



# Free to Be Assembly

## Creating Bully-Free Communities

Planning Packet &  
Guide for schools



SHOPPE

*Building Character  
and Peace*

Dear Principals, Teachers, and Staff;

We are proud to present the first part of the “Free To Be” assembly series at your school. Our presentation will give your students the skills they need to deal with bullying for many years to come. Our goal is to engage them in such a way that they have an experience around the effects of bullying from being bullied, to doing the bullying. From this experience you will walk away with specific strategies to end this and make a commitment to create the best learning environment for everyone.

**Here are some of the concepts the assembly will teach:**

- ★ Set of Tools for dealing with bullying
- ★ Set of Tools for stopping yourself from bullying
- ★ Understanding why we bully
- ★ Compassion
- ★ Posters/bookmarks for everyone with all the tools
- ★ Whole school agreement that we will no longer allow any type of bullying

In this packet you will find resources to continue working on this problem in a progressive and comprehensive manner. There are things to do before we come and present as well as strategies and activities to do after we leave. We know from experience that coming in for one day will not eradicate bullying, but at the same time we believe we will have set you up to not only have the skills but a common language to succeed as a whole school. We look forward to working with you to build a peaceful and safe school!!

Sincerely,

*Joseph Savage and Vicki Abadesco!*

Founders of Soul Shoppe

# **Free to Be Packet**

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# Before the Assembly!



## Here is your Checklist before we come!

- Present “Free To Be” packet to teachers in staff meeting at least one week before assembly
- Make sure all teachers know the time and date of the assembly (send several reminders if needed)
- Secure room for that time (we will need at least a half hour set up time before the students attend).
- Make sure screen is pulled down or set up.
- If you have a microphone have it set up on a stand ready to go.
- Have floor swept and clean so students are comfortable sitting down. Have chairs out for the teachers.
- Try and get the yard duties and other staff scheduled to attend, especially anyone who deals with the children after bullying incidents, (principal, secretary, cafeteria, counselor, psychologists, etc.).



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### **Pre “FREE TO BE”-EVERYONE CAN WIN**

*Purpose:* To identify ways that everyone can win.

*Materials:* Stop and Breathe poster

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#### **Enroll**

- How many of you have ever seen or been involved in a argument, conflict or fight?
- How many of you saw where both people lost the conflict? One person won and another lost? Both people won?

#### **Action**

- Have 2-4 volunteers come up and briefly describe their conflicts to the class.
- Review the following after each volunteer:
  - ★ What happened?
  - ★ What feelings did each person have?
  - ★ How did the conflict end? Did both people get what they wanted?
  - ★ Was the conflict a lose/lose, win/lose or win/win?
- Have students discuss examples of lose/lose, win/lose and win/win for each conflict.

#### **Share**

- Introduce “Stop and Breathe” poster (Stop, Breathe, Think, Choose, Act, Cheer) and go through the hand motions.
- When you find yourself in a conflict at school or at home following these steps:
  - Stop** – when you realize you are angry or upset in anyway. (hand up like a stop sign)
  - Breathe** – we think better when we breathe (hand on chest and take a deep breath)
  - Think** – this is when you can think about how to make this a win/win situation. (finger to brain)
  - Choose** – make your best choice so everyone wins. (thumb up)
  - Act** – put your choice into action. (fist in air, pull down)
  - Cheer** – celebrate your decision! (pat on the back)
- In what ways does Stop and Breathe help us to have win/win situations?

#### **Evaluate**

- Remind students to always go for the win/win! Practice reviewing conflicts and discussing more options for win/win.
- Review Stop and Breathe on a regular basis.

# STOP & BREATHE

Stop: What am I doing?

Breathe: Take a deep breath.

Think: What are my choices?

Choose: I'm going to make the best choice where everyone wins!

Act!: on the choice.

Cheer: Good job!



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### **Pre “FREE TO BE” – CLASS MEETING: WHAT IS BULLYING?**

**Purpose:** For students to begin to discuss the issue of bullying before the assembly.

**Materials:** none (please do this lesson after the “Everyone Can Win” lesson)

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#### **Enroll:**

Ask:

- What is a bully?
- Why do other students bully?
- How do children bully?

#### **Action:**

- Discuss the various kinds of bullying that go on in your school. In this discussion remind the students that we won’t be using any names or pointing fingers.
- Role-play some situations that they discussed and figure out another way to handle the circumstance using the “Stop and Breathe”.

#### **Share:**

- Have a teacher led class discussion on the various reasons that kids do bully. In the assembly we will be introducing the concept of a “Full Balloon”. This metaphor relates that a person with a full balloon is someone who has so many negative feelings inside them that they are ready to explode. They usually explode or leak out their balloons on others. Using their ideas from the enrolling question “Why do other students bully” talk about the following reasons:
  - Gain power over others
  - Someone bullied them
  - Be cool or popular
  - Things are not going well at home
  - Act like someone else that they think is cool
  - Think it is fun
  - Low self-esteem and unresolved social issues

#### **Evaluate:**

- Let the students know about the upcoming assembly and that the whole school will be making a commitment to end this problem. Let them know that it will take the whole community, working together, to make sure that no bullying happens.

# After the Assembly!!

# Compact

Below is a sample of the compact that each student will receive to take home to their parents or guardian. It is a whole school commitment to use the tools we learned to keep our school bully free. Each student will read it with their parent or guardian, sign it, and return to the teacher. This will be introduced and reinforced during the assembly. The compact itself will be given to the teachers to pass out to the students. We will work out the logistics of that transaction during our visit.

## **Free to Be**

**Our school is a bully-free community.**

I agree to do my part to stop bullying.

