

FOCUS GROUPS WITH STUDENTS

The aim of the focus groups is to openly explore the needs and perceptions of students in regards to school climate, causes and impact of bullying, sources of help and coping strategies used.

PARTICIPANTS

Recruitment and consent: All students in participating classes will be invited to take part. Letters describing the purpose of ENABLE focus groups and inviting participation will be sent to both parents and children; the letter for the child/adolescent will be shorter, and in child-friendly language. Both parent and child **will be asked to consent in writing** by jointly signing their agreement to participate in the focus groups and returning the form. For young children (<12 years) this can be more accurately regarded as giving **assent** rather than consent.

Participants: Students who show an interest in participating in focus groups and return the consent form will be split into groups.

Number of participants per group: 8-12 students

Number of groups per school: 1-3

Group composition criteria: students who have been involved in bullying episodes in various roles.

Location: in school

Time: 60-70' total

Facilitators/moderators: An experienced staff facilitator and **co-facilitator** or external facilitators will conduct the groups in school premises. The facilitator will lead the discussion, and the co-facilitator will operate the tape recorder, assist with the discussion and observe group dynamics. The key task of the facilitator will be to **guide and control the group, maximize interaction** between participants, and to maintain an atmosphere in which participants feel free to discuss.

TOPICS OF FOCUS GROUPS

A similar semi-structured template will be used both at pre- and post-assessment.

TOPICS:

- A. Understanding of bullying
- B. **Causes and impact of bullying**
- C. **School climate**
- D. **Sources of help and their efficacy**
- E. **Coping strategies** used and their perceived efficacy
- F. **How do students think bullying should be handled in schools**
- G. Any other pertinent issue/concern they would like to discuss.



empower children. eliminate bullying.

QUESTIONS (FACILITATORS MAY PRE-SELECT UP TO 10 QUESTIONS)

A. VIEWS/PERCEPTIONS

1. *What the words bullying/teasing/cyberbullying mean to students*
2. *How common and what forms does bullying take in your school*
3. *Who does it (no names but profiles)*
4. *Who knows (no names but roles), who students tell*
5. *What kids do or say to make other kids feel bad*

B. SCHOOL CLIMATE

6. *What are student interactions like in this school?*
7. *What does it feel like to be a student in this school? i.e. What is it like to walk around in this school?*
8. *How supported do students feel? Who do they receive support from?*

C. REASONS-IMPACT

9. *Why do you think some students pick on others?*
10. *Tell me a little about the kids who are most picked on/teased. How did they become the targets?*
11. *What are the role of emotions in bullying situations? (Describe)*
12. *From your own experience, what problems can bullying cause?*
13. *How do the kids who are bullied act after they've been bullied?*
14. *What does bullying do to boys and girls? (How does it impact on boys and girls?)*

D. SOLUTIONS- SEEKING HELP -COPING

15. *Who do kids in your school turn to when/if they are teased?*
16. *How helpful is this for them?*
17. *What do you think would be more helpful? What are some other ways that victimization can be handled?*
18. *What do you think should be done about bullying in schools?*
19. **Did you learn something new or useful about how to handle bullying instances in the past months? Please describe*
20. **Did you receive additional sources of support during the past few months? Please describe*

Closing question:

Of all the things we discussed, what to you is the most important? What would you like to discuss next time we meet"

*= Questions for MAY only