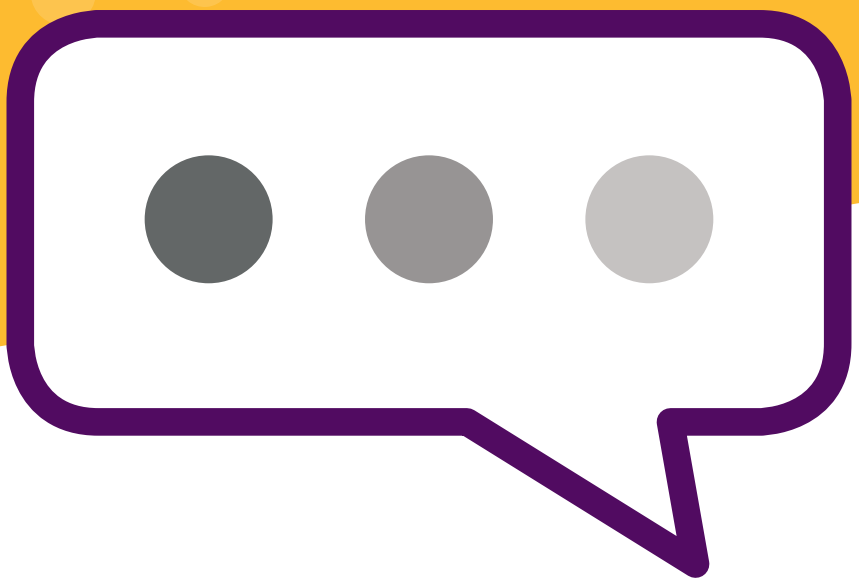
Think b4 you type

Campaign toolkit for use by school staff and local authorities



respectme
Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service

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INTRODUCTION

Bullying in online spaces has been one of the top five concerns reported to Childline every year since 1989. In 2018/19, Childline delivered 2,289 counselling sessions to children, and found that online bullying was their main concern[1]. In our evermore digitally connected world, bullying can be relentless, reaching young people 24 hours a day.

'Think B4 You Type' was a youth-led anti-bullying campaign delivered in partnership between Angus Council, NSPCC Scotland and respect*me*, alongside young people from all eight secondary schools in Angus. The year-long campaign aimed to increase understanding of online bullying from a local perspective and find local, youth-led solutions to address it. The campaign formally ended in January 2020 and this toolkit has been developed as a product of the learning gained.

Now, 'Think B4 You Type' (TBYT) is a proven model of youth-led campaigning developed by NSPCC Scotland and respect*me* alongside young people in Angus. The model allows young people to design and lead their own campaign around the issue of online bullying and how best to prevent and respond to it. While TBYT focuses on online bullying, it is important that this is viewed in the wider context of relationships and any campaign considers the link between online and offline bullying. It is also vital to acknowledge that young people won't be able to make all these changes alone. There must be a member of school staff available to support them and champion them.

This toolkit uses learning from the Angus campaign, and contains direct input from the Youth Advisory Group members, to help you best support young people in your school to lead anti-bullying work and to deliver a 'Think B4 You Type' campaign. While this toolkit provides guidance for adults, in the appendices you will find templates and further learning for direct use by the young people themselves.

1 NSPCC (2016) What Children are telling us about bullying – childline bullying report 2015/16

WHAT IS BULLYING?

HERE IS THE AGREED DEFINITION IN SCOTLAND

"Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as their sense of 'agency'. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened and left out. This behaviour happens face to face and online."

Online bullying

Online bullying is not a separate entity from face-to-face bullying. In fact, for many young people the lines between the two are blurred because they experience bullying from the same person(s) in both physical and online environments.

"I am being bullied by a girl at school. She has taken photos of me and posted them on Snapchat calling me fat and ugly and how I will never have a boyfriend. I have been having suicidal thoughts as this girl is really popular and she has turned my whole year against me". (Girl aged 14)[2]*

Bullying can affect academic performance, school attendance and attainment and is linked to mental and physical health problems. In a quarter of counselling sessions delivered by Childline about[3] bullying, children also talked about mental health and wellbeing issues.[4]

Online bullying usually takes place on social networking sites and online gaming platforms. It can include, but is not limited to, name calling, threats, mean comments and the spreading of rumours.