If I'm being bullied, I will use F.R.E.E. to stay safe.

If I see someone else being bullied, I will get help.

If I catch myself bullying, I will stop and ask for help.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent: \_\_\_\_\_



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### **FREE TO BE F.R.E.E.**

**Purpose:** For students to review and practice the “anti-bullying” techniques.

**Materials:** *posters and bookmarks from the assembly*

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**Enroll:**

- Review Free to Be Assembly. What do you remember most?

**Action:**

- Review F.R.E.E. – these are the techniques we learned to stop bullying.
- How many of you have seen someone bullied?
- These are skills to use when you are being bullied:
  - **Flow:** don't let it bother you – what are examples of “flow”?
  - **Radar:** find a way to stay safe – what are examples of “radar”?
  - **Express:** stand your ground and speak up - what are examples of “express”?
  - **Enough:** know when its time to ask for help - what are examples of “enough”?
- Ask for 1 volunteer for a role play. Teacher plays a person bullying and student using FLOW to stop or get away from the bullying.
- Have students get a partner and practice the 4 FREE techniques.

**Share:**

- Have students share which technique they will use.
- Have students share other techniques that work with bullying.
- Discuss the difference between tattling and telling.
  - Tattling = getting someone in trouble
  - Telling = getting someone out of trouble
- Discuss the importance of safety in helping someone with a full balloon.

**Evaluate:**

- Practice techniques 1-2 times a month to remind students that we are a bully free community!



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## **THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A BULLY**

**Purpose:** For students to review and practice ways to stop themselves from bullying.

**Materials:** *posters and bookmarks from assembly*

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### **Enroll:**

- Review Free to Be Assembly. What do you remember most?
- Review ways that you can stop yourself from bullying.
- Review the concept that there is no such thing as a bully- and why.

### **Action:**

- How many of you have seen someone bully someone else?
- These are skills to stop yourself from bullying. Brainstorm different ways to do each of the following:
  - **Walk Away-** when you see a situation where you know you will be a part of it, walk away.
  - **Do Something Else-** go play, talk to someone, do something where no one gets hurt.
  - **Stop and Breathe-** stop and take a deep breath and think about what you really want.
  - **Ask For Help-** talk to a friend or an adult that you know will listen.
  - **Empty Your Balloon-** find a way to empty the feelings in a healthy way.
- Ask for several volunteers for a role play for each of the strategies. Students play different parts practicing ways to prevent themselves from bullying.
- Have students get a partner and review all the different ways to prevent yourself from bullying.

### **Share:**

- Have students share which technique they will use.
- Have students share other techniques that work with bullying.
- Discuss the importance of safety in helping someone with a full balloon.

### **Evaluate:**

- Practice techniques 1-2 times a month to remind students that we are a bully free community!

# Whole School & Classroom Activities To use After Free to Be Assembly

## **Appreciation Notes**

Have a day to write notes of thanks and appreciation to others in the classroom. Support students to master the life skill of appreciation!

## **Youth Council**

Allow students to participate in decision making activities by creating a Youth Council that meets on a regular basis to give school staff important feedback about what students are really thinking and feeling.

## **Safety Norms**

Brainstorm with students classroom or school norms that everyone can agree on. Have students participate in drawing and/or writing the norms out and have every student sign the norms in agreement to honor them.

## **Active Listening**

Create time and space throughout the school for students to learn and practice active listening. When students have opportunities to share their feelings in a safe environment they are less likely to act out their feelings in negative ways that can potentially hurt others and/or themselves.

## **Peacemakers**

Develop and train a core group of student Peacemakers who will support the school to resolve problems in a positive way.

## **Peer Tutors**

Train a small group of older students to help younger students with reading or spelling. This helps to develop leadership qualities with students and allows older students to take on more responsibility.

## **Acts of Kindness**

Announce monthly or weekly “kindness” challenges. Have students or classrooms take on a kindness challenge they will do for someone else. Students can write letters to the elderly, raise money for a cause, create/make a gift for a staff person or sing songs to kids in the hospital. Create a fun acknowledgment for all who participate.

## **Suggestion Box**

Create a box for input on improvements or changes students would like to see.

## **Recognition**

Provide opportunities for students to be acknowledged – through a bulletin board, daily announcements or newsletters.

# The Power of Positive Language

## Creating a Positive & Safe Learning Environment

In order for us to start to create bully free communities we have to construct an environment where the students feel safe to be themselves and express their feelings. One of the many strategies in doing this is using positive language. Often times we find ourselves telling the students what *not* to do rather than what to do. We often reinforce the behavior we don't want rather than the behavior we want. Here are some simple ideas that will help guide you into giving your students the means to create the best learning environment.

- Use non-directive commands, “We...”, “Our...”, “Let’s....”
  - Avoid telling the students, “I want you to...” “You need to...”
  - Use inclusive phrases like, “We will be looking at...” “Let’s turn to page...” “Our rules at the school.....”
- Direct their focus to what you want accomplished.
  - Often times we focus on erroneous things
  - Be specific, clear, and precise
  - Say what it is that you want
- Start with the simplest things first
  - Give one direction at a time
- Ask them questions that are directed toward the goal.
  - Ask them what might be a better way to get their needs
  - Stay away from commanding them to do something unless it is absolutely necessary.
  - Have them repeat back the ideas.
- When correcting a behavior, ask them what they could have done different
  - Always try and guide into the better choice
  - Ask them what they were feeling before they did a particular behavior and what are better ways to direct those feelings.
  - Stay away from reinforcing the negative behavior (recognize it and get off of it and on to the positive behavior as fast as possible)
  - Practice the positive behavior before moving on.

