

BUILDING INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS TO TACKLE CYBERBULLYING

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for ISPCC

A guide for teachers to support ethnic minority and Traveller students

1. TEACHER AND SCHOOL STAFF LEVEL

Reflecting on bias

Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their own biases and engage in anti-racism and intercultural competence training to better support ethnic minority and Traveller students, reduce bias, and foster genuine inclusion and respect.

Moving beyond color-blindness

Color-blind approaches in education, based on ignoring race, can unintentionally reinforce bias and hinder students' ability to recognize and respond to discrimination.

Challenging the norm

Instead of promoting Western culture as the norm, schools should raise awareness about cultural diversity and stereotypes present within the school environment.

Understanding Traveller culture

Teachers need training on the history and culture of the Traveller community to avoid misinterpreting cultural differences, which can lead to unfair disciplinary actions and hinder inclusive education.

2. STUDENT AND PEER LEVEL

Promoting culture-based strengths and identity

Teachers should support the development of strong ethnic identities among ethnic minority and Traveller students, as this fosters self-worth, counters discrimination, and challenges stereotypes through recognition and celebration of their achievements.

Fostering belongingness

Teachers should create an environment where all students feel seen, valued, and respected, recognizing that a strong sense of belonging, especially for migrant students, supports their acculturation and overall well-being.

Encouraging inter-ethnic friendships and peer support

Through encouraging inter-ethnic friendships and peer support networks, teachers can help ethnic minority and Traveller youth to feel connected and understood. This can strengthen belonging, support multicultural identity, and may reduce the likelihood of cyberbullying.

Developing social-emotional skills

By encouraging supportive behaviors and fostering positive peer relationships, teachers can help students build emotion regulation skills and empathy, and in turn reducing bullying cyberbullying behaviors.

Addressing intersectionality

Teachers should provide tailored support for students facing multiple forms of marginalization, ensuring that overlapping identities are recognized and that all students receive equal care and opportunities.

Supporting safe digital use

Minority youth can use social media for identity exploration and support, but increased online time can raise their risk of cyberbullying. Teachers can help by promoting safe, positive use of technology and equipping students with digital skills to navigate online spaces securely.

3. CLASSROOM LEVEL

Inclusive classroom practices

Minority youth can be more vulnerable to rejection and victimization in less diverse classrooms, but when teachers actively promote diversity and address interethnic conflict, these risks are reduced.

Nurturing democratic values

Reducing online hate among adolescents requires promoting democratic values and coexistence in diverse societies, with teachers and schools playing a crucial role in helping youth understand that human rights and democracy apply online too.

Fostering critical thinking

Teachers can engage students in open, youth-centered discussions on these topics, creating space for their voices, encourage dialogue, and promote critical thinking.

Culture-sensitive curriculum

Including ethnic minority cultures in classroom content and incorporating intercultural activities about student diversity and Traveller history can boost student engagement and promote a sense of belonging.

Culture-sensitive teaching methods

Teachers should include inclusive materials and actively involve ethnic minority students in creating and using these resources, drawing on their local history and culture to foster understanding and value the knowledge of ethnic minority and Traveller communities.

Promoting cooperation among students

Activities that encourage teamwork and cooperation among students from different ethnic groups can be incorporated into daily lessons and extracurricular programs to reduce tensions and promote positive relationships.

Culturally relevant extra-curricular activities

Teachers can create non-academic programs actively involving ethnic minority and Traveller youth to support their identity, interests, and self-esteem, focusing on personal growth, confidence, and cultural pride for all students.

4. COMMUNICATION AND PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

Clear and inclusive communication

Improving communication and cooperation with ethnic minority and Traveller families is key for preventing misunderstandings, building trust relationships, helping families navigating the school system and keeping parents connected to their children's education.

Parent empowerment

Teachers and schools can provide training and opportunities for ethnic minority and Traveller parents to actively participate in school life, like joining school boards or becoming education advocates.

Supporting parental digital literacy

Teachers and schools can support parents by offering training programs that help them to understand and navigate their children's online activities and enhance their digital literacy. Topics like technical skills, online safety practices, and important digital and anti-bullying policies are suggested.

Celebrate diversity

Organizing events that highlight cultures of ethnic minority and Traveller students and inviting parents to participate can make ethnic minority and Traveller identity visible and valued within the school, strengthening community ties and student pride.