"People can bully you and post mean pictures of you. People can gang up on you." (Girl, 13, Instagram) [5]

Our response to online bullying should not differ greatly from our response to a disclosure of face-to-face bullying. It is more consistent and effective when we address online bullying as part of our whole anti-bullying approach.

DID YOU KNOW?

Young people have told respect*me* that they prefer not to use the term 'cyber-bullying' because the term 'cyber' feels outdated and indicates a separation from their 'real world' lives. As a result, this toolkit will use the term 'online bullying'.

2 *All names and potentially identifying details have been changed to protect the identity of the person contacting the Helpline. Quotes are created from real Helpline contacts but are not necessarily direct quotes.

3 NSPCC (2016) What Children are telling us about bullying – childline bullying report 2015/16

4 NSPCC (2016) What Children are telling us about bullying – childline bullying report 2015/16

5 NSPCC (2017) Net Aware Freedom to express myself safely online

WHY ‘YOUTH-LED’?

It is vital that anti-bullying campaigns are led by the people who are most affected by the issue – young people themselves. Having young people lead on campaigns or initiatives makes the work more meaningful, and ensures the problems being addressed are relevant and the solutions effective. It’s important that all adults involved in young people’s lives (teachers, parents, carers, youth workers etc) listen to young people and take their views seriously.

“It was important that it was youth led because we have grown up with the internet and we know exactly what goes on online”.

Young people are the experts in their own experiences, and their understanding, ideas and solutions are needed. By empowering young people to become change makers in their own communities, they gain a sense of agency over their own lives and learn that they have the ability to improve their lives and the lives of their peers.

During the first ‘Think B4 You Type’ campaign, the young people of the Youth Advisory Group not only designed and delivered a plethora of anti-bullying activity in their own schools, but they developed a series of anti-bullying recommendations which were unanimously passed by Angus Council and contributed to the Council’s refreshed anti-bullying policy. The young people ended the campaign by presenting their work at a dedicated Parliamentary Reception at the Scottish Parliament where they shared their learning with industry professionals, MSPs and Ministers. The success of ‘Think B4 You Type’ was not limited to the campaign itself, there was also a marked difference in the confidence, communications skills and future aspirations of the Youth Advisory Group members.

“Campaigns matter because they are trying to make the world a better place. This really matters because the internet is getting bigger and bigger every year and if we don’t try and get better at managing online bullying it will get worse”.

Incorporating young people’s voices and ideas into anti-bullying may seem like a daunting task, but the Angus campaign has proved that supporting young people to develop simple anti-bullying initiatives in their classrooms can lead to changes in regional policy and an audience at the Scottish Parliament.

“I would say to other young people, absolutely go for it. Get the word out as soon as you can. Do it!”

THINGS TO REMEMBER

Take care of yourself and the young people you’re working with

Bullying can be a difficult issue to work on. It can bring up all sorts of feelings and emotions for yourself and for the young people you are working with. Remember to look out for the mental wellbeing of the young people in the group by including your preferred type of emotional check-in at the beginning of each meeting. Encourage the young people to talk to someone they trust about how they are feeling. If they want to talk to someone anonymously, signpost them to www.childline.org.uk.

A little note on language

Calling people “bullies” doesn’t help them understand their behaviour or empower them to change it. Instead, it can disempower people and make them feel like the mistake they’ve made is who they are forever. Let’s label behaviour as bullying, but not people as bullies. The same goes for “victims”, which can be an equally disempowering label.

Children and young people have a right not to be bullied

Rights are basic needs, rather than an entitlement or expectation. Children and young people need to be protected from bullying behaviour so they can survive, develop, and participate in a fulfilling, safe and dignified life. Bullying is a breach of children’s human rights.

Listen to what the young people are saying

It might sound obvious, but it’s easy for adults to ask young people’s opinions then continue with what they think is the correct approach anyway. You will likely be knowledgeable about the latest research findings and approaches, but if the young people in front of you are telling you something different – listen to them. Why do they not agree? What could be done differently?

