



# Everyone's Included – Rumours Session Plan

## **Learning Intentions:**

- To understand the impact of rumours on young people.
- To recognise the role of bystanders and ways in which bystanders can intervene.

## **Experiences and Outcomes:**

### **HWB 1/2/3/4-08a**

I understand that people can feel alone and can be misunderstood and left out by others. I am learning how to give appropriate support.

### **HWB 1/2/3/4-09a**

As I explore the right to which I and others are entitled, I am able to exercise these rights appropriately and accept the responsibilities that go with them. I show respect for the rights of others.

### **HWB 2-44b**

I am aware that positive friendships and relationships can promote health and the health and wellbeing of others.

### **HWB 3/4-46a**

I reflect on how my attitudes, beliefs, values and morality can influence my decisions about friendships, relationships and sexual behaviour.

## **UNCRC - Children's Rights:**

**Article 16** states that children have the right to a private life and that people shouldn't be able to say things which damage a child's reputation if they are not true.

**Article 29** states that children have the right to an education which encourages them to respect other people's rights and values.

## **Success Criteria:**

- I can describe how someone might feel if rumours about them are being spread
- I can talk about some of the ways in which I can be an active bystander when I am aware of rumours being spread

## **RSHP: Second Level**

<https://rshp.scot/second-level/#protectingme>

## **GIRFEC Wellbeing Indicators:**



Safe, Healthy, Respected, Responsible, Included

**Preparation:**

- PowerPoint slides or handout sheet of scenario/train of thought/options
- Flipchart with Agree Disagree Unsure statement (if not using slides)

**Resources:**

- Projector & PowerPoint (if being used)
- Flipchart/whiteboard
- Marker pens
- Your Group Agreement created during the Introduction session (pin/tack this up in the room)

## Introduction

Welcome and inform the class that **this session will explore the spreading of rumours in groups and the hurt that this can cause to individuals.**

Refer to group agreement and ask if pupils would like to add/change anything.

Share the Learning Intentions and Success Criteria for this session.

## Icebreaker

**Example Icebreaker: BROKEN TELEPHONE**

Invite the group to sit in a circle.

Explain to them that you will whisper a statement or story to one of the participants and that they should then whisper this to the person next to them (either left or right). This person will then whisper the statement to the person next to them and this will continue until everyone in the circle has heard the statement and passed it on.



**\*\*The statement/story shouldn't be easy for participants to remember word for word, and can only be passed on to each person once\*\***

Ask the last person who heard the statement to share it with the group and compare their statement with the original one.

### Key Questions

Ask the group:

**1. Why do you think we asked you to take part in this activity?**

Answers could include: To get us talking, to show that the information received might change as it is shared.

End the activity by saying that the session today will focus on rumours and Broken Telephone shows that information can be changed or exaggerated the more it is passed on.

## Scenario

Remind the class that for this session they will be bystanders to an incident involving a friend, classmate or someone they know.

Show the slide or share a copy of the scenario and ask for a volunteer to read it out.

**A girl you know is spreading nasty rumours about another girl. You're not sure if the rumours are true, but you know they're hurtful and you wouldn't want people talking about you like that.**

### Key Questions

Ask the group:

**1. Is this realistic, does it happen?**

**2. Put your hand up if you think there is something wrong with what is happening in this scenario...**

Before the group lower their hands ask them to look around the room and see how their friends/classmates have responded. If most people have agreed highlight that everyone/most people agree that something is wrong.



**3. What do you think the red flags are? What are the key words or phrases in this which make you think there is something wrong?**

Ask pupils to discuss this for 30 seconds with the person beside them, then ask class to call them out – note the red flags on flipchart/whiteboard as they call them out.

**4. Before sharing the next slide, ask the pupils:**

**As a bystander to this situation, what questions might you have? What might you be thinking?**

This can be briefly discussed in pairs or groups and then shared.

## Train of thought

Ask for a volunteer to read the following train of thought:

***Why is she doing this? Are these rumours true? It's only words I guess and this kind of thing happens all the time ... But rumours can be really hurtful ... And if I don't get involved, am I saying it's okay? ... If I confront the girl who's spreading the rumours, will it make it worse? ... What if she starts talking about me next? ... Is this any of my business? ... What should I do?***

### Key Questions

Ask the group:

**1. Why might people choose not to get involved when this kind of thing happens?**

Suggestions may include: fear of repercussions, think it's nothing to do with me, it happens all the time etc.

## Agree/Disagree/Unsure

Place your agree and disagree signs at opposite sides of the room (if applicable).



Tell the group you are going to show them a statement and they should decide whether they agree or disagree with the statement, then go the relevant side of the room. If they are unsure, they can stand in the middle.

**Statement 1: Rumours are part of school life, we just need to accept it**

Give a short amount of time for group to make their choice then ask 2-3 people in each group:

**Why did you agree/disagree/Why are you unsure?**

**Key Questions**

Ask the group:

**1. Raise your hand if you have ever been the subject of a rumour, or helped to spread one...**

Ask the group to look around. Personalising experiences can be a powerful tool. Consider bringing some of your own experiences to the session if relevant.

**2. Are rumours always true?**

No. Often they are made up, or an initial story is embellished or changed to make it more 'interesting'.

**3. What sort of things do people spread rumours about?**

Let group suggest ideas: These could include people's behaviour, things people have said or done.

