



Hot Topics

LEADER GUIDE

bullying

Note to Leaders: *Bullying is a very serious issue with adolescents today. Recently, there have been reports of girls being bullied to the point of sustaining major emotional and physical trauma and even suicide. Church should be a safe place for girls to find refuge, but bullying can happen anywhere students are together, so the church is not immune. If you suspect a girl in your group is being bullied, take action. Talk to both the bully(ies) and victim(s) about it and let the parents know what you suspect is happening.*

Bullying is abuse. Typically, bullying can be categorized as emotional, verbal, or physical abuse. It usually involves subtle methods of coercion such as psychological manipulation. Victims of bullying suffer in many ways including emotionally, physically, and academically. Though it can be a very painful and difficult experience it is, unfortunately, all too common. About one in five students feels bullied at some point during their school years.

Have you or any of your friends ever been bullied? How did it feel? How did you react? How did it stop?

Use the following Scripture verses in your discussion:

Read Proverbs 11:16–18

Would you rather gain respect or wealth? Why?

Do you think kindness benefits you in the long run? How?

What do you think the "sure reward" is? Why does living righteously mean that you'll receive that reward?

Read Luke 6:27–36

Why is it so important to love your enemies? What does it mean to "bless those who curse you"?

Read Luke 6:31 again. This is often referred to as the Golden Rule. What do you think it would be like if every one lived by this rule? What does it mean for you to live by this rule?

What does this passage say about how we should treat the victims of bullies? What does it say about the way we should treat bullies?

Read Ephesians 4:1–6

Why is it important to keep unity with other Christians?

What can you do to keep unity?

Is your church a safe place? What should you do if you see some one is feeling left out or bullied at church?

As girls open up about this topic, it can become apparent that girls are feeling bullied. It may be helpful to wait until after your group is over and talk to the girl one-on-one about her experience. If bullying is occurring at school, help her find resources at school (an administrator, school counselor, or teacher).

For more information, see:

- *Odd Girl Out* by Rachel Simmons
- *Queen Bees and Wannabes* by Rosalind Wiseman
- *Mean Girls and Mean Girl Gone* by Hayley DiMarco

- www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov



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