4.a, RF.5.4.c, W.5, W.5.3, W.5.3.a, W.5.3.b, W.5.3.d, W.5.3.e, W.5.4, W.5.9, W.5.9.b, SL.5, SL.5.1, SL.5.1.a, SL.5.1.b, SL.5.1.c, SL.5.2, L.5, L.5.4, L.5.4.a, L.5.6. 6th: RI.6, RI.6.1, RI.6.2, RI.6.3, RI.6.4, RI.6.7, W.6, W.6.3, W.6.3.a, W.6.3.b, W.6.3.d, W.6.3.e, W.6.4, SL.6, SL.6.1, SL.6.1.a, SL.6.1.b, SL.6.1.c, L.6, L.6.4, L.6.4.a, L.6.4.d, L.6.6. ISTE: 2a, 2b. CASEL: 1a, 1d, 1e, 3a, 3b, 3d, 4c, 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e, 5f.

### Learning Objectives

Students will...

- Understand that many people play a role in cyberbullying.
- Learn the difference between a “bystander” and “upstander.”
- Explore strategies for standing up for others, online and off.



### Introducing The Lesson

Remind students that cyberbullying, digital drama, and even teasing, can feel hurtful to the target of these behaviors. But one advantage of the online world is that when bullying happens there, it becomes **visible**. This should make it easier for others to step in to assist the target and/or put a stop to the cruelty.

### The Lesson

1. Explain that everyone who witnesses cruel behavior plays a role, even if he or she is not directly involved. These roles include the following (have students record):

- **TARGET:** Someone being bullied.
- **BULLY:** Someone doing the bullying.
- **BYSTANDER:** Someone who observes bullying (online or off) but ignores it.

## The Lesson, continued

2. Though not always present in a cyberbullying situation, there is another very important role:

### UPSTANDER

- **Someone not involved with the incident, but who steps in to help anyway.**
- **Someone who empathizes with the target, letting them know they care.**
- **Someone who encourages the target to talk to a trusted adult.**

3. Be sure students understand what the word “empathize” means.” Tell them it comes from the word “empathy” and have them record its meaning:

### EMPATHIZE

- **To imagine the feeling that someone else is experiencing.**

4. Ask students to think of a time when they may have empathized with another, and ask for volunteers to share examples.

5. Tell students that being an upstander does not mean you have to stand up to a bully. Explain that for some students it may be uncomfortable to do so, and it might even escalate the situation further. Tell them there are other ways to be upstanders. For example, they could show kindness or give comfort to the target. Or, they could turn to a trusted adult and seek help.

6. Show students an example of an entire school community that *empathized* with a classmate who had been bullied. They become upstanders by showing kindness to the target. Screen [Video 1].

## Activity

Read the story that follows aloud to the class. Ask students to write an ending, or better yet, to draw a comic strip that completes the story. Their stories/comic strips must include all the people who play a role: the target; the bully/bullies; the bystanders. Most importantly, their stories/comic strips should include an upstander. They should explain/describe what their upstander does. Use the Student Packet provided.

## Goal

The purpose of this lesson is for students to know how to be an upstander. They should understand that if/when they witness bullying, online or off, they can step in to help by standing up to the bully, giving comfort to the target, or seeking aid from a trusted adult.



## How To Be An Upstander

A group of kids in sixth grade like to ride skateboards and some are pretty good at it. But Luke is just a beginner. One day while practicing at home Luke sets up his phone to record himself trying a new trick. Unfortunately everything goes wrong and he crashes, looking pretty ridiculous.

Luke sends this video to Jerry. Without asking Luke's permission, Jerry posts the video on a social networking site. Soon a bunch of kids from school, and even some strangers, see the video and post mean comments like "FAIL!," "Lame Luke," "Loser," and more. When Luke goes to school the next day, some kids point and laugh at him. Luke is hurt and embarrassed.

Can you complete this story?

Here is the same story as a cartoon strip (created by Dirk Tiede, Cyber Civics Teacher at Waldorf School at Moraine Farm):





## **Your Task:**

In your book, write a paragraph or draw a comic strip to tell/show what happens next. Be sure your story or comic strip includes people who play *all* of these roles:

***The target***

***The bully or bullies***

***The bystanders***

***An upstander (or upstanders)***

Your story or comic strip must explain what an *upstander* does in this situation. As you complete the story, think about these questions:

- What could the upstander say or do to show support for the target?
- What could the upstander say to others who viewed the video and left cruel comments?
- How could the upstander involve a trusted adult?





## TERMS TO KNOW

### **TARGET:**

Someone being bullied.

### **BULLY:**

Someone doing the bullying.

### **BYSTANDER:**

Someone who observes bullying (online or off) but ignores it.

### **UPSTANDER:**

Someone not involved with the incident, but who steps in to help anyway.

Someone who empathizes with the target, letting them know they care.

### **EMPATHIZE:**

To imagine the feeling that someone else is experiencing.