**Statement 2: If a friend is the subject of a rumour or is spreading rumours about someone else, it is none of my business**

Give a short amount of time for group to make their choice then ask 2-3 people in each group: **Why did you agree/disagree/Why are you unsure?**

**Key Questions**

Ask the group:

**1. When does it become your business?**

Prompt: **If a friend is upset or in trouble is it your business?**

Ask the group to sit down and move onto the next slide for more in-depth discussion.



# Rumours - Discussion

## Key Questions

Ask the group:

**1. Why might the girl in this scenario be spreading rumours about someone else?**

Suggestions may include: maybe she doesn't like her and wants others to fall out with her, she might be jealous of her, she might want to 'get back' at her for something, maybe it is true etc.

**2. Thinking about the kind of things people spread rumours about, what do they have in common?**

They are generally false or are spread to make a person feel bad, embarrassed or cause ill-feeling among groups of people.

**3. The train of thought says 'this kind of thing happens all the time ... but can be really hurtful'. How do you think the girl, who is the subject of the rumour, will be feeling?**

Responses may include: hurt, afraid, embarrassed, angry etc.

Prompt: **How would you feel if someone was spreading nasty rumours about you?**

**4. Do we have a responsibility to do something here?**

**5. Who do we have a responsibility to?**

You may need to prompt group:

**-Do we have a responsibility to the girl who is the subject of the rumours? Why?**

Rumours are disrespectful and hurtful, you want to make sure she is OK.

**-Do we have a responsibility to the girl who is spreading the rumours? Why?**

She should know others don't agree with this sort of behaviour. She could get into trouble for spreading rumours.

**-Do we have a responsibility to ourselves?**

We have a responsibility to keep ourselves safe, and to be able to say if we don't agree with something.

Explain to the group we are now going to explore some of the things we could do in this situation.



# Options

If you have time you might ask the group to consider the pros and cons of these options in small groups first, before you discuss as a larger group. Or consider role playing options/consequences.

## **OPTION 1: Do nothing. It's none of your business.**

Ask the group:

### **1. Is this an option that some might consider using?**

We have already identified some of the reasons people might give for not getting involved.

### **2. What might happen if you do nothing?**

Responses may include: It could get worse, the girl might be hurt / upset about the rumours, she could be angry etc.

### **3. What does doing nothing say to those involved?**

That you don't think there is anything wrong with what is happening.

## **OPTION 2: When you hear the rumour, change the subject.**

Ask the group:

### **1. What could you say?**

### **2. What would be the benefits of this option?**

People might recognise you don't want involved in the spreading of rumours, you don't have to specifically risk your friendships etc.

### **3. What doesn't this option do?**

It doesn't challenge the behaviour so is unlikely to stop it from happening again.

## **OPTION 3: Talk to the girl who is the subject of the rumours. Let her know that you think it is wrong and offer support.**

Ask the group:

### **1. Could speaking to the girl help her deal with the situation?**

She might not feel so alone. Perhaps she would welcome some support and advice on how to address the rumours.

## **OPTION 4: Talk to the girl who is spreading the rumours and tell her that you don't think what she is doing is ok.**

Ask the group:



### **1. What might stop someone from choosing this option?**

Suggestions might include: you don't want get into an argument, you don't want to fall out with her, you don't want to be targeted next, scared of confrontation etc.

### **2. What might you say to the girl?**

You could suggest that she might get into trouble if teachers / other adults hear about her spreading the rumours and you don't want her to get into trouble.

## **OPTION 5: Share with your friends what you've heard and discuss what to do together.**

Ask the group:

### **1. Why do you think this might be a good option?**

It may be safer or easier to do something with your friends. Remind the group that as most/all have already agreed that they see this behaviour as wrong, their friends will most likely think this too.

### **2. What might happen if you did this?**

If a group of people challenge a behaviour it might be more powerful and therefore more likely to stop it than if one person challenges it alone.

## **OPTION 6: Talk about what happened with a parent/carer or a teacher/adult you trust and ask their advice on what to do.**

Ask the group:

### **1. What might stop a person speaking to a teacher or someone at home?**

If required prompt: **Is telling on someone always seen as a good thing?** You might hear the word 'grass' being used. **Do you think being called a grass might stop someone telling an adult?**

### **2. Would telling a teacher that your friend is in trouble make you a grass or a good friend?**

Acknowledge that this might be difficult to do, however friends look out for each other.

### **3. What might happen if you did this?**

Suggestions might include: it stops it going any further etc.

## **OPTION 7: Personal Option**

Ask the group:

### **1. Is there anything else you could do?**





Remember to explore the possible consequences for any additional options.

## Conclusion

Let the group know that as leaders, they have the opportunity to make sure their school and community are safe, respectful and supportive.

Ask the group:

**What have you learned from today's session?**

You might want to note responses on flipchart.

Reinforce key messages from discussion to include:

- ✓ Spreading rumours is hurtful and can make a person feel alone and upset
- ✓ Being respectful to your friends can help prevent the spreading of rumours
- ✓ There are a number of options we can choose from to challenge behaviour when we don't agree with it
- ✓ We have a responsibility to help our friends and keep ourselves safe

## Where can I get support?

The last slide highlights places and organisations where pupils can access support if they have been impacted by the lesson in any way or are worried about a friend.

Ensure that in-school supports are discussed, but make pupils aware of where they can get support outside of school, so that they have a range of options.

You can add local supports to the slide, alongside the national ones already included, that you feel are relevant to your community/area.

Leave this slide up as the lesson finishes and pupils leave.