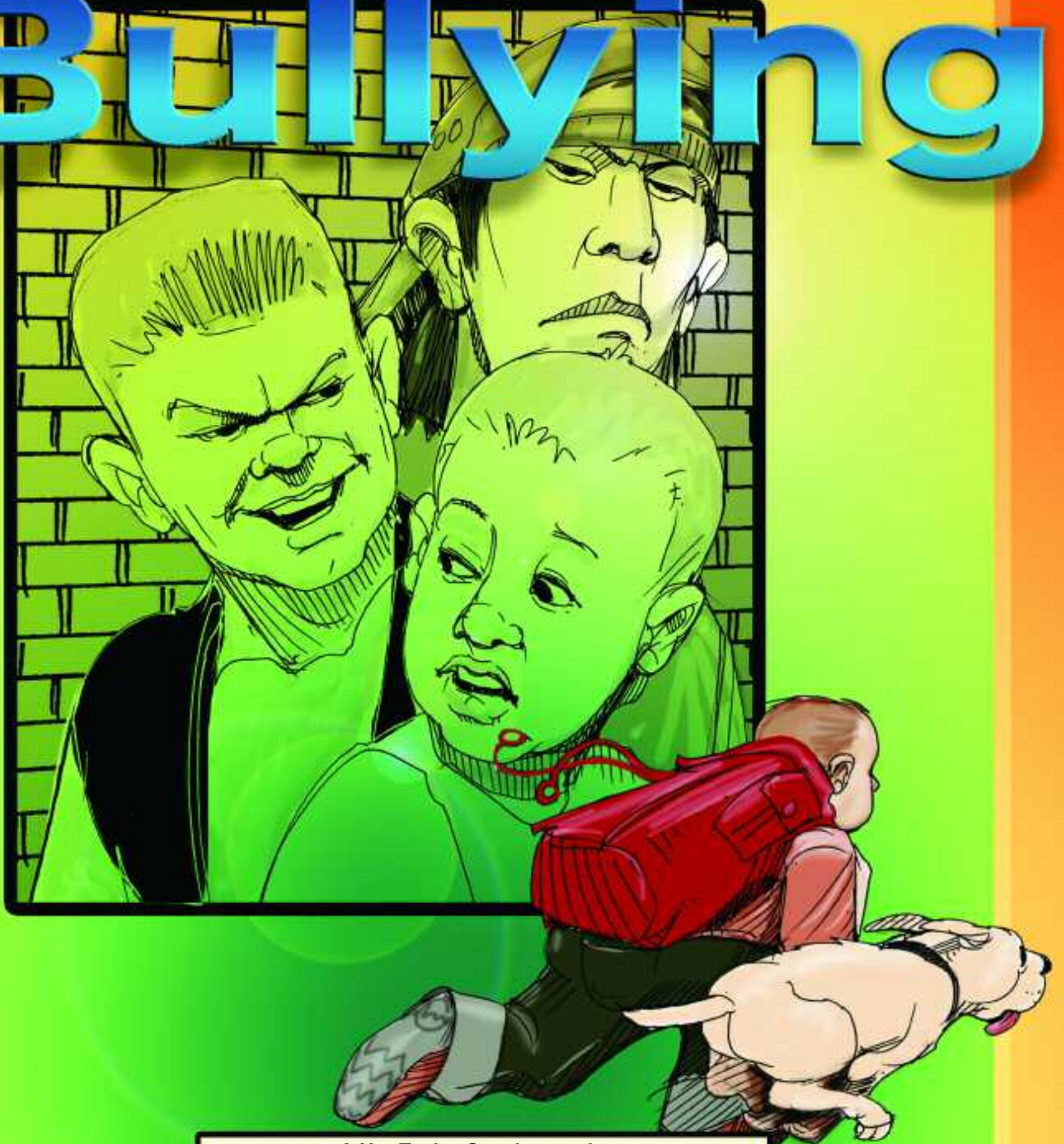


Bullying



A Hot Topics Supplement from

Red



Bullying: A Graphic Novel



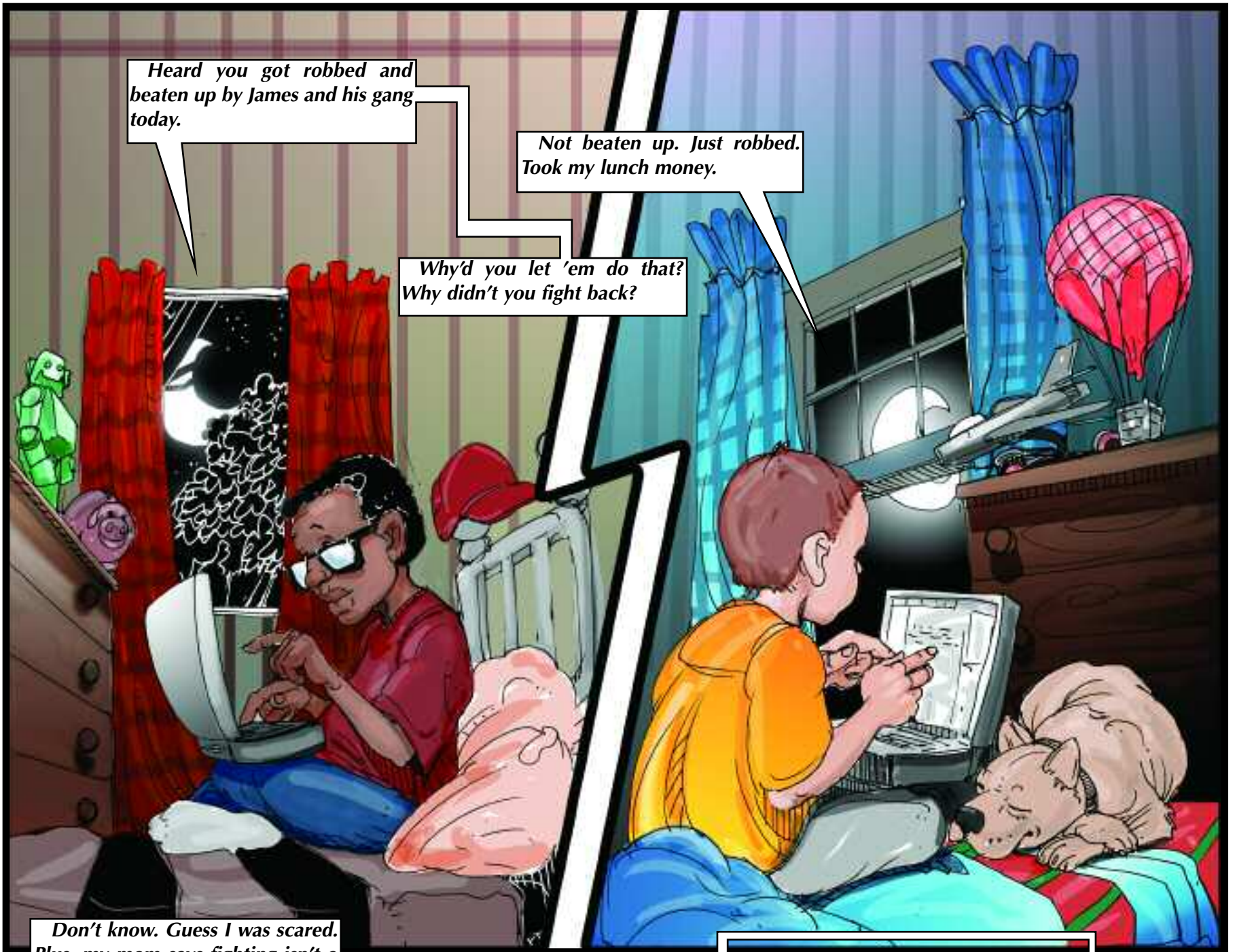


YEAH, ME TOO. BUT, BEN, WHAT'LL YOU DO WHEN JAMES TAKES YOUR LUNCH MONEY AGAIN TOMORROW? YOU'RE GONNA GET HUNGRY, YOU KNOW.

LISTEN, I GOTTA DO MY HOMEWORK. I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW.

I KNOW. I'LL THINK ABOUT IT. MAYBE HE WON'T BOTHER ME AGAIN.

KEEP DREAMING. MAYBE YOU'LL WIN A MILLION DOLLARS, TOO.



Heard you got robbed and beaten up by James and his gang today.

Not beaten up. Just robbed. Took my lunch money.

Why'd you let 'em do that? Why didn't you fight back?

Don't know. Guess I was scared. Plus, my mom says fighting isn't a good way to solve problems.

Unless the problem is James. Fighting's the only way to solve that problem.

Well, I'm not taking lunch money tomorrow, just a lunch bag. So he won't bother me.

Don't bet on it.





KICK HIM IN THE STOMACH.

LIKE A KARATE KID.