STEP 1 –
FINDING THE YOUNG PEOPLE!

First step in starting a youth-led campaign? Find the young people!

The role of the Youth Advisory Group (YAG) is to lead, design and deliver the anti-bullying campaign. They will provide ideas, understanding and knowledge, and will act as a representative voice for their peers when it comes to online bullying issues.

Your role, as the adult forming the group, will be to listen, support and help facilitate their work. You will be able to provide your own insight as a professional, and as a person, and use your status to look into relevant policy, strategy and ethical issues that may arise. Are you pressed for time and/or capacity? Ask a fellow member of staff to share the responsibilities.

When forming a youth advisory group, here are some things you may want to consider:

Numbers

The number of young people in the group may depend on the interest you get, but it's helpful to have an idea in your head when you first advertise the opportunity. We would recommend having a group of 8-12 to begin with.

Remember: not everyone will want to stay involved in the campaign from start to finish – and that is okay! The make-up of the group might change but as long as you have a strong foundation this shouldn't cause any major issues.

Age range

What year groups do you want to focus on? Pupils in S2-S3 already have an understanding of the online bullying in the context of the school environment, and they are in a position to see their work develop as they move up the school. Alternatively, you may want to choose representatives from each school year group. Keep in mind that whoever you choose they will likely need some time out of class throughout the year.

Diversity

Online bullying can affect all young people, regardless of perceived popularity, gender, religion or belief, class, race, disability, or sexual orientation etc. Involving different perspectives in your group will help make anti-bullying activity inclusive.

Experience of bullying

Let young people know that they don't need experience of bullying to join the group, and if they have, they are not expected or required to share their personal experiences. Encourage participation from young people who have bullied others in the past – they will have different perspectives and being part of the solution may help them understand their behaviour.

ADVERTISE!

With the above considerations in mind, try to advertise the opportunity in as many different spaces as possible. Assemblies and PSE classes are a good start, as are public spaces like corridors, social areas and canteens. Why not ask subject teachers to mention it to their class? Or adults leading after school activities? Allow young people to enquire privately about joining – this may help those who are unsure.

"The hardest bit for me was having to meet new people because I didn't know anybody else before we started it. I was nervous but then we all made friends."

STEP 2 –
DESIGNING THE GROUP

Once you have identified the members of the Youth Advisory Group (YAG), it's time to discuss what will be expected of them.

Here are some suggested guidelines for you to cover:

- The purpose of the YAG is to design and deliver anti-bullying activity, not to discuss individual incidents of bullying. If group members wish to disclose or discuss personal experiences, signpost them to an adult they can speak to.
- Similarly, discussions in the group may bring up challenging emotions for members, identify a contact they can speak to if this happens.
- The YAG is a safe, non-judgemental space for its members and anything discussed within the group will not be shared outside the group.
- Anything else? Ask the members if there are any other guidelines they think the group should have.

It will also be helpful to discuss group logistics at this point. Think about:

- When will the group meet?
- How often?
- Can the group meet remotely?

STEP 3 –
GATHERING INFORMATION

Before the group can begin planning anti-bullying activities, it's important they understand the issue of online bullying within their school and/or community environment. This could be done through an anonymous school survey, or by holding focus groups. Ask the young people how they would like to gather information. How can this be done in a way that's safe for everyone? How will they make it accessible? How will it be promoted?

Encourage the young people to think about the questions they would like to ask their peers. Here are some suggested questions to start them off:

- Do you think online bullying is an issue in our school?
- Why do you think online bullying happens?
- How can we prevent online bullying?
- Who would you tell if you were being bullied online?
- What should schools do when online bullying happens?
- What is one thing you think everyone should know about online bullying?
- Is there any specific online bullying related issue affecting this school?

Talk to the adults, too!

Group members may also want to hold a focus group with school staff. What do they want to know? Who would they invite? Remember it's not just teachers who will have thoughts on bullying – janitors, support staff, nurses and canteen staff may also have useful insight.

Ask the young people about the role they will each take in the collection of information. Will someone ask the questions? Will someone else take notes?

