



Combat Bullying Whole School Program Toolkit Executive Summary

Project Title:	Combat Bullying: A Whole School Program
Project Acronym:	ComBuS
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70%
of young people have
experienced some
form of *bullying*

1 000 000
children are bullied
every week
inside and outside of school

Combat Bullying in Schools



Students who experience bullying are
at increased risk for
poor school adjustment,
sleep difficulties,
anxiety, and
depression

Bullying is the biggest concern for children as they grow up...

I. INTRODUCTION

Despite the current efforts in national and European level, school bullying appears to be an escalating challenge. Children who experience bullying are at increased risk for depression, anxiety, and poor school adjustment. The effects of school bullying on children's stress levels, depressive tendencies, and self-concept are not only a barrier to their learning and development but also for wider society.

“Combat Bullying: A Whole School Program (ComBuS)” (ref. no. JUST/2014/RDAP/AG/BULL/7698) is a project financed by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The ComBuS project aims to fight bullying in schools by developing a whole school program that supports directly: students, school staff, teachers, parents, school leaders.

The ComBuS objectives were to:

- conduct literature review and analysis of the needs of students, teachers, school staff, school leaders and parents in 6 European countries;
- build a participatory, whole school program (ComBuS Toolkit) that will engage students, teachers, school staff, school leaders and parents in fighting bullying using blended (face-to-face, online and mobile) methodologies, tools and activities;

- implement the program in at least 2 schools for each of the chosen 6 European countries;
- disseminate the model widely in the EU.

The activities and outcomes of the ComBuS project have been achieved by a consortium composed of seven partners from 6 EU countries: Cyprus, Romania, Spain, Greece, Italy and Ireland. The project was coordinated by the Centre for the Advancement for Research and Development in Educational Technology LTD (CARDET) from Cyprus.

II. THE COMBUS TOOLKIT

The ComBuS Toolkit is the most important outcome of the project. It is a suite of guidelines, resources and activities which will help to raise awareness of bullying in schools and to help identify, report and tackle the issue of bullying in primary and post-primary schools in Europe. The Toolkit includes activities and resources which are targeted at school leaders and principals, teachers, support staff, students and parents. Housed on the bespoke ComBuS website (<http://combatbullying.eu/>), this Toolkit acts as a ‘One Stop Shop’ for all actors in the school community who want to be supported and guided to combat bullying in their school. Based on the findings from the project’s extensive and diverse needs analysis and literature review research process, this Toolkit contains best practice resources which appeal to all members of the school community, including sample lesson plans for in-class and extra-curricular activities, blended modules for school leaders, teachers and parents, peer support guidelines for students and assessment tools and rubrics for teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of the ComBuS Toolkit in combatting bullying in their schools.

More specifically, the ComBuS Toolkit comprises the following components:

- ComBuS Online Platform and Digital Tools (available at <http://combatbullying.eu/>)
- ComBuS Mobile Application (available at <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=cardet.combus>)

- Blended Learning Modules for School Leaders, Teachers, School Staff and Parents
- Experiential Workshops for Students
- Peer to Peer Support Guidelines
- ComBuS Classroom Activities
- Reading Against Bullying
- Material for thematic school days
- ComBuS Evaluation Rubrics
- ComBuS Implementation Guidelines
- Localisation and adaptation in national contexts

Each toolkit component is user-friendly, easy accessible and abundant in explanations and examples. The combined use of the toolkit components and resources will ensure more efficient results in fighting bullying. Each toolkit component is briefly presented below.



Blended Learning Modules
for School Leaders
Teachers and Parents

A. Blended Learning Modules for School Leaders Teachers and Parents

As part of the ComBuS approach to tackling bullying, it was decided that the project would pilot a ‘whole-school programme’; this means involving all actors in the school community to raise awareness of the issue of bullying, to convey real understanding of the issue and to instruct all actors on how to react to and report incidents of bullying when uncovered. To ensure that school leaders, teachers and parents are all involved in this process and informed of the reality of bullying in schools, the toolkit includes specialised blended learning modules for each of these target groups. There are individual modules for school leaders and principals, teachers and parents; and these have been designed as four 90-minute units; three of which can be completed online and one to be completed in an interactive face-to-face workshop. These units cover topics such as understanding and defining bullying, identifying bullying, responding to bullying, reporting and resolving bullying and an introduction to

cyberbullying; and aim to directly address the needs of these target groups in combatting bullying.



