


THE HAPPY PIRATE TEACHER RESOURCE



Happy Pirate: Teacher resource

Summary

This unit provides teaching materials for the graphic novel and digital story, *Happy Pirate*. The story is about a young woman working in a children's play centre and raises awareness of, and issues around, bullying in the workplace.

These teaching materials are designed to support and extend the issues covered in the story. They include discussion questions, research ideas and applied learning activities. Activity sheets are provided for students to support the teaching materials.

The materials are designed to cover aspects of the Work Related Skills units of VCAL and can be used, with adjustment, across the VCAL levels.

Purpose

For students to recognise workplace bullying, know its potential consequences, understand the responsibilities of employers to prevent it and learn how they could respond if it happens to them.

Background

Workplace bullying is characterised by The Victorian Workcover Authority as persistent and repeated negative behaviour directed at an employee that creates a risk to health and safety.

Workplace bullying may exist in many workplaces in different industries. It can have an impact on an individual's health and affect their ability to do their job. It can have both short term and long term health consequences and can even contribute to suicide. It can also contribute to loss of productivity, staff turnover, absenteeism, low morale and financial costs. It can take many forms and includes verbal and physical abuse, harassment and intimidation from managers, supervisors and/or co-workers. Bullying arises when these behaviours are repeated, or occur as a pattern.

It is the responsibility of employers to prevent workplace bullying from occurring as far as is reasonably practicable. This duty falls under section 21 under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 which requires the employer to provide a safe working environment.

Young people entering the workforce for the first time are often more vulnerable to bullying.

Bullying can include persistent and repeated behaviours that have the potential to affect mental or physical health such as:

- hurtful comments (verbal, written, emailed, texted, social media) making fun of someone at work
- excluding an employee from workplace activities
- playing mind games or 'ganging up'
- giving an employee pointless tasks that don't help to do his or her job
- using an employee's roster to deliberately make things difficult for them
- withholding important information
- excessive scrutiny of work
- initiation or 'hazing' rituals where an employee is pressured to do something unacceptable or humiliating.

The following forms of bullying are also addressed by specific legislation:

- Sexual harassment
- making impossible demands; setting someone up to fail (if it leads to dismissal or demotion)
- physical violence, from pushing and tripping to outright attacks
- threatening an employee with workplace equipment like knives or drills.

All workers, including young workers, have a duty to take reasonable care for the health and safety of other workers while at work. It is an offence for an employee to bully a co-worker.

More information on bullying can be found on the [Victorian Workcover Authority](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/safety-and-prevention/health-and-safety-) website. See [Workplace Bullying \(www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/safety-and-prevention/health-and-safety-](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/safety-and-prevention/health-and-safety-)

[topics/workplace-bullying](#)). Youth Central also has information about bullying in the workplace. [See Problems in the Workplace \(www.safe-t1.net.au/problems-in-the-workplace.html\)](#).

Discussion questions

You may like to use the following questions to facilitate discussion before or after students have read or viewed *Happy Pirate*. Take time to discuss the issues before the students undertake the research or applied learning activities.

Bullying

- How do you know when someone is being bullied?
- How is bullying different from a one-off incident?
- What is the difference between persistent and repeated?
- When does bullying become assault? Can it be both?
- Why is bullying an issue that can affect young people?
- What do you think a bullying policy should have in it?
- What do you think the employer should do to prevent bullying from happening?
- How can an employer create a culture where bullying doesn't happen?
- How can a workplace health and safety representative help if bullying happens?
- Why is it the employer's responsibility to make sure that bullying doesn't happen in the workplace, as far as is reasonably practicable?
- What do you think the employer should do when they become aware of bullying behaviour?

Personal experiences

- Have you experienced bullying in the workplace or at school?
- What can you do if you are bullied?
- Who can you talk to if you are being bullied?
- Have you seen someone being bullied? What did you do? What do you think colleagues who witness bullying should do?

'What's going on?'

Activity 1: What's it all about?

Students discuss the questions below in small groups or as a whole class. The questions are designed to encourage students to explore the bullying issues brought up in the story. They then write answers to the questions (see activity sheet 1).

- What scenes in *Happy Pirate* show workplace bullying?
- How was Nui (the girl in the story) affected by being bullied at work?
- How was the problem dealt with?
- Can you think of any other ways that the problem could have been dealt with?
- Why do you think Jim, the bully, behaves the way he does? What actions would you recommend to prevent him behaving that way again?
- How could the problem have been prevented?
- What is Mr Arnold's responsibility in making sure bullying doesn't happen at *Happy Pirate*?

- How did Nui's workmates act? Should they have said something? What? Who to? When?