STEP 4 – PLANNING THE CAMPAIGN

Now that the group has up to date information about online bullying within the school or community environment, it's time to plan some activities. Issues like online bullying are complex, and the changes the group hopes to make may seem too big or overwhelming, so ask the group what their main aim is. For example, their main aim may be:

'For young people at our school to understand how their online behaviours like videoing, liking and sharing posts can contribute to bullying and a disrespectful culture for all.'

Once the group have identified their main aim, ask them to break it down into smaller steps. Here are some prompts to help the discussion:

- What are the things you think that will help you achieve your aim?
- Is it awareness raising?
- It is providing young people with a safe place to hang out together?
- Is it a different behaviour from teachers?

> **TOP TIP: Download and print Appendix 1 of this toolkit so that each of the young people in the group can have their own 'Campaign Planning Template'.**

Now ask the young people: What are the things that will help you achieve this aim? What needs to happen? **What are the solutions?** For example:

'Raising awareness of how online behaviour makes people feel and the ways in which behaviour online can transfer into the school environment.'

Once the group have identified some solutions, encourage them to think of some objectives. If the solutions seem big or intimidating, narrow the objectives down to one or two at first. An example of objectives might be:

'Create X number of posters reminding young people that their behaviour online impacts the school environment'

OR

'Run a workshop for young people to learn how to deal with online bullying'

The SMART rule might help group members develop objectives:

- ✔ **SPECIFIC**
- ✔ **MEASURABLE**
- ✔ **ACHIEVABLE**
- ✔ **RELEVANT**
- ✔ **TIME BASED**

Who has the power to help make this happen?

Encourage the group to think about who at the school might help achieve their objectives. Will a head teacher help organise an assembly? Would canteen staff let them put up posters? Could prefects or house captains help you promote a workshop?

There is more information on evaluating the anti-bullying work in Step 6, but it's important to build in evaluation as the campaign is being planned. Ask the young people 'How will we know if this work has been effective?' How will we measure this?'.

Elevator Pitches

Now the group know what they want to achieve and who can help them do it. The final stage of development is to practice telling others about their campaign.

Having some key messages will allow group members to tell others about their campaign quickly and succinctly. A great way to do this is by developing an elevator pitch!

Ask the young people to imagine they were in an elevator with a someone for just 30 seconds. This is their only opportunity to tell that person about their campaign. What would they want them to know? How would they get them to care about the issue?

Good elevator pitches include:

- What the issue is
- What impact the issue is having
- How the campaign is going to create change
- What you want them to do to help

Marketing your campaign

What do the group members think the group should be called? Remember, try not to use the term 'bully' or 'bullies' in the title.

Does the group have a tagline? This can help other people understand what the group does, and it may help when developing the group's aim.

Do the group want to design their own logo? This could link in with the school or could focus more on the group's aims.

STEP 5 –
PLANNING THE ANTI-BULLYING ACTIVITY

It's likely the young people in the group have already come up with some great ideas for anti-bullying activity during your discussions so far. They should have found some great inspiration in the case studies of the Angus campaign.

Download and print Appendix 2 of this toolkit so that each group member can fill in an 'Action Plan' to help them develop their ideas.

