



Pilot Project
“Saugi mokykla” (“Safe School”)

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What is bullying?

Bullying is repeated deliberate behaviour of children and teenagers directed at weaker peers with the intention to cause physical or emotional pain. Bullying includes both verbal and non-verbal action hurtful to another person, such as name-calling, teasing, threatening, hitting, kicking, punching, shoving, slander, ignoring, taking things or money, exclusion from a group, etc.

Although we talk of the peculiarities of this phenomenon among children and teenagers, bullying also takes place in families and among adults at work. Bullying is confused with humour, but the essential difference between bullying and a joke is that the intention of bullying is to hurt or humiliate the other person.

The problem of bullying

The international study of Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) carried out in **2006** in 40 countries and investigating the spread of bullying indicates that the lowest percentage of boys who are bullied, bully others or are bullies and victims at the same time is in Sweden (8.6%) and the highest percentage is in Lithuania (45.2%). The percentage of girls is respectively 4.8% in Sweden and 35.8% in Lithuania.

The studies carried out in **2007** by Save the Children Sweden in the Baltic Sea countries (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Poland, St Petersburg area of Russian Federation) indicate that 15–25% of children are constantly bullied at school.

The research carried out in **2008** by TNS Gallup indicates that 22% of children in Lithuania have experienced physical violence at school (money, personal things, food was taken from 19% of children) and 65% of children have experienced other forms of bullying (13% are bullied constantly).

The data of World Health Organisation (WHO) of **2008** indicates that 26.50% of the girls and 27.97% of the boys have experienced bullying in Lithuania. Even 30.33% of the boys and 16.60% of the girls admitted they had bullied their friends.

The survey conducted by Vilnius University in **2009** indicated that Lithuanian children are unhappiest in Europe: up to 50% of 12-17 year old children have signs of depression; 41.7% of school-age children have issues related to mental health; 70% of children stated that they have experienced bullying both as victims and as bullies; around 20 children commit suicide in Lithuania every year.

The research carried out in 12 schools in 2010 by Save the Children Lithuania indicated that 52.42% of children experience bullying and 56.8% are bullying others.

Effect of bullying

A lot of studies were carried out on the effect of bullying. We may distinguish the effect on *the victim, the bully, and psychological climate of the school.*

The amount of negative effect of bullying greatly depends on the reaction of adults to this phenomenon, their support and help. Bullying is a risk factor for various mental health and behavioural problems. Only with the protective factors (family support, good social skills, teachers' help) can we expect the effect of bullying not to be severe. The fact that an adult does not feel significant effect of bullying experienced in childhood does not mean that bullying has no negative effect, more likely it is the psychological resistance of particular person that outweighed the negative effect of bullying.

Effect of bullying on the victim

- The children suffering from bullying often feel insecure and experience anxiety. Prolonged anxiety and state of fear are a significant factor of other disorders: depression and anxiety disorders.



Picture from Veliuona Antanas and Jonas Juška Secondary School of Jurbarkas District

- The children fallen victims to bullying often feel sad, depressed, lack self-confidence and self-esteem. They may feel helpless and think that the situation cannot be changed and bullying cannot be stopped.
- Sometimes the children who face constant bullying of their peers have suicidal thoughts. Bullying was first pointed out as a problem after 3 teenagers committed suicide in Norway and one of potential reasons was found to be constant harassment by the peers. The suicidal thoughts of children indicate helplessness, incapacity to solve the situations of bullying, and a high need of help (*Olweus D., Bullying at School. – Oxford, Blackwell, 1993*).
- One of possible effects is various psychosomatic symptoms: headaches, stomach-aches, nausea, sleep and eating disorders.
- Bullying can be one of the reasons for children to avoid school, skipping classes. Moreover, child's attentiveness and performance at school may be compromised, the child may find it difficult to study.
- Acquired helplessness is another effect of continual bullying. The child constantly suffering from bullying and unable to stop them learns that he/she is incapable to change the situation and thus, gives up and does not take any actions to defend himself/herself or get help. It is the acquired helplessness that makes it very difficult to help a child – it is difficult to make the child trust himself/herself and others and that the situation can be changed and bullying can be reduced.
- Violent reaction to the bullies is one of the ways chosen by children who experience bullying in order to stop it. The US Secret Service National Threat Assessment Centre found that 2/3 of shootings at schools are the victims' revenge to the bullies. It seems that such reaction of children victims is inadequate, but it is just behaviour arising from helplessness and not knowing how to react. It indicates the helplessness of children suffering from bullying: the children see no other ways to stop the bullying.