Activity 2: Image cube

Students choose six moments in the story that show an aspect of bullying or the consequences of bullying. They then cut them out and paste them on a cube net (see activity sheet 2).

Ask students to compare their cube with those of others.

Students roll the cube and then explain how the image shows an aspect of bullying or the consequences of bullying. This could be done in small groups, pairs or as a whole group activity.

Activity 3: Interview

Students write questions to ask one of the characters in the story (Nui, Jim or Mr Arnold) to find out more about the bullying incident. They may like to ask questions about why the character acted the way they did, what happened before or after the incident, how the character was feeling, who the character thought was responsible for the bullying incident and why.

Students then work in pairs to role-play the interview with one person asking the questions and the other taking on the role of Nui, Jim or Mr Arnold.

Take some time to debrief after the role-plays.

Student research activities

Research activity 1: Bullying behaviour

Students find how bullying is characterised on the VWA website.

Using characters in *Happy Pirate*, their own experiences and material on the web, students compile a list of actions that constitute bullying. They then search for news articles and case studies on bullying and compile a list of bullying incidents and their consequences (see activity sheet 3).

It is important that students understand that it is the employer's responsibility to ensure that bullying does not happen in the workplace as far as is reasonably practicable. Students should also know that it is important for employees to know their rights and have strategies to draw on if they encounter bullying and to know how to speak up if it happens to them. The employer's bullying policy and training should address how and to whom workers raise incidents of bullying with their employer.

Research activity 2: Who to contact for help

Using the VWA publication *What to do if bullying happens to you*, students compile a list of people and organisations that can be contacted for help with workplace bullying (see activity sheet 4).

Remind students that workers could also talk to a bully directly about their behaviour and how it affects them. These are divided into:

- People around me
- People in the workplace
 - The employer should encourage reporting of bullying incidents. The employer's policy and/or supporting procedures also need to inform workers of how and where they should report issues.

- Students need to know that it is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against an employee for raising an issue or concern about health or safety.
- It is important for students to know about the role of the Health and Safety Representative. Refer them to [worksafe.vic.gov.au/hsr](https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/hsr) and WorkSafe guidance *Employee representation*. Organisations that can help. (Students should be aware that if bullying involves assault or threats of assault that they should contact the police. Other organisations also exist that can help such as Lifeline, BeyondBlue, JobWatch, Fair Work Ombudman, Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, Centre against Sexual Assault)

Students then discuss and write down which people or organisations would be best to talk to in different situations. Some examples could include:

- **People around me** - If you feel uncomfortable about how someone speaks to you at work, you may start by talking to your parents, friend, counsellor, chaplain, support service like Lifeline/Beyondblue about it
- **People in the workplace** - If you are unsure whether someone's behavior is bullying and what can be done, you could talk to the Health and Safety Representative at work
- **The bully** – ask them to stop the bullying behaviour
- **Your boss** – tell them about the bullying behavior and ask them to intervene
- **Organisations that can help** - If you have spoken to your boss about someone bullying you and nothing has changed or if involves assault.

Students discuss who Nui could have spoken to or contacted for help.

Research activity 3: Bullying policy

Students seek out a copy of the bullying policy at their school (Foundation level only) or workplace. They then find out the procedure for reporting a bullying incident, how reports are investigated, and what is being done to prevent bullying (see activity sheet 5).

Intermediate and Senior level students can use the bullying policy to write one for the *Happy Pirate*.

A bullying policy should include:

- a clear statement that the organisation is committed to preventing bullying
- what is, and isn't workplace bullying
- statement that the policy includes communication through verbal, SMS, email and social media
- the standards of appropriate behaviour expected
- encouragement for, and instructions on, reporting
- consequences for not complying with the policy
- responsibilities and accountabilities of categories of staff (eg management, supervisors and workers).
- where to get more information.

There are [examples of bullying policies](#) (*Preventing bullying at work-sample policies* in the forms and publications section of the [VWA website](#)).

Activity 3: *Getting the message out* in the applied learning activities could be used as a follow up activity.

Applied learning activities

Activity 1: Assertiveness

Students look at some exchanges in *Happy Pirate* where Nui is spoken to by Jim or Mr Arnold and discuss her responses. Was she assertive enough? How could she have responded differently?

While it is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that employees do not communicate in a bullying way, as far as is reasonably practicable, this activity helps students think about the best way to deal with situations where they are spoken to, or treated, badly.

Students create a list of actions that could constitute bullying, or use the work they have done in Research activity 1. For each action, students create an effective way to respond to it (see activity sheet 6).

E.g.

Type of action	Response
Shouting in a hostile or menacing way “What’s wrong with you? Can’t your mum get you out of bed?”	Be assertive: “There’s no need to shout.” “I don’t like it when you speak like that.”