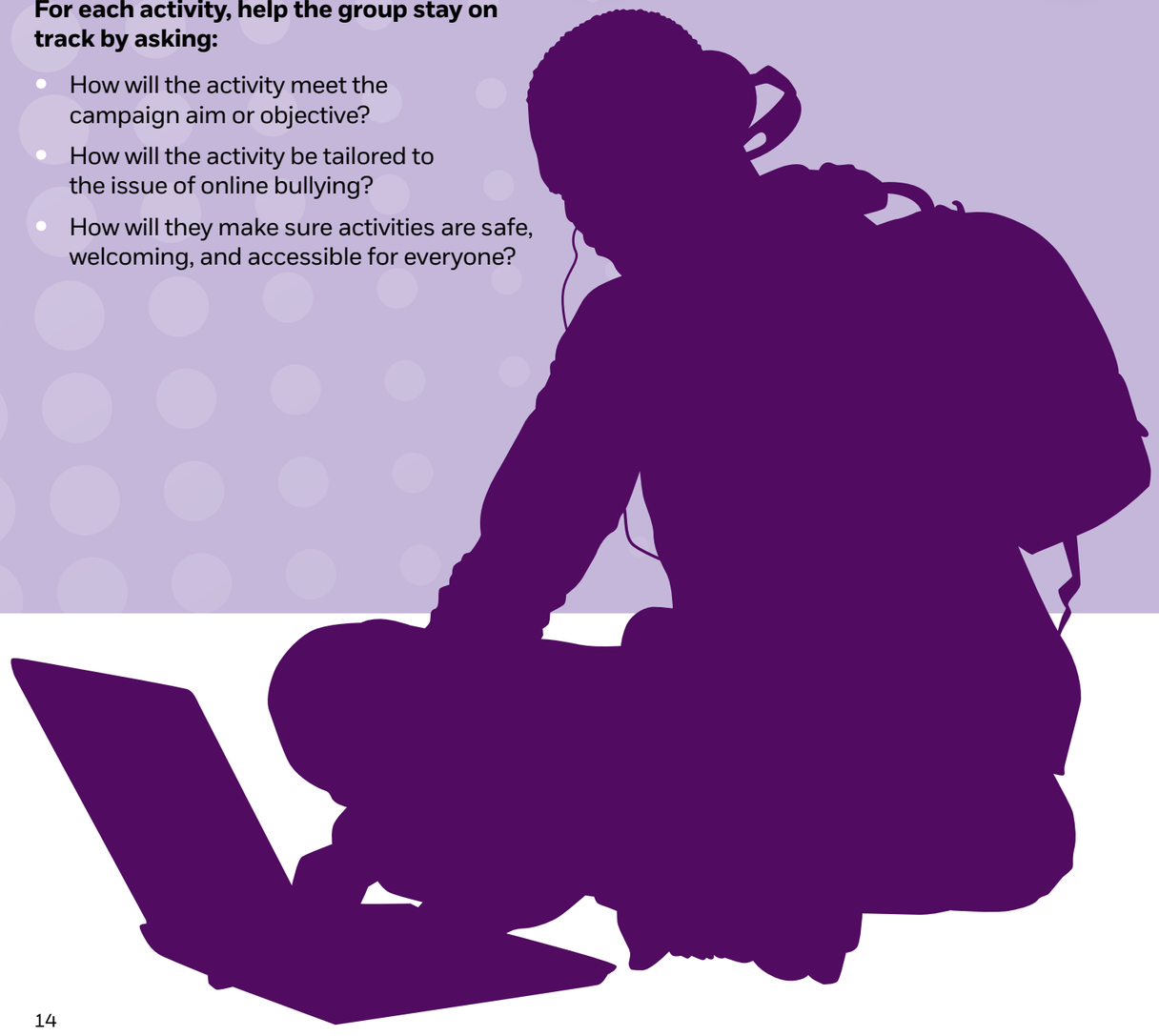
If the group needs some more information, Appendix 3 lists some more of the anti-bullying activity schools have told us about.

For each activity, help the group stay on track by asking:

- How will the activity meet the campaign aim or objective?
- How will the activity be tailored to the issue of online bullying?
- How will they make sure activities are safe, welcoming, and accessible for everyone?

Encourage group members to:

- Think outside the box! Do they have a favourite game that could be used to communicate their message?
- Use the skills they have! What skill or interest does each person in the group have? How can these be used?



STEP 6 –
EVALUATING THE CAMPAIGN

While the group plan their activity, remind them of the importance of evaluating how successful the activity has been.

Evaluating helps us understand what worked well and what could work better next time. It will also help the young people show how they have met their objectives at the end of the campaign.

Ask the group members how they would like to collect information about the activity, such as number of young people reached, and what the feedback was.

"People met others at the lunch and we have seen people make friends there and still hang out now."

"People were more comfortable in school and people were really nice to each other and it was nice to see that."

Guide the young people in their evaluation discussions with these question prompts:

- Which objective was the activity aimed at?
- Did you do everything you said you were going to do?
- What were the outcomes? How do you know?
- What have you learned?
- Is there anything you would do differently next time?
- Did you go some way to achieving your vision?

As ever, the campaign planning template in Appendix 2 will help the young people set out their evaluation.

