



2014

During the meeting between the representatives of the group of students that dealt with the issue of bullying in order to try to identify some possible solutions to fight this sad phenomenon, we focused on three very important aspects:

- The importance of prevention
- The role of adults and young people in facing the problem
- The importance of punishment

1. As regards to the first point, the discussion highlighted that adults need to have more control on their kids to avoid acts of incivility and outrage over weak people.

At school teachers must be especially present in times and places so-called "at risk", because it is clear that bullying occurs when children are not supervised (break time, lesson changing ...) and in places that are out of their control (hallways, bathrooms ...). It isn't enough to solve the problem, but if kids feel more controlled, they are also more responsible.

At home parents must find a way to control the attendance of social networks by their children and realize if they perform or undergo acts of cyberbullying. Teens often have too much freedom in surfing the net and this allows them to act undisturbed as cyberbullies, as well as to expose them to the risk of experiencing bad situations in the network or to run into violent or unpleasant material. Parents need to empower children and make them understand that what is often considered a harmless game can have serious consequences.

2. With regard to the second point we considered the dialogue between adults and young people very important in facing the problem: TALK and LISTEN are fundamental. In fact, the hardest thing is to make the victim of bullying "come out"; in fact he/she very often tends to hide the problem because of his/her fear of retaliation by the bully or even by shame. Furthermore who witnesses an act of bullying doesn't report the fact because he/she doesn't care or because he/she is afraid of the bully in the same way as the victim. Therefore our proposal is to recognize spaces and moments during the school activity, where the students can have a confrontation with each other under the guidance of a teacher in order to reveal difficult situations and to ensure that victims of bullying do not feel isolated and have the courage to ask for help. Similarly also the bully can find the courage to "come out" and not be isolated, because he/she is often a person who behaves that bullying way just to disguise his/her insecurities and his/her troubles, so he/she is a person who really needs help. In order to make this possible, however, it is necessary that the guys trust teachers and institutions: so adults have to conquer this trust thanks to their authority and coherence.

Of course the dialogue between parents and children is very important to highlight situations of discomfort as well as that between parents and teachers to promptly intervene in close cooperation and mutual aid.

3. Finally, we analyzed the issue of punishment and we came to the conclusion that acts of bullying cannot go unpunished. We believe, in fact, young people ask to be gratified, but also to be punished, if necessary. They ask adults to be responsible and coherent, even when it hurts themselves. Bad behaviour that is well punished protects everyone: strong people, weak people, bullies and quiet people. For this reason we thought the bully should repay the damage he/she has caused, for example by doing socially useful services such as cleaning school environment, or forbidding him/her enjoyable activities, like for example activities related to sports or school trips.