IF I HIT HIM, HIS GANG'LL JUMP ME AFTER SCHOOL.

YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT. THAT GANG'S TOUGH. THEY COULD REALLY HURT YOU. JUST TELL ON THEM. GO TO THE COUNSELOR, MS. FISHER. SHE SAYS SHE'S THERE TO HELP KIDS IN TROUBLE. YOU'RE IN TROUBLE.

THAT'LL JUST MAKE THEM EVEN MADDER. YOU GOTTA SHOW 'EM THEY CAN'T MESS WITH YOU.

Later that day, after school, Ben walks home alone.

HEY! BENNY BABY, WAIT UP, GOT ANY FOOD? I'M HUNGRY.

THINK YOU CAN OTRUN ME? WELL, YOU CAN'T RUN AWAY TOMORROW IN SCHOOL. SEE YOU AT LUNCH!





WANNA HANG OUT? WE'RE BORED.

YEAH. COME IN. I NEED TO ASK YOU SOMETHING ANYWAY.



DO YOU REALLY THINK I SHOULD FIGHT JAMES?

IF YOU WANT HIM TO LEAVE YOU ALONE, YOU BETTER.

IF YOU FIGHT HIM, HIS FRIENDS WILL GET YOU.

SO WHAT? BEN'S GOT AN OLDER BROTHER. RICKY AND HIS FRIENDS CAN TAKE JAMES AND HIS LITTLE GANG.

Meanwhile, at James's house ...

YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN THAT KID RUN, LIKE A GHOST WAS AFTER HIM.

GOOD JOB. ANYTIME YOU WANNA HANG WITH US, YOU CAN.

JAMES, YOU ROTTEN KID, GET DOWN HERE. DIDN'T I TELL YOU TO TAKE CARE OF THIS? YOU'RE SO STUPID.



MAN, JAMES, YOUR MOM IS REALLY MAD. WHAT'D YOU DO?

AW, NOTHIN'. SHE'S LIKE THAT ALL THE TIME.

JAMES! IF YOU DON'T GET THIS SKATEBOARD OUTTA HERE, I SWEAR I'LL BUST IT AND THEN I'LL BUST YOU!



WELL, THAT'S JUST TOO BAD. AND YOU AIN'T GOT NO FRIENDS. BUT WHOEVER'S HERE BETTER GET OUT NOW BEFORE I HAVE TO COME UP THERE AND GET YOU.



LATER, MA, MY FRIENDS'RE HERE.

YEAH, GUYS, IT'S LATE ANYWAY. I'LL SEE Y'ALL TOMORROW. WE'LL MEET AT BEN'S LOCKER.



DO YOU REALLY THINK I SHOULD ASK RICKY TO COME UP TO SCHOOL AND BEAT UP JAMES?

WELL, I'LL THINK ABOUT IT. I JUST DON'T KNOW.

SURE. THE ONLY WAY TO BEAT A BULLY LIKE JAMES IS TO BEAT A BULLY. SEE THAT BAT OVER THERE? IT'S NOT JUST FOR BASEBALL, Y'KNOW.



Next day at school...

SO, BEN, I JUST WANTED TO SEE HOW YOU'RE DOING. I LIKE TO CHECK IN ON ALL OF OUR NEW STUDENTS AND SEE HOW THEY'RE GETTING ALONG. DO YOU LIKE OUR SCHOOL?

YEAH, I GUESS IT'S OKAY.



GOOD. WELL, HOW'RE THE KIDS TREATING YOU? IT'S NOT EASY TO START NEW IN THE MIDDLE OF A YEAR.

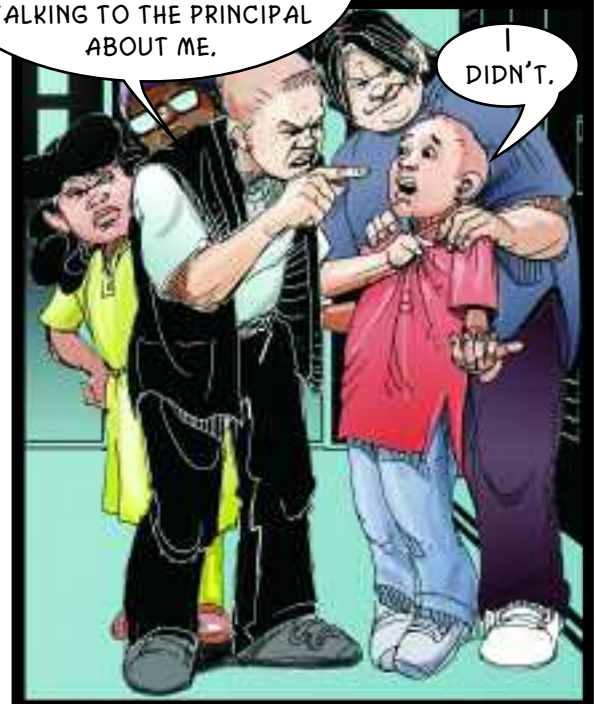
I SAW YOU IN THE OFFICE BEFORE. YOU BETTER NOT EVEN THINK ABOUT TALKING TO THE PRINCIPAL ABOUT ME.