- And finally, how will you develop your work in the future?

Here's what the young people in the Angus campaign had to say...

"In the future, we would like to send our [anti-bullying video] to our cluster primary schools for them to show in class and discuss the effects of bullying."

"Our future activities will promote teamwork so that pupils can get to know each other and they are not as nervous to move up to high school."

"I hope that [our work] will make pupils more comfortable and happy when they come to school."

"I hope that my school and Angus as a whole will continue to focus on online bullying and prevent issues from escalating so that all young people can feel safe."

To help the group evaluate the work, print off the evaluation template provided in Appendix 4 and encourage them to tailor it to their needs.

STEP 7 –
SHARING THE STORY

Some great anti-bullying activities have been delivered, the campaign was a success, and the group have gained some useful feedback in evaluation. All that's left to do now is to share the success!

This toolkit is a great example of the importance of telling others about young people's anti-bullying work and sharing what was learned – this couldn't have been possible without the schools involved in the original 'Think B4 You Type' campaign, and the many other schools that sent respect*me* information on what their pupils were doing over the last school year.

We would love to hear all about the young people's anti-bullying work. To share your work contact respect*me* at: **enquire@respectme.org.uk** and NSPCC Scotland at: **scotland1@nspcc.org.uk**

Here are some other ways the young people can tell their story:

- Write an article for the school newsletter or website
- Create a notice board or display area where updates and milestones can be posted – this is a great way to see the progress being made.
- Does your school or club have social media? Find out if you can share the work online and tag @NSPCC_Scotland and @_respectme_ for a share on Twitter!

Remember: Everything doesn't have to have gone perfectly for you to share your story, learning on what didn't work can sometime be even more valuable!

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on online bullying and how to support young people, visit:

respect*me* at:
https://respectme.org.uk/

Childline at: www.childline.org.uk

Net Aware at:
https://www.net-aware.org.uk/

Scottish Government – Respect for All (2017) at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/respect-national-approach-anti-bullying-scotlands-children-young-people/

CASE STUDIES FROM THE ANGUS CAMPAIGN

We spoke to young people from Brechin High School and Carnoustie High School about the anti-bullying activity they delivered in their schools as part of the *Think B4 You Type* campaign.

BRECHIN HIGH SCHOOL

PSE lessons on bullying

The anti-bullying group led a series of PSE lessons for their peers in S1 and S2, in which they used exercises from our 'Change Starts With Us' campaign toolkit and lesson plans to discuss the effects of bullying.

'Our PSE lessons linked with an S2 Mentors in Violence Prevention awareness day. The day focused on dealing with bullying behaviour by seeking out adults to help tackle bullying.' - Anti-Bullying Group Member (S2)

Anti-bullying film

The group also worked together to create '*OK on the outside, not on the inside*', a film highlighting the hidden impact of bullying and reminding pupils that although someone may seem OK, that is not always the case.

'We made the video as an alternative to our PSE lesson for classes which we couldn't be in, or classes who wanted to know what our lessons were all about. In the future, we would like to send out the video to our cluster primary schools for them to show in class and have them discuss the effects of bullying.' - Anti-Bullying Group Member (S2)

What's next?

Going forward, the anti-bullying group will set up a pupil working group to promote the school values of friendliness, achievement, inclusion, trust, respect and honesty. The group hopes to lead on health and well-being activities delivered throughout the year, and they have recently created a Google Form to measure the impact of their anti-bullying activities to date. They have reached up to 200 pupils and aim to eventually reach the whole school through assemblies. Findings from the campaign are now included in Angus Council's refreshed anti-bullying policy.

CARNOUSTIE HIGH SCHOOL

Staff Pledge

The group held a staff meeting during which they emphasised the important role staff have in initiating conversations and supporting pupils who are affected by bullying. The group then asked staff to sign a pledge stating they are available for students to speak to about bullying issues. The aim of the pledge is to improve pupil's confidence in approaching staff and to ensure pupils know that staff are willing to help. An impressive 61 of the school's 76 teaching staff signed the pledge on the day, with further opportunities for support staff to sign it provided in early 2020. The pledge will be displayed publicly at the school.