Effect of bullying on the bullies

In the long-run, bullying can turn into other types of aggressive or socially unacceptable behaviour at older age. According to the data of D. Olweus, 60% of the boys who have been active bullies at secondary school, committed at least one crime before they were 24, and 35-40% of them committed 3 or more crimes (*Olweus D., Bully/victim problems in school: Facts and intervention / European Journal of Psychology of Education. – 1997*).

The studies carried out in Sweden in 2009 indicated that 60% of bullies are accused of criminal offences by the age of 24. They also tend to consume more alcohol, skip classes, and if they do attend – their performance is far from brilliant.

Effect of bullying on the psychological climate of the school

- Decreased sense of security, satisfaction with school life.
- If there is no response to bullying or it is even approved, an attitude is formed that such behaviour is appropriate and acceptable. In the long-run, such attitude can enhance the scale of bullying and create less secure atmosphere. Moreover, bullying affects all children – not only those who are engaged in bullying or experience it, but also the observers.
- The value system becomes distorted: tolerance, help to others, friendliness, respect become behaviour that is not valued. Meanwhile, bullying becomes the behaviour that helps the children to become leaders, “occupy a high position” in class, be “valued” and respected.

Such transformation of values should raise concerns not only to school staff, but all people near the children. One of the most important things in school is to change the attitude of community towards bullying.

International project Friends Across Borders

In 2008-2010, NGO Save the Children and Bank Swedbank implemented the international project Friends Across Borders in Sweden, Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia.

The project sought to solve the **problem of bullying and violence** in school relevant to all countries.

Project activity included:

- prevention of bullying in schools;
- support to victims of bullying;
- publicising the problem and development of innovative methods for stopping bullying.

In Lithuania, the project was implemented by NGO Save the Children Youth Groups against Violence.

In three years of project implementation, 96 Groups (around 63,000 children and adults) participated in the project, around 200 seminars were conducted, 4,000 children and adults were trained, surveys were carried out in schools participating in the project, and information stands were installed. Practical aid on prevention of bullying in schools (DVD) for teachers and parents was prepared and distributed to all Lithuanian schools. 2 summer camps and 5 competitions for schools were organised.



NGO Save the Children Youth Groups against Violence

The Organisation has been implementing the project “Vaikų grupės prieš smurtą” (Youth Groups against Violence, hereinafter referred to as the “Groups”) in schools since 1996. The aim of the project is to create a safer environment for the children in schools and to fulfil the right of children to be protected against violence.

Developing the system of violence prevention in Lithuanian schools, the project contributes to national programmes for violence prevention and control in schools. It is done by establishing Youth Groups against Violence, which base their activity on the initiative and involvement of children.

NGO Save the Children Youth Groups against Violence were established in schools across Lithuania. The Groups consist of 5-10 students and an adult (leader) – the social pedagogue, teacher or psychologist employed by the school. The Groups participate in creating school projects, which ensure secure environment in the school, cooperate with school self-government bodies and local community, informs the school administration, teachers and parents of violence in school, take complaints and information from the students who experience or see violence.

The students of the Groups perform preventive activity, teach the younger children to communicate without violence, organise the training of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, organise competitions and olympiads, and develop websites.

The organisation Save the Children supports the Groups: organises training and seminars for Group leaders and children on child's and human rights, organises summer



Picture from Anykščiai Antanas Vienuolis Gymnasium

2. Organise preventive activity: teach non-violent communication skills, engage in socially significant activity;
3. Organise occupation of children, provide the conditions for creativity/self-expression of children, activate the children as members of school community, create a school attractive to children, a school that the children want to attend and participate in its life.

Pilot project “Safe School”

In order to ensure the quality and efficiency of NGO Save the Children Youth Groups against Violence activity as well as structure and planning of actions, the organisation invited the schools where the Youth Groups against Violence are operating and trained and strengthened them: prepared the leaders who would continue educative preventive activity independently, share their knowledge, practice and work methods, teach other schools in their area, which will be willing to ensure the safety of their students, and thus, publicise and expand the project “Safe School”.

The schools for the pilot project were selected based on their activeness, planned activity, and seeking to achieve the goals; they were the strongest and willing and capable of implementing the project.