I DIDN'T.



THEY'RE FINE.

WELL, COME BACK AND SEE ME ANY TIME.



'CAUSE IF YOU DO, I'LL MAKE YOU SORRY YOU SAID ANYTHING.

YEAH. YOU GOT THAT RIGHT. REAL SORRY.



YOU GUYS BETTER LOOK OUT 'CAUSE AFTER SCHOOL BEN'S BIG BROTHER RICKY IS GONNA GET YOU SO-O-O-O BAD.

OOH, I'M SO SCARED. BEN'S BIG BROTHER? BIGGER THAN BEN? WOW, THAT'S BIG, HA, HA, HA.



WELL, HE'S REAL BIG, AND HE'S GOT FRIENDS ON THE FOOTBALL TEAM WHO ARE GONNA CRUSH YOU GUYS.



WELL, WE'LL SEE YOU AFTER SCHOOL AND WE'LL FIND OUT WHO CRUSHES WHO.

WHOM, YOU MORON.



PEARL, WHY'D YOU DO THAT? WHY'D YOU SAY RICKY WAS COMING? I DIDN'T EVEN TALK TO HIM ABOUT THIS.

I JUST WANTED TO SCARE HIM.



YOU CAN'T SCARE A BULLY. THAT'S WHY YOU HAVE TO GET A GROWNUP TO HELP YOU.

WELL, I KNOW ONE THING. AFTER SCHOOL, I'M GETTING OUT AS SOON AS THE BELL RINGS AND RUNNING HOME AS FAST AS I CAN.



Next day at school...



SO, YOUR BIG BROTHER'S A GHOST, HUH? 'CAUSE HE WAS SURE INVISIBLE YESTERDAY.

YEAH, OR SO SMALL WE COULD HARDLY SEE HIM. "INVISIBLE, HA!



LOOK GUYS, I DON'T WANT ANY TROUBLE.

WELL THAT'S JUST TOO BAD.



WHAT'S YOUR NAME? ARE YOU NEW HERE? I DON'T REMEMBER SEEING YOU BEFORE.

I'M BEN ALBRIGHT AND, YEAH, I'M NEW. I'VE BEEN HERE A COUPLE OF WEEKS.



WELL, BOY, YOU SURE CAN RUN. EVER THOUGHT ABOUT RUNNING TRACK? OUR TEAM CAN USE A FAST GUY LIKE YOU.



ME? FOR REAL?



SURE. COME TO THE GYM AFTER SCHOOL.

Later that day, after school at Ben's house ...

HEY, SPEEDY, DON'T THINK YOU CAN RUN FASTER THAN ME. AFTER SCHOOL TOMORROW, I'M COMING FOR YOU, AND YOU WON'T GET AWAY. BETTER TELL THE COACH YOU'LL BE MISSING TRACK PRACTICE.

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU MADE THE TRACK TEAM. YOU MUST BE REALLY FAST.

I TRIED OUT LAST YEAR BUT DIDN'T MAKE THE CUT. I REALLY DIDN'T WANNA BE ON IT ANYWAY, THOUGH.

OKAY, SO YOU'RE FAST, BUT WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO ABOUT JAMES TOMORROW?

WELL, MAYBE IF I'M STRONG ENOUGH TO MAKE THE TRACK TEAM, I'LL BE TOUGH ENOUGH TO TAKE ON JAMES.

WHAT ARE YOU, NUTS? FAST IS GREAT, BUT FIGHTING IS NOT THE SAME AS RUNNING. GO TO THE COUNSELOR TOMORROW.

NAH, TELL YOUR BROTHER AND HAVE HIM COME AFTER SCHOOL TO TEACH JAMES A LESSON.

KICK HIS BUTT YOURSELF, BEN. IF YOU CAN RUN TRACK, YOU MUST BE IN BETTER SHAPE THAN YOU THINK.

