

## *The ROCKS!* Teacher's Guide

The performance of ROCKS!, along with the materials in this guide, is intended to supplement (not replace) current education and guidance on bullying and other related issues in the schools.

### DISCUSSION ETIQUETTE

*Due to the sensitive nature of the issues presented in ROCKS!, it is very important for everyone to follow the standard ground rules for group discussion.*

- ◆ Respect what others say without passing judgment.

All things said within the group should remain confidential. Students ought to bear in mind that they should speak in general terms, as opposed to specific, when talking about personal or uncomfortable facts.

- ◆ Only those students who feel comfortable speaking should be asked to do so.

### ABOUT THE PLAY

#### *Breakdown of Characters*

**Jamie:** New at Camp Obsidian, nervous but eager to make friends...which can only be easier thanks to the gem their Big Brother got them.

**Big Brother:** Jamie's supportive older brother. In Jamie's words: "He's the absolute best!"

**Casey:** Also a new camper, nervous and a little jealous. They handle their bad feelings the only way they know how.

**Unkind Big Brother:** Casey's selfish older brother. He can't wait to get Casey out of his hair for a week.

**Parker:** Couldn't be MORE excited to be at camp. Practicing how to speak calmly.

**River:** The most *stylish*, considerate camper. Not sure if this 'camp' thing is for them or not just yet.

**Jasper:** The totally tubular Head Counselor. Works to ensure that everyone has an awesome summer.

## *Play Summary*

When Jamie and their Big Brother drive to a new summer camp, Camp Obsidian, Jamie is nervous about the change from their beloved Camp Blissful. Jamie's Big Brother offers support and calming techniques to help them manage their fears. They share a special bond, with Big Brother gifting Jamie with a gemstone from the campground to help them make friends. Upon arrival, another new camper, Casey, is getting dropped off by their Unkind Big Brother. Unlike Jamie's supportive sibling, Casey's brother is dismissive and harsh, leaving Casey feeling scared and insecure.

At the camp, Jamie meets and starts forming friendships with new campers Parker and River. Parker is overly enthusiastic and friendly, while River is more reserved but curious. Casey walks by the group but refuses to sit near Jamie. Despite this, Parker and River accept Jamie, who tries to stay positive and hopeful about making more friends. The group is soon welcomed by Jasper, a super-enthusiastic camp counselor, who promises a fun and exciting camp experience, hyping up the upcoming Talent Show and the camp activities. The campers are excited, and Jamie writes a letter to their big brother, describing their experiences at camp. While playing in the mud, Jamie mentions receiving letters from home; this sparks Casey's jealousy, causing them to react angrily and storm off.

During their activities, Casey begins targeting Jamie with mean pranks and tricks. Jamie writes about these incidents but hesitates, unsure if they're making a big deal out of nothing. Jasper tries to cheer Jamie up, emphasizing having the BEST SUMMER EVER. Casey's bullying continues, and Jamie struggles to understand why Casey treats them poorly. Jamie decides to show Casey their precious gem, hoping it might help improve their relationship. Casey is fascinated by the gem and asks to hold onto it longer, but then hides it in the woods during a hide-and-seek game.

When Jamie realizes the gem is missing, River and Parker offer to help find it. They eventually enlist the audience (acting as wise rocks) to help locate the gem. The audience directs them to where Casey hid it. Parker and River recognize Casey's behavior as bullying and encourage JAMIE to report it to a trusted adult, teaching Jamie about the 3 Rs: Recognize, Report, Refuse.

Casey enters, denying the accusations and claiming Jamie stole the gem. Jasper arrives and listens as River and Parker support Jamie's account. Casey is visibly upset, revealing they felt bad about Jamie having it so good and wanted to make Jamie feel bad too. Jasper acknowledges that bullying hurts both the victim and the bully and encourages Casey to talk about their feelings so that everyone has a good camp experience. During the Talent Show, Casey works to make amends with Jamie by offering to perform something together. They decided to present the premiere of their secret friendship handshake. Jamie closes with a final letter to their Big Brother explaining how the summer camp had its ups and downs but ultimately rocked.

## ***Rocks!* Education Goals**

### **Bullying Prevention:**

- Recognizing
- Reporting
- Refusing
- Upstander Skills

### **Celebrating Differences/Welcoming Newcomers:**

- Acceptance despite differences
- Sensitivity to others' feelings
- Celebrating everyone's interests
- Forgiveness

## **Pre-Viewing Discussion Questions**

To place the students in a proper frame of mind for viewing the play, we suggest using the following discussion questions.

1. Have you ever seen someone get bullied (picked on unfairly) before? How did that make you feel?
2. Can you define bullying? What are some examples of bullying?
3. What does it mean to respect others? How can you respect someone you don't get along with, or who is different from yourself?
4. What should you do when you see someone being bullied? How do you know if the situation is safe for you to help?
5. Have you ever been picked on because you were different?
6. Do you think bullying is a problem at our school? Why or why not?

## **Post-Play Discussion Questions**

1. Which parts of the play did you like the best? Were there parts that made you think more than others? Were there things in the play that surprised you?
2. Which characters did you like best and which characters did you not like, and why? Who did you identify with?
3. What is bullying? What is cyberbullying?
4. What should you do when you see someone getting bullied?