This way, the pilot project “Safe School” was launched in January, 2010. At least 2 schools from the same area were selected to ensure closer cooperation, sharing good practice, and support between schools. In total, 4 areas of Lithuania, 12 schools, and 6,398 students participate in the project.



On stage one, project participants are 12 schools, 4 areas, ~6,400 students, and ~180 adults.

It is expected that *on stage two*, project participants will be 36 schools, 8 areas, ~19,000 students, and ~550 adults.

The pilot project is implemented according to the example of school curriculum against violence and bullying approved by the Swedish government and mandatory to all schools of Sweden. The percentage of children experiencing bullying in Sweden is currently 5-7%.



Picture from Šiauliai Vocational Training Centre Department of Domestic Services

The goal of the pilot project “Safe School”

Short-term goal: pilot project “Safe School” in 12 schools of Lithuania after 2010.

Medium-term goal: project “Safe School” in Lithuanian schools, where NGO Save the Children Youth Groups against Violence are operating (117).

Long-term goal: Mandatory preventive action plan/programme against bullying and violence, approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania in all schools of Lithuania. The Law on Schools..

Participants of the pilot project “Safe School”

Anykščiai District Kavarskas Secondary School,
Anykščiai Antanas Vienuolis Gymnasium,
Rokiškis District Obeliai Gymnasium,
Rokiškis Juozas Tūbelis Gymnasium,
Šiauliai Juventa Basic School,
Šiauliai Zokniai Basic School,
Šiauliai Vocational Training Centre,
Šilutė Martynas Jankus Basic School,
Šakiai District Sintautai Basic School,
Jurbarkas District Veliuona Antanas and Jonas Juška Secondary School,
Jurbarkas Naujamiestis Secondary School,
Vilnius Simonas Stanevičius Secondary School.



Pilot project “Safe School” implemented in the Districts (marked in red on the map).

In 2010, the Action Plan of the pilot project “Safe School” was implemented

Pilot schools undertook and implemented Action Plan 2010:

- a) Spring 2010: meeting of the pilot project participants (representatives) in Vilnius, where the action plans of the pilot project were introduced to the representatives of participating schools, the first tasks were discussed, and the good practice of education system in Sweden was shared.
- b) Spring 2010: a survey conducted in schools participating in the pilot project to establish the situation of bullying. More information in *Appendix 2*.
- c) Two meetings independently organized by schools of the pilot project in spring in 4

areas for establishing the contacts between project participants, sharing good practice, planning, and raising motivation.

d) Introductory seminar/project introduction in the schools of 4 areas, where the aims and plan of the pilot project were introduced, the situation of bullying and violence in Lithuania and abroad was discussed, general results of the survey on establishing the situation of bullying conducted by the project participants in spring 2010 were introduced, the Swedish education system was introduced, and the good practice of schools in Sweden was shared with school leaders, teachers, and students (199 participants).

e) Analysis of the obtained results of the survey on establishing the situation of bullying in schools and drawing up a preventive action plan, which was the responsibility of and organised by the ABC councils in schools (more information in *Appendix 1*).

f) Summer camp for the pilot project schools (students and leaders), where the self-knowledge and leadership skills were developed and strengthened, motivation was raised, team-building was taught, and good practice of schools was shared.



Picture from the summer camp of the pilot project "Safe School"

g) Fall 2010: the meeting of pilot project participants (representatives) in Vilnius to discuss and assess preventive action plans in schools, to discuss the activity of the project in the fall and to distribute the tasks.

h) Two meetings independently organized by schools of the pilot project in spring in 4 areas for sharing good practice of project participants and planning.

i) Seminars of Evaldas Karmaza, the Psychologist for the Institute of Psychodrama and Expressive Therapy for the leaders and teachers of schools in 4 regions with a view to gather together and strengthen the school community (347 specialists were trained).

j) In the international conference “Building a Safe and Supportive School” organised in the fall of 2010, the pilot project was supported by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, Human Rights Committee of the Republic of Lithuania, and Children’s Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Lithuania. In the conference papers were read and experience was shared by the head of the Diamanten school in Norrkoping, Sweden, consultant for Save the Children Sweden, Psychologist for the Institute of Psychodrama and Expressive Therapy, Principal, student, and Deputy Principal for Education of Šilutė M. Jankus Basic School. The conference was attended by the administration and students from the schools participating in the pilot project, representatives of ABC Councils, representatives of local governments, where the pilot project is being implemented, press representatives, and other schools of Lithuania.