THANKS GUYS. YOU'RE GOOD FRIENDS. I KNOW WHAT I HAFTA DO.

Choose Your Own Ending: What Should Ben Do?

On these pages, you've read about the problems that Ben has had at school. He has had to deal with bullies and gang violence that might hurt him.

He has gotten advice from his friends about the best way to handle these bullies. They've told him different things. One has advised him to tell an adult; another says he should get his big brother to help him by beating up the bullies; another has told him to fight back himself. There are probably more choices, too, but, of those three, which do you think would work the best?

Victims have a couple of choices. They can ignore the bully, pretend they don't hear or see what he or she is saying. It's hard, but it's best to show no reaction at all. Or, they can respond firmly with, "Who cares what you think?" They can make a joke about it.

They can remove themselves and walk away or go to an adult nearby if they feel threatened. In fact, if bullying happens over and over, the most important thing a victim can do is to tell an adult.

What do you think Ben did? On a sheet of paper, write the end of this story showing what Ben chose and how it worked out.



In these panels, draw the word balloons showing Ben telling Pearl what he's decided and what she said back to him.

Then write the word balloons showing his words with James and what James said back to him.



Bullying is a Big Problem

Bullying is a problem for everyone in a school. Chances are that if you go to school, you are a bully yourself, a victim, or a witness to bullying. It could be that you're not even aware of it because bullying is not always easy to spot. Bullying can be of different types and actions. It could include teasing, threatening, hitting, stealing, and even gossiping.

Some bullying hurts the body because the victims are hit in some way. Other bullying is emotional, like when one kid is left out of things on purpose and made to feel alone. That kind of bullying hurts the feelings. That pain might even be worse than physical pain.

Boys and girls can be both victims and bullies. Boy bullies are more likely to cause physical pain. Girl bullies are more likely to hurt the feelings. Either way, bullying hurts everyone and needs to be stopped. Everyone in school has the right to feel safe and to be able to learn and to succeed. Bullying denies those rights.

One of the reasons why bullying is hard to stop is because sometimes the bullies are the kids who are popular, the kids everyone likes. The victims are often the unpopular or "weird" kids. So you can see that if the bullies are popular and the victims are "weird," the witnesses will probably support the popular ones. Who wants to side with the "weirdo"?

Numbers Don't Lie

The statistics are scary. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics:

- 30% of students in grades 6 through 10 are involved in bullying, whether as bullies, as victims, or as both. That's one of every three kids!
- Case studies of school shootings show that bullying is a factor in most cases.
- Recent surveys show that 77% of students say they had been bullied at some time.
- One out of every five kids admits to being a bully.
- Forty-three percent of school students are afraid to go to the bathroom because of the threat of violence.
- Every 7 minutes, a student is attacked on a playground.
- Eight percent of students miss a day of school each month as a result of bullying.
- There are twice as many fights in lower grades than in higher grades.

Who Gets Bullied?

A victim could be anyone. Victims are often loners or kids who appear to be friendless. Sometimes they are children who are different in some way - with mental or physical handicaps. Girls in cliques may pick on other girls just because they wear their hair differently or dress in their own style, thought to be "uncool." Victims are often people who get upset easily and show it.

Who is a Bully?

Again, a bully can be anyone. Bullies are often the "cool" kids. They may be kids who have suffered some abuse or witnessed some abuse at home. They may be kids who are popular but are afraid they'll lose that position. Bullying is about power. Making the victim feel weak makes the bully feel powerful. In this twisted way, bullies feel better about themselves when they hurt others. Bullies truly have low self-esteem. They just hide that fact by showing power.

The Role of the Witness

A bully needs an audience to succeed. Don't help the bully. If you are witnessing an act of bullying, walk away. Get help if you can, but don't give the bully an audience. Watching adds to the hurting of the victim. You're not just an innocent bystander if you're watching. You're guilty, too. And be aware that if just one person says "Stop it" to the bully, about half the time the actions stop. Think about that the next time you see bullying.

Bully-Free Schools

Your classroom and school should have rules about bullying. Those rules can keep you safe. Talk with your teacher and your classmates about the rules and how they can be enforced.

Brainstorm a list of words you think of when you hear the word "bully." Then do the same for the word "victim." Then talk about the word "empathy." Talk about what it means to think about being in another person's place in order to feel what that person is feeling.

Newspaper Learning Activities

Conflict Can Be Peaceful

Conflict is a way of life, but violence doesn't have to be. Find a story about conflict in the newspaper. Talk about the ways in which it could be settled peacefully.