'The reason we made the pledge was to show pupils that there are lots of staff in the school who are willing to listen and who they can talk to.' **– ABG Members (S3)**

Drop-In Sessions

Lunchtime drop-in sessions provided S1, S2 and S3 pupils with opportunities to meet, socialise and play games. The drop-ins aim to provide a safe space for young people to come together, especially those who might be feeling left out. The S1-S2 drop-in was attended by 30-40 pupils while the S3 drop-in was attended by 20-25 pupils.

'We weren't sure if anyone would turn up but we couldn't believe how many people came along. It felt good to see them chatting with other pupils at the drop-in and they looked happy.' **- ABG Member**

'I hadn't ever really thought about people spending break and lunch on their own as I have my group and we just eat lunch then play football – it was nice to be able to help pupils who were alone and help them to have a good lunchtime.' - **ABG Member**

Anonymous Advice Board

A new box has been stationed in the library allowing students to raise anonymous concerns about bullying. Support staff will answer these concerns via an anonymous advice board displayed in the school.

'This will allow pupils a discreet and anonymous way to ask questions and raise concerns they have regarding bullying issues for themselves or their peers.'
- Miss Meldrum, Principal Teacher Pupil Care & Support

What's next?

The anti-bullying group plan to make their lunch-time drop-ins weekly events, to work with staff to update the school's anti-bullying policy, and to create a dedicated anti-bullying email address which will allow pupils to contact support staff directly. When asked how they see these activities impacting the school, one ABG member said:

'I hope this will make pupils more comfortable and happy when they come to school. I also hope the staff pledge will let pupils know there are many adults they can talk to in the school.'

APPENDIX 1 – CAMPAIGN PLANNING TEMPLATE

Name of your Anti-Bullying Group:	
Tagline:	

Once you have gathered information from young people and staff at your school, what will be your campaign's main aim?

What needs to happen to achieve your vision? Write down your solutions here:

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....

4 .....

Who can help you make your goals a reality?

What is your elevator pitch?

APPENDIX 2 –
ACTIVITY TO DO LIST

Activity	Which solution?	What needs to be done?	By when?	Who will do it?	Is it finished?

APPENDIX 3 –
IDEAS & LEARNING FROM YOUR PEERS

Need some inspiration while you're planning your anti-bullying activity? Here are some ideas and advice from the young people involved in the Angus campaign...

Assemblies

'We thought the Jesy Nelson clip needed to go into the assembly as we felt that lots of people would know who she was and it gives the message that online bullying can happen to anyone, even celebrities.'

On speaking at assemblies: *"I didn't mind it. Most of them were younger than me. It's mostly about getting the word out there."*

PSE Lessons

'It was good to be able to discuss this in class and see that other people have been through bullying, too. This helped.'

Staff pledges

'I hope this will make some pupils more comfortable and happy when they come to school. I also hope the staff pledge will let pupils know there are many adults they can talk to in the school.'

Anti-bullying films

Posters

Drama groups

Anti-bullying apps

Exhibitions & Displays

Lunchtime Drop-In Sessions

"A lot of people get bullied at our school and would like to create a place where they can go to feel safe."

'It felt good to see people chatting together at the drop-ins. They looked happy.'

Anonymous Advice Boards

Odd Socks Day Celebrations

'The Odd Socks Day celebrations went very well. We decided to take part in it because it promotes the message that it's ok to be different.'

Welcome checks

Staff anti-bullying meeting

Compliment Displays & Advice Boards

'When we read the compliments, pupils were quite shocked because they weren't used to hearing positive things about themselves. It was really nice.'

APPENDIX 4 –
CAMPAIGN EVALUATION TEMPLATE

Name of anti-bullying activity	No. of young people reached	No. of staff reached	No. of parents / carers reached	Impact • Did you notice changes in awareness, knowledge, confidence or behaviour of participants? • How do you know this?

Evaluation tips

You may want to create a survey for participants to fill in. Ask them to rate their awareness or understanding of online bullying before and/or after the activity. How did they feel about the activity? What did they learn?

Thank you to Angus Council and the Angus Youth Advisory Group
for their support in developing this toolkit.

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