



Bullying has been a problem for ages and all signs signify things are getting worse. We need to look no further than a handful of recent news reports to realize the dangerous social conditions facing our youth today. School-aged children compose one-tenth of the U.S. population, but they are victims in one out of every four violent crimes. It is important students see that less aggressive bystanding (i.e., encouraging bullying) is a form of bullying itself. The following activity was done by a teacher in New York. The message about being peaceful is very clear and powerful.

1. **Have the children take a piece of paper and tell them to crumple it up, stamp on it and really mess it up *but do not rip it.***
2. **Then have the students unfold the paper. Let the kids really try to smooth it out and then look at how scarred and dirty it has become.**
3. **Next, have your students tell the piece of paper they are sorry.**
4. **Finally, explain that even though they said they were sorry and tried to fix the paper, point out all the scars they left behind. And that those scars will never go away no matter how hard they try to fix it.**

POINT: This is what happens when a person bullies another person, they may say they're sorry but the scars are there forever. *If this piece of paper had been another person, and you had done all those things to him or her, by making them feel less than*



perfect (through your words or actions), these are the scars you would leave. That person would never be the same, no matter how many times you tell them you are sorry, no matter how many times you try to smooth things out..."

One final point...The Toothpaste Example. Ask for a volunteer to come to the front of the room. Place a strip of masking tape on the length of the table. With a tube of toothpaste, have the volunteer run a bead of toothpaste on the length of the masking tape. Now ask the participant to put the toothpaste back in the tube. The students will quickly see that it can't be done. This is an example of how hurtful words once spoken cannot be taken back. Bullies say hurtful words frequently and need to know the impact that their words have on their victims.



After you and your class have done the Crumpled Peace and toothpaste activities, have a discussion with the following questions:

- 1. What is one word you can think of to sum up these two activities?**
- 2. How can being peaceful make a difference....for yourself.....for others?**
- 3. How can our words affect others.....in a positive way.....in a negative way?**



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