



**Power
of Zero**



Solution Team

Starter Kit for Schools

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A proven way for schools to resolve
bullying and cyberbullying

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A personal thank you from our CEO!

Thank you for reading this guide and taking the time to learn about a new way to resolve student bullying.

Bullying and cyberbullying are some of the most pervasive and difficult challenges facing schools today. As educators we know how much suffering bullying causes and without intervention it can destroy student self-esteem and lead to anxiety, depression, eating disorders, and in extreme cases suicide.

And yet most teachers, counselors and school leaders have never been trained in an effective system for how to respond.

That is why we developed Solution Team®. The year was 2010. I had been brought in by a school district in the central valley of California to help with chronic bullying problems. They had tried everything from zero tolerance to restorative practices but nothing was working. Punishment did not make the bullying students any kinder and the threat of zero tolerance had dampened any inclination on the part of victims to report bullying, for fear that stitches are for snitches. The district had invested tens of thousands of dollars in restorative practices but found these to be time consuming and - when it came to bullying - they often had to wait a long time before the bullying student consented to participate.

Solution Team changed all this. **It replaced the threat of punishment with making the student peer group responsible for solving the bullying.** It was a time-smart intervention delivered over the space of two weeks and in total took little more than an hour of staff time. Incredibly, we found that it solved nearly 90% of incidents of bullying. And when we followed up three months later with the target, it was clear that the intervention had long term staying power.

Our goal as a nonprofit organization is to bring schools sustainable, effective solutions to bullying. **We encourage you to try out the Solution Team intervention at your school.** If you want any help from us or training from our trainers, please do let us know.

Nicholas Carlisle | CEO

[Power of Zero](#)

Why schools need better ways to respond to bullying

Most schools invest time and care in prevention. They work to build positive cultures, teach social skills, and set clear expectations. And still, bullying happens.

When bullying or cyberbullying becomes ongoing, schools often encounter the same challenges. Incidents repeat despite consequences. Peer dynamics sustain harm. Online behavior spills into the school day. Parents push for answers. Staff spend significant time investigating situations that do not fully resolve.

Traditional discipline can interrupt behavior, but it often does not change the underlying dynamics or restore a sense of safety and belonging for the targeted student.

Solution Team was developed for these situations, when bullying is already happening, and schools need a response that is effective, efficient, and evidence-based.

How does a Solution Team work?

*Solution Team is a **structured, adult-led response** used when bullying or serious peer conflict is ongoing.*

A trained **Solution Coach** brings together a small group of students and guides them to take responsibility for stopping the bullying and supporting the targeted student. The process is designed to end harm and restore safety without escalating conflict or relying solely on punishment.

Several features distinguish Solution Team from other approaches:

- It is led by an adult, not run by students.
- It involves peers because peer influence is central to sustaining bullying.
- It is used selectively, when prevention and everyday interventions have not been enough.

Solution Team is not a curriculum, not mediation, and not a replacement for school-wide prevention. It is a response method within a larger system.

When Solution Team is (and is not) appropriate

Using a Solution Team well depends on choosing the right situations.

A Solution Team **is appropriate** when bullying or harassment is repeated or conflicts are escalating, when the targeted student feels unsafe or distressed, and when peer dynamics are clearly reinforcing the behavior. It is particularly helpful when other strategies have been tried without success.

A Solution Team is **not appropriate** when there are serious safeguarding concerns that require immediate action, when a formal investigation is necessary, or when the situation is a one-time conflict between students of equal power. It should also not be used if the targeted student does not consent to peer involvement. Safeguarding thresholds and legal obligations vary by country and context. Schools should always follow their local safeguarding policies and statutory requirements.



Solution Team process: step-by-step

The Solution Team process follows a seven-step structure. Each step is intentionally designed and relies on professional judgment, facilitation skills, and safeguarding awareness.

Step 1. Meet with the targeted student

The teacher or staff member meets privately with the targeted student to understand what is happening, assess safety, and determine whether this is bullying or another form of peer difficulty. The staff member explains the Solution Team option, seeks the student's consent, and discusses what information can be shared with peers. The parents of the target are informed in line with school policy.

Step 2. Form the Solution Team

The staff member selects six to eight students, including those involved in the bullying and positive peer leaders who can influence change. The targeted student is not part of this meeting.

Step 3. First Solution Team meeting

The staff member brings the students together and makes it clear that no one is in trouble. With the adult's permission, the adult describes how the situation feels for the targeted student and asks each team member what they can do or stop doing to improve the situation. Solutions come from students, not from adults.

Step 4. Check in with the targeted student

Shortly after the first Solution Team meeting, the staff member checks in briefly with the targeted student. Without sharing details of the meeting, the staff member lets the student know that their peers are working on change and encourages them to notice and be open to any differences in how they are treated. Later in the same week, the Solution Coach® meets again with the targeted student to see whether changes are occurring, assess safety, and identify any remaining concerns.

Step 5. Second Solution Team meeting

One week after the first meeting, the Solution Coach reconvenes the team. The focus is on reinforcing positive change, helping students reflect on what is working, encouraging continued action, and adjusting actions if needed.

