

# Teachers' Resource Pack

for

School Performance Tours

# My Friends and I

## A note from the writer

During the months I spent researching and writing the show I was reminded again and again about the seriousness of bullying. In one of the more elite Sydney High Schools a student was stabbed by another student. Not surprisingly the crime was motivated by bullying.

The situation in Primary schools can get just as ugly. In my role as a foster parent I witnessed a seven year old student, bully his teacher, both mentally and physically to the point where the teacher took stress leave and the student was suspended from school for longer and longer periods.

A friend, a lawyer working in legal aid, told me of a recent case she worked on, of a shooting in a high school in which the perpetrator was not just the victim of bullying at school but also at home from his elder brother.

But it is always the personal experience which affects us the most and it was interesting to read that writer after writer on the subject spoke of the Victim's need for revenge on the Bully. Boy did I identify with that. I cannot imagine where I'd be now if I had carried out even a fraction of the revenge I fantasized about taking out on my tormentors in high school in Queensland in 1969.

OK, so I came to the project with passion, but what could I hope to achieve in 45minutes. What were the show's objectives? I came up with the following.

Offer a step plan (that kids could understand) to deal with bullies; present a positive program that will compliment and support your primary school's anti-bullying program; and above all it had to be entertaining.

## Research Material

and the basic strategies they suggest

<http://www.kidshelp.com.au>

This site changed since I first wrote these notes. Originally of all the websites I looked at I thought this to be the best. It is still worth a look.

[www.schoolperformancetours.com.au](http://www.schoolperformancetours.com.au)

**Once there click on "Other Stuff" , "Kids stuff" then "Bullying". It's gives clear, to the point information. There are also good guide lines for teachers when dealing with, understanding and helping the bully.**

**Bully Busting** by Evelyn M. Field Finch Publishing Sydney

- Deal with your feelings
- Understand why you are bullied
- Build your self-esteem
- Become a confident communicator
- Create your own power pack
- Develop a support network

Evelyn M Field also has a website [www.bullying.com.au](http://www.bullying.com.au)

There is provision on Evelyn's website for students to submit their own stories.

**Back Off Bully** by Mark Dobson Published by DoubleDay

A very easy book to read, concise with good information.

- How do you stand?
- Don't react
- Don't argue, just agree
- Don't throw stones
- Block their path
- The secret weapon: The journal

[www.nobully.org.nz/advicek.htm](http://www.nobully.org.nz/advicek.htm) I liked this site, and think it is useful for a couple of reasons.

1. It is, age appropriate for primary students, to the point and has the basic strategies.
2. It is a New Zealand website so making Australian children aware that bullying is not something that they alone suffer, the problem is world wide.

# Pre-show activities

## 1. An exercise to do with the class

The Law of Averages - (This idea comes from the Book "Bully Busting" Page 81)

What you'll need - DICE, PAPER, PENCIL.

- If you can manage dice, pencil and paper for each student the exercise is much more fun for everyone.

- Or have the students work in pairs, one rolls the dice, the other keeps the tally.

This is a great way to show students that persistence pays.

While their first, second or even third or fourth attempt at stopping a Bully may not work, the law of averages suggests that persistence pays off.

In the game of dice everyone wants to roll a six. Six is the best, but no one rolls a six every time, but sixes do come up with persistence.

On a piece of paper have students write down the numbers one to six (one under the other down the left side of the page).

Now get them to roll the dice ten times placing a mark along side the number they get each time.

Check with the class to see who has scored sixes. The rule of averages - they should all have at least one (six).

But don't forget Murphy's Law (If it can go wrong it will) so if someone hasn't thrown a six, get the class to all throw another 10 times, and compare scores. Keep going until everyone has thrown at least one (six).

Persistence pays! Even Persistence against bullies!

## 2. Explore with your students the strategies for dealing with bullies.

Does your school suggest a strategy for students to use? With older students discuss the strategies offered on some of the websites listed above, how do these differ from the strategies of the school. Do they contradict or are they complementary of each other. Questions to discuss with students: what is the opposite to bullying, is it possible to be friends with everyone, what is the different between being friends with someone and being friendly to them,

## 3. Reading and Listen

The idea is to familiarise or reacquaint the audience to rhyme.

In the show an updated quirky version of the Cinderella story is told in verse. The idea came after reading the Roald Dahl *Revolting Rhymes*, which I found kids just love. My two favourites from the book are Little Red

Riding Hood and The Three Little Pigs. I adore the way he connects the two stories. If reading to your students from *Revolting Rhymes* be warned that the Roald Dahl version of Cinderella contains the word slut, our Cinderella story in the show does not. Apart from being written eight beats to the line and rhyming the word Cinderella with Feller, there is no similarity between the Cinderella story in *My Friends and I* and the Dahl version.

## Post-show activities

### Discuss the performance.

Questions for back in class while the play is fresh in the students and your mind.

1. Did Louise (the puppet girl) ignore the Bully when he called her friend names? *Ans. No.*
2. What did Louise do? *Ans. She joined in the bullying and called her friend the name.*
3. What did her friend do? *Ans. She and their other friend ignored Louise.*
4. How did this make Louise feel? *Ans. Very upset because they refused to talk to her until she apologised and they forgave her.*
5. Do you think Robbie was being bullied? This is definitely a discussion for the older grades. When Louise's mother asks "Who is Robbie?" Louise tells her that "He is new and that nobody likes him". Why does Louise's mother get upset? *Ans. Because she thinks that the other students haven't given Robbie a chance to make friends and because of this he has started bullying.*
6. When Louise's mum goes to speak to the school counsellor, what does the counsellor say he will do? *Ans He has spoken to Robbie's parents and he is going to help Robbie make some friends at the school.*

**Revise** the anti bullying strategies used in *My Friends and I* with students.

Bully proof yourself.

Put another way:- Don't give the bully what they want - don't get upset

1. Warn - talk firm

2. Walk away
  3. Tell a trusted adult
- and when telling give all the facts, the What When Where and Who

What was done/said?  
When was it done?  
Where was it done?  
Who did it? Who saw and hear it?

With Older students talk about the advantage of keeping a written record of what happens, and the need to write it down as soon after it has happened as possible.

## **The Characters in the Show:**

Q. Why were there puppets in the show?

A. Lots of reasons. To make the show visually more interesting. To give the performer other characters (people) to interact with in the play.

Q. How many Characters can the class remember from the show?

Q. How many of them were puppets?

A. Louise, Mr Nancarrow, Robbie.

Q. How many of them were represented by a mask.

A. Most of the characters in the Cinderella:- Cinderella, Dad, Step Mum 'Myrtle', the step sisters 'Daisy and Maize'

Q. How many characters did the performer play?

A. Lousie's Parent, Cinderella's Mum, the School Teacher, Great Aunt Glenda, the Policeman.

Q. What type / styles of puppets were used in the play?

\*hand puppet (Louise could be called a hand puppet

\* rod puppets (Mr Nancarrow 'the school principal'

\* humanette (Robbie was a humanette)

### **N.B. Requirements:**

An indoor area 3.5 square mts. A min ceiling height of 2.6mts. and good vehicle access.