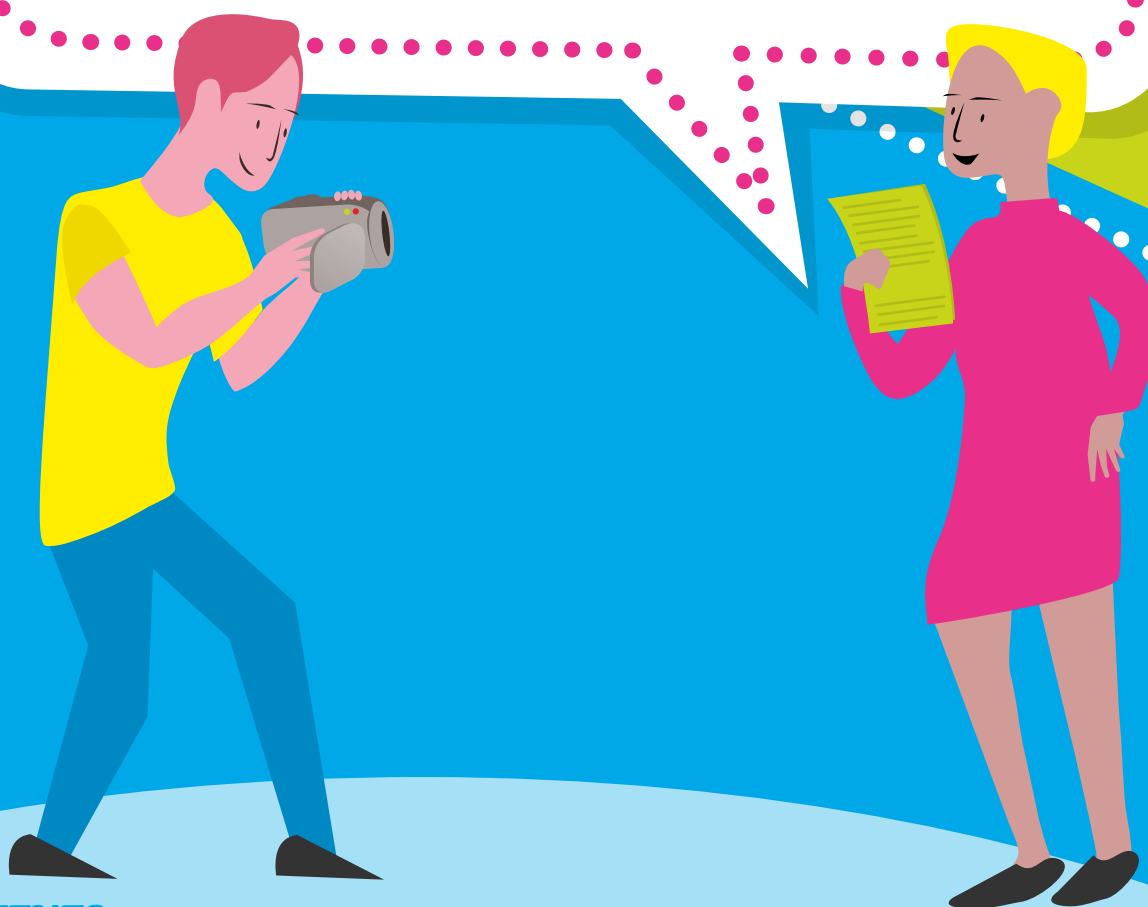


# What made it better?

What made it better for you,  
might make it better for them.

Young Filmmaker Competition: Secondary Age Group Winning Film  
Anti-Bullying Resource 2022



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## SAFEGUARDING

Talking about bullying can be sensitive and can be an emotive subject that can trigger some difficult feelings. Share information with your group on where they can seek support or who they can talk to if they are in any way affected by the session. They can also contact Childline Scotland on 0800 1111 or via webchat to speak to someone anonymously.

## INTRODUCTION OF CAMPAIGN

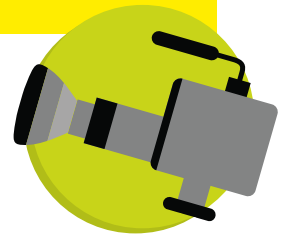
### respectme campaign 2020/2021: What made it better?

respectme's anti-bullying campaign **What made it better?** set out to explore the approaches that helped people respond to bullying behaviour, as well as providing a platform for young people and adults to feed into anti-bullying solutions.

### Young Filmmaker Competition

respectme teamed up with The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland's Junior Conservatoire of Film to launch a Young Filmmaker Competition for Primary aged children (between P4-P7) and Secondary age young people under 18 as part of the '**What made it better?**' campaign.

The competition provided a creative platform for children and young people to look through the lens at bullying from a young person's perspective with the support of adults, to share what helped them or others as well as creating new and important discussions about bullying and how the behaviour and actions affects those involved. The response was positive, after shortlisting films we went on to announce and celebrate three imaginative and original anti-bullying films made by young people.