Module 1: Combat Bullying – Guidelines and Tools for school leaders



Module 2: Efficiency coping with bullying in school: A practical approach for teachers



Module 3: Anti-Bullying Tools and Resources for Parents: Protect Your Children and Support Safe Schools



Experiential Workshops for Students

B. Experiential Workshops for Students

The target group of the experiential workshops are students aged from 6 to 14 years. The overall aim of these workshops is to raise awareness amongst students on a range of bully-related issues which can affect them at any stage in school. These workshops aim to involve students in combating bullying, by improving their understanding of the topic and of the causes of bullying; educating them on how they can identify bullying and how to address the issue with the help of teachers, parents and other school actors if they discover that bullying is taking place in their school. These students are the end-user target group of these workshops; however the workshop outlines and resources have been designed to be delivered by teachers. They can be easily integrated into the school curricula, delivered using typical classroom resources and they address the needs of the students in upper primary and lower post-primary school in understanding and responding to episodes of bullying.



Peer to Peer Support Guidelines

C. Peer to Peer Support Guidelines

The Peer to Peer Support Guidelines have been designed to act as a guide for students aged between six and fourteen years old to be able to support each other in order to combat bullying in schools. These Guidelines have been designed to encourage students to become actively involved in tackling the issue of bullying in their schools, and to develop advocacy skills to be able to support and speak up for those peers who need their help. The Guidelines are available through the Mobile App so that students can access them on-the-go, ensuring they always have the support and advice they need to help to put a stop to the bullying of their peers, wherever they may encounter it.



In-Class Activities/Lesson Plans

D. In-Class Activities/Lesson Plans

The ComBuS Toolkit includes lesson plans and activities to be completed with students in a classroom setting. These activities follow a cross-thematic approach, and are intended to be used by teachers in planning their anti-bullying activities which they complete with students. The aim of these activities is to raise awareness of bullying among students and teachers, and to teach both target groups how to identify, report and eradicate instances of bullying. These anti-bullying lesson plans focus on activities which include music, acting, art, etc. meaning that they can be easily integrated into the school curriculum, and teachers will have the skills and resources necessary to successfully implement these activities with their class group.



E. Reading Against Bullying

Reading Against Bullying

An important and innovative component of the ComBuS Toolkit is the activities designed around the theme of ‘Reading Against Bullying’. This component of the Toolkit consists of a profile of relevant books and reading materials which are appropriate for students aged from six to fourteen and which deal with the topics of bullying, building relationships with classmates, dealing with conflicts and dilemmas in school, understanding different cultures and other topics relevant to the issue of bullying. These profiles of books include a short synopsis of the book and explain why the book is relevant to school-based bullying. They are also accompanied by a sample activities and lesson plans which teachers can use with their class to get students reading about and discussing the issue of bullying in schools. These activities are a useful resource for teachers, and are targeted at students; with the aim of empowering them to talk about and understand bullying behaviour so that a change can be brought about in their attitudes and behaviours towards bullying in schools.



F. Material for Thematic School Days/Weeks

Material for Thematic School Days/Weeks

As well as providing in class and learning materials for individual classes, the ComBuS Toolkit also includes extra-curricular activities for teachers to use when planning thematic days in school, highlighting the issue of bullying. These materials are aimed at students but can be implemented in the school by teachers, school leaders and support staff. Certain projects may also be implemented outside of school hours with the support of parents, if possible. These materials take a less formal approach to the topic of bullying, encouraging students to collaborate on art competitions, song-writing and performing activities, theatrical plays, etc. These materials also include resources which will help to spread information and raise awareness throughout the school on the issue of bullying, such as posters, leaflets, podcasts, etc.



Evaluation Rubrics

G. Evaluation Rubrics

To finalise the ComBuS Toolkit and to support the evaluation of the Toolkit resources, ComBuS project partners worked to develop specialised evaluation rubrics for practitioners. These are specifically aimed at school leaders and principals, teachers and school staff, and will aid them in assessing and providing feedback on the suitability of the ComBuS Toolkit resources to tackling bullying in their school communities. The aim of these evaluation rubrics is to support the ComBuS project consortium to gather data and feedback on the relevance of the Toolkit resources and tools to the needs of local schools in each partner country and ultimately to assess the success of the ComBuS Toolkit.

III. CONCLUSION

The Toolkit was produced in all partners languages – Greek, Romanian, Spanish, Italian and English, and it is accessible on our project website.

During the piloting and testing phases we received positive feedback on the Toolkit use, from school leaders, students, teachers, school staff and parents. They found the Toolkit a valuable practical resource, which provides the necessary knowledge and concrete ways to increase awareness on bullying and also to efficiently combat it at the school level.

We hope that you will also discover how the ComBuS Toolkit can help you and we remind that you may access it on our website at www.combatbullying.eu!