

Bullying Case Studies

The following case studies are based on real-life situations. They may be helpful in the classroom or with clients for educational and demonstrative purposes.

Case Study Number One

Henry is 11 years old and attends Main Elementary School just a few blocks from his home. He is in the sixth grade and is an average student. Henry has always been a bit shy and somewhat anxious around his peers. He just moved to this city 3 months ago and has not yet made any friends at the new school, though he does have a “best friend” at his old school. Henry is quite tall and thin for his age and is very self-conscious about his appearance.

Over the past month, Henry has become increasingly withdrawn. Several weeks ago he came home with a tear in his favorite jacket. When his mother asked him what happened, he hurriedly said it was an accident. He goes straight to his room after school and shuts the door. His mother has noticed that he has become more irritable and is often tearful, but when she tries to talk to him about this, he tells her to go away. She is worried about him but thinks this is a phase he’s going through since they’ve just moved to a new city, etc. She also worries about making Henry too dependent on her if she gets too involved in his problems.

You hear through others that Henry is being teased by his classmates several times a week. In particular, two children—a girl, Krissy, and a boy, Michael—make fun of the way he looks and have convinced most of his classmates to avoid him at lunch.

Discussion Questions

- Does a problem exist? If so, what is it?
- How could you encourage Henry to talk about what is happening?
- Who are the people you may want to talk to about this problem?
- Who are the bullies? The victim? The witnesses?
- What are some of the warning signs Henry displays?