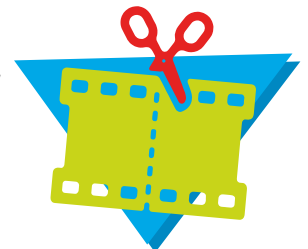


## FACILITATOR NOTES AND CONTEXT

This learning resource has been created for use with young people in a classroom or in a youth group setting.

It has been designed for use alongside our winning Secondary Age Group film 'Monster (Like Me)' written and produced by Ellie Willcocks & Annabelle Rand who attend Woodmill High School in Dunfermline. To watch the film [click here](#) to our YouTube page.

The notes here would require approximately three 50 minute sessions to explore fully. You may wish to use the notes in three sections as indicated, or you may wish to pick and mix from the various sections to adapt to the time you have available. The third section is a comprehensive analysis of the imagery in the film, and you may prefer to use this in full, or not.



This video is designed to be used as a tool to promote discussion. It aims to raise awareness with young people of the nature of bullying behaviour and its impacts, and to show that young people are not alone in experiencing bullying.

The key message from this resource is that while bullying can make a young person feel very alone, many others have had very similar experiences and shows the importance of connection with others to break the disempowering experience of isolation.

This video is created by and for young people, and does not explore the full range of options for a young person who is experiencing bullying. Therefore, it is important that these are also raised and discussed as alternatives, particularly for young people who may feel that friendships are difficult and complex.

As well as the images in the video we have developed additional guidance which you can use to facilitate and widen discussions. There are no right or wrong answers: this is about opening up a discussion as to how bullying and isolation feel, and how they can be prevented. This resource has the potential to generate an empowering discussion around the idea of how to be a good friend.

To facilitate this, the following steps may be helpful:

## **SECTION 1: Key actions and discussion points**

### **STEP 1**

Introduce the video as a resource that is designed to help people think about what bullying is and how it can make people feel.

- Note that the video has some distressing themes and offer young people a safe space/person to follow-up with if any upset arises.
- Show the video in full before the discussion.
- Ask the young people how the video made them feel and what their initial thoughts are.
- This may be prompted by questions such as:
  - ▼ What did you understand about how the girls in the video felt?
  - ▼ What kind of things were happening to them?
  - ▼ What did you feel about the soundtrack?
  - ▼ Was it important that there was no speech or dialogue in the film?
  - ▼ What did you think of their costumes and make-up?
  - ▼ What did you think of the ending?
  - ▼ What overall message did the video leave you with?

### **STEP 2**

Show the film again, pausing at moments to allow the young people to reflect. They may wish to take notes or to discuss with each other. Suggested questions to facilitate further discussion are included below.

- Reflect on the title: why is it called 'Monster (Like Me)?'.
- This may generate discussion around the connotations of the word "monster" as someone who is frightening, evil, wicked, different etc.
- The group may note that the girls are dressed as monsters but in fact they both feel frightened and alone.
- You may wish to consider the importance of the brackets (Like Me) to the ending of the film, and the girls finding each other.



## SECTION 2: Key actions and discussion points

You may like to focus on the music/soundtrack before watching and analysing in-depth. There are many points throughout where the soundtrack juxtaposes with the reality of the girls' experience in a very poignant way. You could ask them to note or discuss what is happening in the film when the lyrics are played. Your class/group may notice some of the following lines in particular:



- Say I look nice when I'm not.
- Touch my hair as you pass my chair.
- A line a day when you're far away.
- Give me your hand when I've lost the way.
- Send me the warmth of a secret smile.
- Give me a shoulder to cry on.
- Give me your heart to rely on.
- Little things mean a lot.

You may wish to open up the discussion around "Little things mean a lot" to think about what kind of things they may be able to do if they see someone else experiencing bullying. They may not feel able to confront the person or people bullying, but maybe they could extend gestures of friendship?

## SECTION 3: Key actions and discussion points

You could now work through the film, playing and pausing to discuss the following frames. You could pick and choose some of these. You don't have to do them all. Depending on your group and what you wish to use this exercise for, you could ask the young people to take notes, or to discuss in small groups and to feedback to the whole group at various points.



### Post-it Notes on the Mirror

- ▼ What sorts of messages is Girl 1 writing on the mirror?
- ▼ How is she trying to make herself feel before she goes to school?
- ▼ Are there any other ways that people might try to cope or prepare themselves if they are worried about bullying at school?

### Girl 1 in the Hallway

- ▼ How does the film make it clear that Girl 1 does not fit in/ is very isolated?
- ▼ Think about the framing: the way she occupies the centre space alone with crowds around the edges, some staring at her.
- ▼ Think about her clothes and make up and the use of colour.
- ▼ You may wish to discuss or reflect on what types of things, parts of someone's identity, may make them feel alone or not part of the crowd.
- ▼ You may also wish to discuss how this can happen to someone, e.g. how sometimes people can find themselves no longer part of a group if there is a fall out etc. or if they simply choose to dress or present themselves in a unique way.