Advertise the Bully Box

Your school should have a bully box. It's a box where kids can write anonymous notes to report any bullying they see. Look in the newspaper to see how display ads are designed. Create one advertising the bully box and encouraging people to use it.

Write an Editorial

Read the editorials to see how they are written. Write one about how bullying is handled in your school.

Think-Pair-Share

Break into groups of two. Discuss these questions:

Can one person make a difference?

If bullying has no audience, can it exist?

How is empathy the first step to stopping violence?

How can you become part of the solution to bullying at school?

Then find a story in the newspaper about someone who is either being bullied or is a bully. Write a paragraph about how empathy could have changed the situation. Present it to the class.

Acts of Violence

How many acts of violence are reported in today's newspaper? Break your class into groups with each group skimming a different section of the newspaper. Add the totals. What conclusions can you draw about our society? Are we violent? Can that be changed? How?

Be the Change

Nonviolent activist Mahatma Gandhi said, "You must be the change you wish to see in the world." Talk about what that means. Find someone in the newspaper who is "being" good for the world.

Surround Yourself with Trust

People should stay with others they can trust. If you were looking in the newspaper seeking a trustworthy person to hang out with, whom would you choose? Pick one person and write a description about why he or she was your choice. Then write a paragraph about your friends and why you chose them.

Jokes Can Hurt

Look at the comic strips and talk about the humor there. Do you think any of the comic strip characters could feel bullied? Talk about it.

Learning standards for lessons on this page: understanding conflict, finding resolutions to problems, creating graphic representations, writing editorials, writing for fluency, skimming, drawing conclusions, portraying positive characteristics, writing descriptions, verbalizing opinions.

This Hot Topics Hot Serials supplement was:
Written by Debby Carroll
Edited by Ken Bookman
Design and Illustrated by Roel Wielinga
Copyright 2007 Hot Topics Hot Serials

Resources:

Great Books About Bullying and Related Issues

Fiction

Attack of the Killer Fishsticks

by Paul Zindel

A fun-loving group of fifth graders confronts the Nasty Blobs, two of the meanest kids in school, and they help a new kid run for class office.

Only Twice I've Wished for Heaven

by Dawn Turner Trice

A story of a young African American girl's attempt to fit in after her family moves to a new place.

Blubber

by Judy Blume

A classic! Jill goes along with the rest of her fifth-grade class in tormenting a classmate and then finds out what it's like when she, too, becomes a target.

The Hundred Dresses

by Eleanor Estes

Wanda Petronski stands out in her class. She has a Polish name, lives in a poor part of town, and has only one dress to wear to school. To defend herself against her classmates, she brags that she has 100 beautiful dresses in her closet.

Joshua T. Bates in Trouble Again

by Susan Shreve

The third book in the "Joshua T. Bates" series. After repeating third grade, Joshua struggles to fit in as a fourth-grader. Soon Joshua's uncertainties combine with a couple of bullies to get him in trouble.

The Night the Bells Rang

by Natalie Kinsey-Warnock

During the final year of World War I, Mason's secure Vermont farm life is disrupted by Aden, a teenager who bullies him. After Aden runs away, joins the Army, and is killed, Mason deals with his feelings and his confusion.

The Skin I'm In

by Sharon G. Flake

Thirteen-year-old African American Maleeka has suffered through lots of teasing because of her dark complexion. Into her life walks Miss Saunders, a teacher whose rare skin condition also sets her apart.

Stepping on the Cracks

by Mary Downing Hahn

Set during World War II. When best friends Margaret and Elizabeth spy on the sixth-grade bully Gordy, they discover that he is hiding his brother, Stuart, a deserter from the army.

Non-Fiction

Bullies Are a Pain in the Brain

by Trevor Romain (Illustrator) and Elizabeth Verdick (Editor)

Cliques, Phonies, & Other Baloney

by Trevor Romain

How to Handle Bullies, Teasers and Other Meanies: A Book that Takes the Nuisance Out of Name Calling and Other Nonsense

by Kate Cohen-Posey and Betsy A. Lampe (Illustrator)

Why Is Everybody Always Picking on Me: A Guide to Handling Bullies

by Terrence Webster-Doyle

What Do You Stand For? For Kids: A Guide to Building Character

by Barbara A. Lewis

Websites:

www.bullying.org

www.kidpower.org

www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov

www.wordscanheal.org

www.stopbullyingnow.com