Students could act out these actions and responses to create a film on how to deal with bullying in the workplace.

Activity 2: The next chapter

Students use the storyboard (see activity sheet 7) to create the next chapter of *Happy Pirate*.

Alternatively they could go to one of the many sites that offer free storyboards. ACMI has an easy to use storyboard generator (<http://generator.acmi.net.au/storyboard>).

Students should consider:

- How have the characters been affected by the incident? Do they behave differently? Has Jim changed how he acts with Nui?
- Has Nui’s experience at work improved?
- What do Nui’s co-workers think about the incident and how does the No Bullying policy affect them?
- How could Mr Arnold be pro-active in preventing a re-occurrence?

Students can use the storyboard to develop a film or could use the frames for a photostory or a comic.

Activity 3: Getting the message out

Students develop a training session that could be used at the Happy Pirate workplace to let all employees know about the new bullying policy. This could include information about what is and isn’t workplace bullying, what’s in the policy and what to do if they do experience or witness bullying. Some of the information could be presented using a presentation package but students should also think of other activities that could get across the message that ‘bullying isn’t OK’. Some

of the activities in the *Resource Centre for teachers* on the SAFE-T1 website might give students some ideas (see www.safe-t1.net.au/bullying-downloadable-print-based-resources.html).

Students should then present the training session. Each training session (presentation and activity) should be between 10 and 20 minutes. If students don't feel comfortable facilitating the activity, you may assist them or facilitate it for them, if appropriate. If students work in small groups, they may feel more confident to facilitate the activity together or one of the group may facilitate it.

Students could use activity sheet 8 for this activity.

This activity could be done as a follow-up to *Research activity 3: Bullying policy*.

Safe-T1 links

SAFE-T1 provides teaching/learning resources around OHS awareness for young people. The links below are for resources that are relevant to the issues in *Happy Pirate*.

[Bullying at work](http://www.safe-t1.net.au/bullying-at-work.html) (www.safe-t1.net.au/bullying-at-work.html)

[Teaching and learning resources](http://www.safe-t1.net.au/bullying-downloadable-print-based-resources.html) (www.safe-t1.net.au/bullying-downloadable-print-based-resources.html)

[Online games and activities](http://www.safe-t1.net.au/bullying-multimedia-resources.html) (www.safe-t1.net.au/bullying-multimedia-resources.html)

VCAL levels

These activities are suitable for students working at Foundation, Intermediate and Senior level. Teachers will need to adjust the activities to meet the requirements of the curriculum at different levels.

The activities are designed to **support** student learning but, in some instances, may also be used for assessment purposes. The activities support the learning outcomes listed in the table below but **may not cover all the elements**. If the activities are to be used as assessment tasks, teachers should **check VCAL Work Related Skills Curriculum Planning Guides** to ensure all the elements are covered and the activity is consistent with the unit purpose statement.

While documentation from undertaking the activities in this unit can be collected to build a portfolio of evidence to be used for the assessment of relevant learning outcomes, students will need to demonstrate competence of a learning outcome on more than one occasion and, wherever possible, in different contexts, to ensure the assessment is consistent, fair and equitable.

Curriculum alignment

Work related skills Unit 1			
	Foundation	Intermediate	Senior
What's going on?			
Activity 1	Can be used as an introduction to Learning Outcomes 2 & 3.	Can be used as an introduction to bullying in the workplace.	Can be used as an introduction to bullying in the workplace.
Activity 2	Can be used as an introduction to		

	bullying in the workplace.		
Activity 3	Can be used as an introduction to Learning Outcomes 2 & 3.		Can be used as an introduction to bullying in the workplace.
Research activities			
Activity 1	Can be used as an introduction to Learning Outcome 3.	Can be used as an introduction to Learning Outcomes 2.	
Activity 2	Can be used as an introduction to Learning Outcome 2.	Can be used as an introduction to Learning Outcome 3.	Can be used as an introduction to Learning Outcome 4.
Activity 3	Can be used as an introduction to Learning Outcome 2.	Can be used as an introduction to Learning Outcome 3.	Can be used as an introduction to Learning Outcome 4.
Applied activities			
Activity 1	Can be used to support Learning Outcome 3.	Can be used as an introduction to bullying in the workplace.	Can be used as an introduction to bullying in the workplace.
Activity 2	Can be used as an introduction to Learning Outcome 2.	Can be used as an introduction to bullying in the workplace.	Can be used as an introduction to bullying in the workplace.
Activity 3	Can be used to support Learning Outcome 3.	Can be used to support Learning Outcome 2.	Can be used to support Learning Outcome 2.