- ▼ Finally, we can tell here that the girl feels anxious and sad, but is it always a negative thing to look/ be different? What can help to embrace and value difference? Could it be that these were costumes designed for the video to represent how isolated the girls felt, rather than actual depictions of their styles and identities?

### The Sock Puppets

- ▼ The sock puppets appear at her shoulders, and seem to represent all the voices resounding in her head, perhaps things others say to her, or that she says to herself. It could also be viewed as an “angel/demon” battle on each shoulder, with her trying to hold on to her positive messages in the midst of an onslaught of horrible comments.
- ▼ You may ask your group what kind of things the puppets seem to be saying to Girl 1?
- ▼ How does she feel as her head fills with their words?
- ▼ What might the sock puppets represent here?
- ▼ You may wish to elicit from the group how bullying can be experienced as inescapable or getting inside your head, affecting self-belief etc.

### Surrounded by Text

- ▼ You could ask the young people if they think the background is made up of one conversation or many.
- ▼ How does the girl feel to be surrounded by all these messages?
- ▼ What kinds of things are written? You could ask the group if any particular words or phrases stood out to them?
- ▼ This could be a good point to discuss how the nature of bullying has changed because of social media and how much words matter.
- ▼ Some young people may wish to raise comments that others have made to them on social media that have made them upset or worried.
- ▼ You may wish to make it clear that bullying via social media is still bullying, and may cross the line into criminal behaviour in some cases.
- ▼ There are options for handling or responding to online bullying and these include telling a friend or an adult what is happening.
- ▼ How realistic is blocking or deleting people as a response? When would you do that, and when wouldn't you?

### The Toilet Cubicle

- ▼ In this scene Girl 2 is introduced as sitting next to Girl 1, both feeling the same way but unaware of each other.
- ▼ What do you notice about the post-it notes surrounding Girl 1 in this scene?
- ▼ What might this suggest about the way she feels?
- ▼ You might wish to discuss strategies that people have tried that have or haven't been effective here.
- ▼ Girl 2 is introduced and it is clear that she is having a similar experience and feelings as Girl 1.
- ▼ You may wish to draw on the parallels in the way that they are dressed, their make-up, the way they are both sitting.
- ▼ Both girls are seen in separate toilet cubicles. Why might they have gone here? You could ask here about what other options there are, and whether there are any safe spaces in their school or community that they could use if they had to.

## No Escape

- ▼ We see a series of images cutting between Girl 1 and Girl 2, showing both alone in a dark room but tortured by the real or remembered things that they have had said to them. Girl 1 is seen screaming and crying while Girl 2 cries.
- ▼ You could ask the group what they think is happening to both girls here.
- ▼ What types of things/ messages are they dealing with?
- ▼ Why have the directors chosen to show their characters alone in a dark room?
- ▼ In what way are their reactions similar?
- ▼ Is there anything that Girl 1 does differently from Girl 2?
- ▼ You may wish to discuss here that bullying does not have a uniform impact, and that while many people may react in more expected ways of dealing with pain, that there can also be reactions of hurt, anger and fury. You could ask how this type of hurt, anger and frustration may be manifested.

## The Journals

- ▼ Girl 1 is seen writing/ drawing in a journal, surrounded by chaotic patterns and whirls of colour.
- ▼ You may ask how the girl feels at this point, as shown by the background colours and the frantic scribbling.
- ▼ What sorts of things is she writing in her journal?
- ▼ You could discuss here the power of journaling or recording the experiences of bullying. Not only can it be therapeutic to write it down and let it go, but it may be something that you could reflect on with a counsellor or friend, to look more objectively at statements or comments that have been hurtful/ internalised.
- ▼ What do the girls realise when they compare their journals?
- ▼ You may consider as a group here that in fact, most people have felt bullied at some point in their lives, and although it feels incredibly isolating, actually it is something most of us have in common.

## The Ending

- ▼ The film ends with the girls posting messages together on the mirror, just as Girl 1 did at the start.
- ▼ What do these messages say?
- ▼ Why is “you’re not alone” such a powerful message for both girls?
- ▼ What difference has it made to discover that they have a shared experience?

## PLENARY DISCUSSIONS

At this point you could come back to the purpose of the film, sharing with them that the two school pupils made the film in response to respectme's call for young filmmakers to share their ideas on the topic of the campaign **'What made it better?'**.

You could ask the group for their thoughts and ideas on this topic, covering various options to cope with or respond to bullying.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

There is an accompanying video on the respectme YouTube channel, called 'Bullying: What Can I Do?', which also has additional guidance/facilitator notes.

Click on the link below to visit the awareness raising videos section of respectme's website <https://respectme.org.uk/resources/videos/>

