

## Anti-Bullying Workshop Evaluation

This document briefly summaries the main points to emerge from the evaluation forms completed by pupils and teachers following the anti-bullying workshop held in the NICCY offices on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2006.

### Pupil Evaluation

A total of 38 pupils (19 boys and 13 girls) the majority of whom (78%) were 13-14 years participated in the anti-bullying workshop. Just under three quarters of these pupils (72%) rated the overall event as 'excellent'. When asked to specify which particular part of the day they enjoyed most, the play on bullying and the workshops were rated as the most popular with two out of three pupils (64%) citing one or both activities as the most enjoyable event/s of the day. Just under one in five pupils (25%) rated either the final feedback session and/or the discussion which took place prior to the workshop activity as their most enjoyable part of the day and 10% of pupils rated the research findings presented at the start of the workshop as their favoured activity.

When asked to explain why they had found a particular aspect of the day enjoyable, the most popular response was that the information on bullying had been presented in a fun and interesting way and that the workshops enabled pupils to talk about bullying with different students from different schools. This may, to some extent, have depersonalised the issue of bullying encouraging pupils to talk more openly when expressing their attitudes. Typical comments included:

*I enjoyed the day because I got to express my feelings on bullying and it was interesting to hear what other schools do about bullying*

*This is a good way to show how bullying works.*

*Bullying is not just about calling people names. Sometimes you are bullied and you don't think you are.*

Question 5 asked pupils to write one important message they had taken from the event. The most popular message cited by 56% of pupils was to 'Stop the bully' or 'Don't Bully'. Another popular message was to 'tell someone'. Other messages pupils took away from the days included:

*Bullying is not just pushing*



*Everyone is affected by bullying*

*If you know of a friend or family member who is getting bullied it's alright to tell.*

*You do not have to stand for bullying you can do something to stop it.*

One of NICCY's priorities is to ensure that children and young people are empowered to voice their opinion on issues which affect them and that their views are given due weight in decision making processes. To this end, question 6 asked pupils to tick 'yes' or 'no' as to whether they felt their ideas had been listened to and valued. All 32 pupils replied 'yes' to this question and when asked to explain their answer, the most popular response was that pupils were keen to listen to one another and that 'everyone seemed to pay attention'.

Other comments included:

*I feel that everyone was valued equally and got a chance to say what they wanted*

*Our leader stopped and listened to us*

*We all felt like we could say our own ideas without being told they were right or wrong*

The final question asked pupils if there was anything they would change to improve the workshops. Encouragingly, most pupils who answered this question wrote very positive messages such as 'Nope, it was brill' or 'Make the workshops longer and do every workshop activity with the groups. Other suggestions included making the workshops longer and involving larger groups of students

*'Bring it to the BBC'*

*It's good to get people to talk and people who have been bullied to talk too*

*Make more connections with other schools so you are more familiar with the people in your group.*

*Have older students involved*



## Teacher Evaluation

Ten teachers from 10 post-primary schools across Northern Ireland participated in the workshop. Two thirds of these teachers rated the event as 'good' and one third rated the event as 'excellent'. Like the pupils, the Rainbow Factory play on bullying was rated the most enjoyable part of the day (50% of teachers rated the play as a highlight) with the discussion group being rated the second most enjoyable part of the day followed by the feedback session and the research findings. When asked to explain their why they had rated one particular aspect of the day as enjoyable, most teachers commented the opportunity to learn about the strategies other schools were using to deal with bullying. Other comments included:

*This was up to date, clear and effective. I think it would be useful of the play was done in schools.*

*Excellent play – the message was extremely clear a very enjoyable and useful performance.*

*Pupil's involvement in the feedback session was very enjoyable and worthwhile. Play was very informative about what constitutes bullying.*

When asked to rate how useful they had found the roundtable discussion with other teachers, 86% of teachers rated this as an 'extremely useful' exercise. The main reason for this appeared to be because the discussion afforded an opportunity for teachers to learn about the strategies other schools had put into place to deal with bullying and to reflect on which of these strategies had worked well and which had not. In their comments the emphasis was very much on the need to be proactive rather than reactive when dealing with bullying. Typical responses included:

*There were some good ideas for dealing with bullying discussed.*

*It was good to hear about other procedures and practices used in other schools plus hearing about the cd's and other web related resources which relate to bullying.*

*I found the event useful for raising awareness among pupils and empowering them to speak out against bullying towards themselves and others*



Question 5 asked teachers if they could write one message they took away from the event. By far the most popular response was the need to include pupils in the drawing up of a school anti-bullying policy as bullying is an issue which can have wide repercussions for the entire school community. All six of the teachers who answered this question made reference to the need to listen to pupils and their ideas about tackling bullying through meaningful consultation. Given that main message pupils took from the day's events was to stop the bully it would appear that teachers who actively and genuinely listen to what pupils have to say around the issue of bullying maybe in a much more powerful position to proactively tackle this issue in schools than teacher's who do not engage with pupils. Typical comments summing up the main message they had gained from the day's proceedings included:

*Pupil's views are very important especially with issues that directly involve them.*

*The message I took away today was the importance of empowering pupils to participate in practices.*

*Be proactive rather than reactive.*

The final question asked what could be improved about the day's events. Only four teachers had suggestions about what could be improved upon and these comments were mostly very positive. They included:

*Discussion of research findings could be more interactive*

*More pupils could be involved and longer sessions.*

*Less time on research and more time on listening to pupils.*

*This was an excellent workshop. It was great to see all the pupils from different schools working together. Thank you.*