The papers of the conference are available on the website at www.gelbvaik.lt.

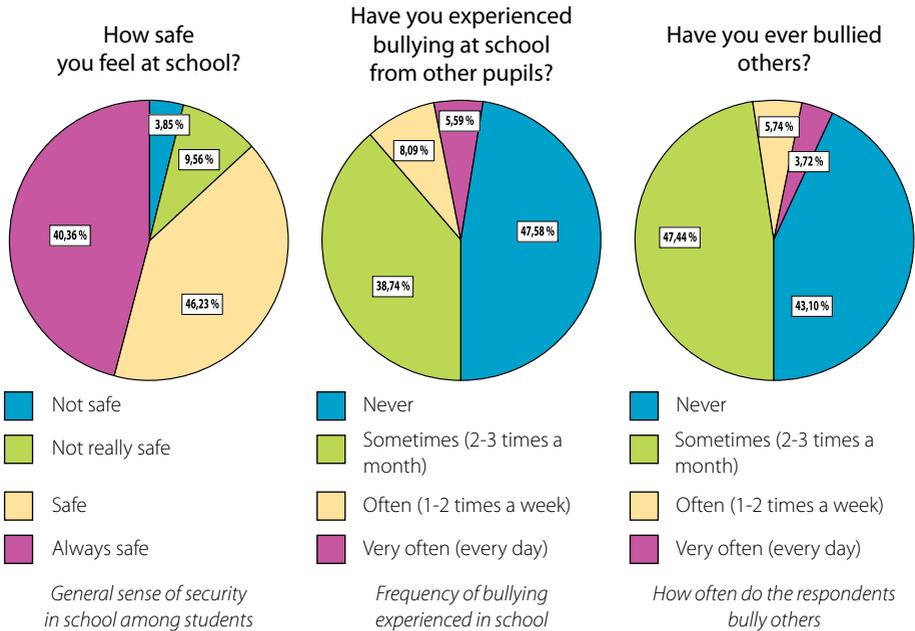
The schools-participants of the pilot project “Safe School” established ABC Councils (anti-bullying council) in their schools, carried out a survey on the situation of bullying in their schools, analysed survey results and prepared a preventive action plan against bullying, which was introduced to school community, students and parents, and also performed the planned preventive activity.

According to Evaldas Karmaza, the Psychologist for the Institute of Psychodrama and Expressive Therapy, a safe school has 4 main criteria:

1. Careful school community, where all members feel safe, supported, and belonging to the community.
2. The children are taught appropriate behaviour skills in school.
3. Positive behaviour is systematically encouraged in school.
4. The school has introduced a stimulating studying structure customized to child's capabilities.

Summary of pilot project “Safe School” survey results

In February 2010, the organisation carried out a survey on school environment of the pilot project “Safe School”. Survey participants were the students of 1-12 grades, in total – 4,153 students. Survey participants consisted of 52.1% of girls and 47.8% of boys.



After the students were asked how they felt at school, the majority (46.2%) said they felt safe. Several percent points less of respondents said they always felt safe at school. Thus, the results seem good: 86.5% of students feel safe at school. Nevertheless, there still are 13.41% of students who do not feel safe in their schools.

47.6% of all students never experience bullying in school. Almost 40% of students experience bullying sometimes (2-3 times per month). The proportion of students who experience bullying often (1-2 per week) and every day is significantly lower, 8.1% and 5.6% respectively. Although a large proportion of students never experience bullying, the proportion of students who experience it is higher: in total, it amounts to over a half of all respondents.

The most popular types of bullying in all schools are name-calling and slander (30-37%). It indicates that the most common form of bullying is verbal. Moreover, a large part (nearly a quarter) of students feel ignored. Meanwhile, physical bullying: damaging things, taking money or things, hitting is experienced by a smaller proportion of the respondents.

Most often, the students sometimes respond to bullying in some way. However, a small proportion of students do nothing when they are bullied. Most often, the students

tend to demonstrate that they are not bothered by the bullying. Only a small proportion of all respondents often respond to bullying.

The students who answered the survey questions were asked whether they were bullying others. 43.1% said they never do that. The rest more or less often bully others (sometimes – 47.4%, often – 5.7%, and every day – 3.7% of all students).