5. How can you focus on things about yourself and others that are the same and not different? How can we celebrate our differences?
6. What are the negative effects of bullying? For the student who is being bullied? For the student who is bullying?
7. What can we do to help stop bullying in our school?

## **Definitions**

**Bullying:** Bullying is one-sided and unfair. It happens when someone who is more powerful, physically or socially, repeatedly hurts, scares, threatens or leaves out another person on purpose.

**Bystander:** Someone who witnesses bullying behavior.

**Positive Bystander:** Someone who witnesses bullying behavior and helps the student being bullied, either by intervening in the situation or by reporting the behavior to an adult.

**Tattling:** Telling on someone just to get them in trouble or to get revenge.

**Reporting:** Reporting (telling on) someone to keep you or someone else safe.

**Recognize, Report, Refuse:** When faced with a bullying situation, it is important to *recognize* that the behavior is a bullying behavior, *report* the behavior to a trusted adult who can help you *refuse* the behavior by staying calm and confident when asking them to stop. Recognizing, reporting, and refusing bullying focuses on safe ways to keep someone/yourself from getting hurt.

*The definitions used in this show and study guide are brought to you through our partnership with **Committee for Children**, and their **Second Step** bullying prevention program. Please visit them at [www.cfchildren.org](http://www.cfchildren.org) for more information.*

## **For Teachers Only**

### Handling Bullying Reporting with Students

From Committee for Children's *Second Step* curriculum

[www.cfchildren.org](http://www.cfchildren.org)

Following performances of our shows, schools often experience an increase in bullying reporting as students become aware that bullying is not acceptable and help is available. Administrators, counselors, and teachers are all seen by students as responsible adults who can help in a bullying situation.

Every school has their own process for handling bullying reporting. The following guidelines are used by permission of Committee for Children. They are taken directly from the *Second Step* curriculum and are intended to supplement (not replace) existing curriculum and guidelines already used in your school.

## Handling Bullying Reports

### **The Four-A Response Process**

Because *Steps to Respect* is a schoolwide program, it is essential that all staff know how to respond to bullying reports. Following is the process adults should use when a student reports bullying.

#### **1. Affirm the child's feelings.**

Ideas:

- a. "You were right to report/get help from an adult."
- b. "I'm glad you asked for help with this."

#### **2. Ask questions.**

Ideas:

- a. "Tell me more about what happened."
- b. "Has this happened before?"
- c. "Did anyone try to help you?"
- d. "Are you telling me this to get someone in trouble or to keep someone safe?"

3. **Assess the child's safety.**

Determine what the child needs to feel safe now.

4. **Act.**

Coach the child or refer the child for coaching.

Tell the child what will happen next.

## Coaching Students Involved in Bullying Situations

### *Second Step Coaching Models*

Once bullying has been reported, both the student who was bullied and the student who did the bullying must receive coaching—it is essential that no exceptions to this rule occur. *Second Step* recommends that all classroom teachers be prepared to coach students. The following sections detail the models teachers should use when coaching students.

### **Coaching the Student Who Was Bullied**

Children rarely report the bullying they experience to adults—in part because they believe that adults are unable or unlikely to stop the harassment. Adults can combat children's feelings of helplessness by (1) affirming children's actions in reporting (which demonstrates that adults will provide the needed support and consequences) and (2) checking back with students who report bullying to see whether the problem has stopped.

*Second Step* recommends the following five-step model when coaching a child who has been bullied.

1. **Affirm the child's feelings.**

- a. "You were right to report/get help from an adult."

2. **Ask questions.**

Get information about the current situation and the history of the situation

3. **Identify what has and has not worked in the past.**

4. **Generate solutions for the future.**

Ideas:

- a. Discuss how the child can avoid the student who has bullied him or her. (Examples: The child could sit somewhere else, play somewhere else, or travel with a group of friends.)
- b. Coach the student in using assertive refusal skills. (If relevant to the situation, remind the student that aggression is *never* an appropriate solution.)
- c. Identify others (parents, teachers, friends) who can support the child

**5. Follow up.**

- a. See how the plan is working.
- b. Contact parents as appropriate.
- c. Refer more serious or chronic cases to an administrator or counselor.

**Coaching the Student Who Bullied**

Your school's bullying policy should provide the necessary framework for applying consequences for student bullying. In addition to those consequences, children who bully need more targeted help addressing their problem behavior. Children are more likely to change problem behavior if adults help them select positive alternative behaviors and provide consistent feedback on their progress.

This coaching model (for use with students who bully) has five steps.

**1. Identify the problem and diffuse reporting responsibility.**

Ideas:

- a. "I have been hearing that..."
- b. Many students have reported that..."

**2. Ask questions and gather information.**

Ideas:

- a. "I'd like to hear from you about what happened."
- b. "How would you feel if this happened to you?"

**3. Apply consequences.**

Ideas:

- a. Review the school policy regarding bullying.
4. **Generate solutions for the future.**

Ideas:

- a. "What are some ways to prevent this happening again?"

5. **Follow up.**

Ideas:

- a. See how the plan is working.
- b. Contact parents as appropriate.
- c. Refer students for further discipline as appropriate.
- d. Refer more serious or chronic cases to an administrator or counselor.

Note: Be sure to coach the students who have been bullied separately from those who bullied them. Children who have been bullied are often frightened, and may deny that there is any problem when face-to-face with children who have repeatedly harassed them.