Step 6. Third (final) Solution Team meeting

Approximately two weeks after the first meeting, the Solution Coach® holds a final team meeting. The targeted student attends this meeting to share what has been helpful and how things feel now. The team reflects on what they did to help and how they can continue supporting a positive environment.

Step 7. Follow up with the target of bullying three months later

In nearly every case, their bullying is resolved. But it is good practice to check in on them to show that you care.



Solution Team Timeline



Proven Impact

Schools trained in the No Bully System® resolve nearly 90% of bullying and cyberbullying incidents, making it one of the most impactful bullying response methods in use today.

See:

[Solution Team: Outcomes of a Target-Centered Approach to Resolving School Bullying. DeNike, M. & Gordon, H. Contemporary School Psychology \(2019\)](#)

[Impact Evaluation of the No Bully System®. Hanson, T; Izu, J; Fronius, T; and Petrosino, A. \(2019\).](#)

This evidence-based approach has been implemented in 700+ schools across public, private, and international settings and refined through more than two decades of real-world school use.

Why the Solution Team works

Bullying is rarely sustained by one student alone. It is reinforced by the peer group and the bystanders who do nothing to help.

Solution Teams work by engaging these dynamics directly. They build empathy and responsibility, reduce power struggles, and shift group behavior. Because the process is focused and time-limited, it often resolves situations more quickly than prolonged investigations or repeated punishment.

Schools using this approach report resolving close to **90% of bullying and cyberbullying cases**, reducing repeat incidents and staff burnout.

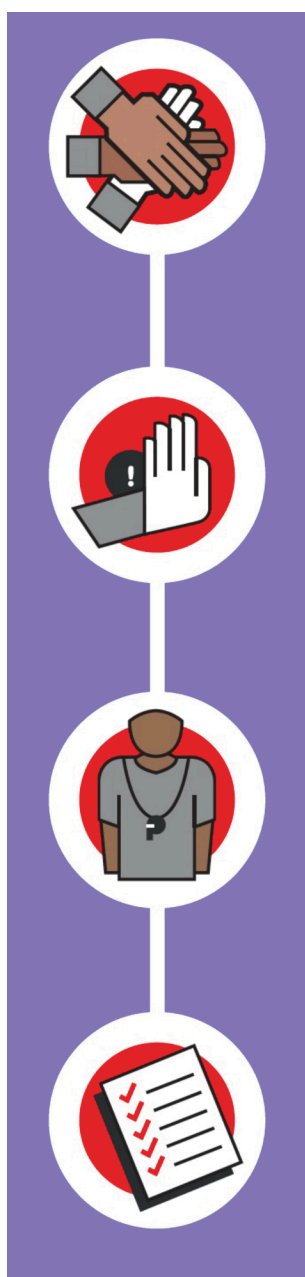
Implementing responsibly

Many schools choose to train a group of key staff to become Solution Coaches and implement the Solution Team across all grade levels at their school. This approach supports consistency, safeguards students, and helps adults navigate complex situations with confidence. Effective implementation requires skilled facilitation, practice, leadership backing, and alignment with safeguarding procedures. The Solution Coach role is central to ensuring the process is used ethically and effectively.



The No Bully Program: prevention and response

Solution Team is a highly effective response to bullying. Many schools begin here and then implement the No Bully Program to reduce bullying frequency and foster a culture of kindness and respect. The No Bully program is a whole-school bullying prevention program, which trains administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and students in four levels of intervention.



Level One

Build a welcoming school culture

The foundation to a bully-free school is a welcoming school culture where every student is accepted for who they are.

Level Two

Interrupt student disrespect and bullying

All teachers and staff interrupt student prebullying and bullying and refer on-going incidents to a school Solution Coach.

Level Three

Run a Solution Team and follow up

The Solution Coach convenes a Solution team of 6-8 students and engages their sense of kindness and fairness to bring the bullying to an end. They follow up with any student stuck in the role of bully or target.

Level Four

Implement an empathy building action plan

If you are experiencing a problem grade or class where bullying is endemic, the school implements a plan to create a culture of acceptance.

How would your school benefit from training?

Training and certification of key staff as Solution Coaches support schools in moving from trial use of Solution Teams to confident, high-quality implementation. This includes developing shared language, clear roles, and reliable systems that protect students and staff alike.

Through training and certification, schools gain access to:

- Exact facilitator language and guidance that helps adults lead Solution Teams with clarity and confidence
- Clear criteria for selecting Solution Team members in different types of cases
- Strategies for responding when students minimize harm or blame the target
- Guidance for addressing racially motivated bullying within Solution Teams
- Structured approaches to safety assessment and escalation, aligned with safeguarding responsibilities
- Documentation tools, solution logs, and monitoring systems that support accountability and follow-up

Together, these elements help ensure that Solution Teams are used ethically, consistently, and effectively across your school.

Bring Solution Teams to your school

We provide online and in-person training to become a Solution Coach and implement Solution Teams to end student bullying. If you would like to find out more about bringing Solution Team to your school, reach out to us at info@powerof0.org.

About Power of Zero

Power of Zero is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to teaching students how to use their power well, with zero violence, zero hate and zero bullying. We launched our No Bully program in 2003 and we have made school bully-free for over 500,000 students worldwide. For more information visit <https://www.powerof0.org/>.