The girls rarely bully others *often* or *very often*; however, more girls than boys chose the answer variant *sometimes*. The boys said they bullied other *often* and *very often*.

The respondents witnessing bullying situations usually do nothing. From those who do nothing and passively observe the victim, the majority support the bully and not the victim. Out of 4,153 respondents, only a quarter actively defend the victims and turn to adults. Obviously, the students do not tolerate bullying and would try to discipline the bullies, but a large part of the respondents avoid conflict situations. It indicates passiveness and fear of students.

Bullying in school takes place everywhere, but most often happens in open spaces, where it is more difficult to discipline the students (passageways, school territory, etc.). 56.9% of surveyed students said they knew they could get help in school, 30.7% - did not know, and 12.4% said they could not get help. It can be concluded that the students are fairly informed on who they can turn to in case of bullying, because more than half of them know that. However, even 12.4% of students said that they did not get necessary help. When the students were asked where would they turn in case of bullying, 1,884 students said that they would turn to their parents, 1,688 – to class teacher, and 1,371 – to social pedagogue. The smallest percentage of students would turn to school administration.

Conclusions of the survey

Each society has not only nice community traditions and customs, but also negative aspects. Crimes and inappropriate behaviour are referred to as problems important to society, which have to be solved. One of such problems is bullying. The same mini model of society is reflected in school life.

At first glance it may seem irrelevant, but the survey revealed that many students are constantly experiencing or have experienced bullying. The definition of bullying includes such behaviour as name-calling, ignoring, slander, and even physical violence: shoving, stealing and damaging things, and other material harm. The major part of respondents indicated they most often experienced verbal bullying, and physical bullying is suffered by a smaller proportion. It was proved that more severe psychological impact on a child is made by verbal bullying.

It is bad that the children in schools are not well enough informed on where to turn

when faced with bullying. The survey indicated that a part of respondents have turned for help, but did not receive it.

It is good to know that the majority of students do not keep silent when they witness bullying and turn for help: tell their parents, friends, less often – teachers and school administration or psychologist. Maybe the information on where the students can apply in case of bullying should be announced more actively in schools.

The respondents are not indifferent to bullying and many respondents said they would not tolerate bullying and would defend a victim. However, one third of responses was that the students would not tolerate bullying, but they would neither defend the victim nor interfere. It is good to know that only a small part of respondents are indifferent to bullying and would not react. However, it is not enough to reduce the occurrence of bullying, especially among children and teenagers. To this end, not only the media contents must be controlled and the causes of the problem sought for in social phenomena, but first, communication must be changed, starting with family relations. The parents and students should also be introduced to the activity of Groups against Violence and psychological aid in school. It is important to achieve that all students in school felt safe, could study and grow up to be decent citizens.

Such survey results were obtained from 12 schools participating in the pilot project "Safe School", where Youth Groups against Violence have been operating for several years, events and discussions are organized, preventive actions are organized in schools, and school leaders know and approve of such preventive activity. We can only guess what the situation is in schools, where are no preventive programmes, where bullying is not discussed and not seen.

We learn about particular painful cases from the police, statistics of health care institutions, and statistics of suicides.

In spring 2011, control survey of the bullying situation in pilot schools will be carried out with a view to assess the first results of preventive activity in schools. In the fall 2011, the preventive plan will be reviewed and corrected in schools in accordance with the survey results in pilot schools obtained in spring.

According to Evaldas Karmaza, the Psychologist for the Institute of Psychodrama and Expressive Therapy, a safe school has 4 main criteria:

1. Careful school community, where all members feel safe, supported, and belonging to the community.
2. The children are taught appropriate behaviour skills in school.
3. Positive behaviour is systematically encouraged in school.
4. The school has introduced a stimulating studying structure customized to child's capabilities.

Contact information of pilot project “Safe School” participants

Name	Surname	School	E-mail	Telephone
Jūratė	Arštikaitienė	Šakiai District. Sintautai Basic School	mokykla@sintautai.sakiai. Im.lt	+370-345-45034
Dalia	Šiaudvytienė	Martynas Jankus Basic School, Šilutė	mjuzk@mjankus.silute.Im.lt mjmok@mjankus.silute.Im.lt	+370-441-62041
Neringa	Pajadienė	Obeliai Gymnasium, Rokiškis	obeliu.mokykla@gmail.com	+370-458-78410
Genovaitė	Pugžlienė	Juozas Tūbelis Gymnasium, Rokiškis	tubeliog@yahoo.com	+370-458-33587
Rasa	Karžinauskienė	Juventa Basic School, Šiauliai	karzinauskiene@gmail.com	+370-656-51804
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ABC Council (Anti-bullying council) in schools

ABC Councils have 8-10 members (teachers, school principal/administration, students from Youth Group against Violence, the leader of Youth Group against Violence, other active students, parents, representatives of local government, police, media, etc.)

ABC functions

1. Strategic

- analysis of school situation
- analysis of survey situation
- drawing up the preventive action plan

2. Functional

- organisation of information collection mechanism
- organisation of mechanism to solve bullying situations
- planning the dissemination of the preventive plan

Problem	What can we do?	Who will be responsible?	When will it be done?	Assessment
Examples				
<i>Bullying during breaks</i>	Adults on duty during breaks	All teachers. Laura draws up a schedule	During every break	28 May
	Anti-violence group organises activities during breaks	Children from anti-violence group. Inga draws up a schedule	During lunch breaks	28 May
	Teachers speak of it during classes	Teachers in the life-long learning school	As part of education	At the end of academic year
<i>Heavy atmosphere in the school</i>				
	Making rules on behaviour in class	Class teacher	At the beginning of academic year	Before Christmas holidays
	Joint activities/celebrations for certain age students	Anti-violence group	During the academic year	At the end of academic year

7. How do you respond when you are being bullied? (tick the respective answer box in each line):

Action	Sometimes	Often
Retaliate to the bullies		
Tell the parents		
Tell the teachers		
Tell the friends		
Try to demonstrate that it does not bother me		
I do nothing		
Your variant (please indicate)		
.....		

8. Have you ever bullied other students? (circle the appropriate letter)

- a. very often (every day)
- b. often (1-2 times per week)
- c. sometimes (2-3 times per month)
- d. never (move on to question 10)

9. If you have bullied others, please indicate how (tick the respective answer cell in each line):

Action	Sometimes	Often
Name-calling, teasing		
Slandered		
Threatened or intimidated them		
Ignored them or did not talk to them		
Shoved, hit or kicked		
Damaged their things		
Took money or things from them		
Wrote insulting words about them		
Bullied them in other ways (please indicate)		
.....		

10. How do you behave when you see a situation of bullying in school? (tick the box with the respective answer)

- a) I have never seen it
- b) I join the bullies
- c) I watch and do not interfere but support the bullies
- d) I watch and do not interfere

e) I watch and do not interfere but support the victim

f) I try to protect the victim myself

g) I turn to adults

i) Other (please indicate)

11. Where do you think the children bully others in your school? (tick the respective answer box in each line):

Place	Never	Sometimes	Often
In the rooms			
In the passageway			
In the canteen			
In the restrooms			
In the school yard or territory			
Other (please indicate)			
.....			

12. If you experience bullying, can you get help at school?

a) yes

b) no

13. Who would you turn to for help if you experienced bullying?

a) to the administration

b) to class teacher

c) to a teacher

d) to the psychologist

e) to the social pedagogue

f) to another adult

g) to the Group against Violence

h) to the parents

i) to nobody

j) other (please indicate)

14. What could you do to stop bullying in school?

.....

15. What could the teachers do to stop bullying in school?

.....

16. What could the school do to stop bullying in school?

.....

17. Is there anything else you would like to say?

.....

Thank you for your answers!

PREVENTIVE ACTION PLAN SAMPLE

Introduction

- Mission and vision of the school
- Formal information (contact details)
- Specified responsibilities of school community (the leader, the administration, ABC Council, teachers, students)

Activity

- Actions taken last year
- Strategy for collecting information on bullying
- Strategy for finding out the situation of bullying in a particular school
- Strategy for presenting the information to school community and parents
- Actions directed at solving the problems in a particular school
- Strategy for student involvement

Particular actions

- Describing standard behaviour procedures in case of bullying (with the bully, with the victim, and with their parents)

PREVENTIVE ACTION PLAN

Must be a tool for strategic work against bullying and humiliating behaviour

Must be a tool for stopping existing bullying and humiliating behaviour

Must be well known by all school employees, students, and parents of students

The students must be involved in the discussion and preparing the plan



Gelbėkit vaikus

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