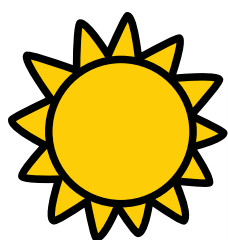


THE MOODERATORS

Teacher & Caregiver Guide:



BULLY



IN YOUR



HEAD



The Kids
Mental Health
Foundation™

GoNoodle

For more information and learning resources, visit [KidsMentalHealthFoundation.org](https://www.KidsMentalHealthFoundation.org).

Welcome to the Teacher Guide for The Mooderators.

This series is in partnership with The Kids Mental Health Foundation, created by the experts at Nationwide Children's Hospital.

The Kids Mental Health Foundation and GoNoodle are working together to bring elementary schools fun, engaging episodes on social and emotional wellness. We hope these guides can give you more insight into children's mental health and activities you can bring into the classroom.



Overview

We want our Mooderators episodes and guides to help you navigate mental and emotional concerns that young children face every day.

Each episode features a song from The Mooderators, Skylar and Clara. These songs promote four social-emotional goals: energize, focus, calm and support.

In this guide, we've included:

- **Insights** on the how and why behind each topic
- **In-class activities** to further engage students
- **Caregiver pages** that explain each topic and offer activity adaptations for home
- **Links** to further reading on [KidsMentalHealthFoundation.org](https://www.kidsmentalhealthfoundation.org)

What We'll Focus On

"Bully in Your Head" focuses on negative self-talk, the inner voice that shames us and weakens our self-confidence. For children, this voice can be especially powerful, especially when they haven't learned ways to counteract it.

In this guide, we will:

- Identify negative self-talk.
- Explain where critical inner voice originates.
- Name ways to fight negative self-talk.

Self-Talk: Supportive or Shaming?



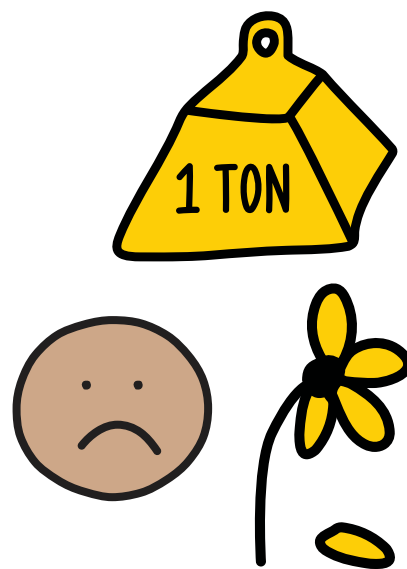
“ Sometimes we have thoughts
That are trying to bring us down
They might have us feeling blue
But it doesn’t mean they’re true ”



We all have an inner voice that guides us. This self-talk seems to provide a running commentary on our day. Sometimes that voice is friendly, encouraging us to keep going. You might “hear” positive talk like, “You are good at this!” or “You have a lot of friends!”

Other times, self-talk is negative. It focuses on failures and struggles, what “you’re no good at” or “you’ll never be able to do.” Sadly, for some people, including children, that inner voice can be negative most of the time.

For children, their self-talk is often “all or nothing.” They may perform poorly on one test, and suddenly, they’re “terrible at math.” They need encouragement to realize these thoughts are untrue.



Where Did It Come From?



“ Sometimes we need to investigate
Put our detective skills to the test
Those thoughts,
Where are they coming from
And can we prove them wrong? ”



We all experience both positive and negative thoughts – it's normal! Some kids may struggle with constant negative self-talk. There are many potential reasons:

- Perfectionism
- Low self-esteem
- Lack of resilience to challenges
- Friendship with peers with similar negative self-talk



Ways to “Talk Back”



“ I’m proud
Of how I practice every day
To fight the bully in my head
By treating myself how I would treat
A really good friend
Being patient, being kind
When a bad thought comes to mind
I can change it
Into something that feels right ”

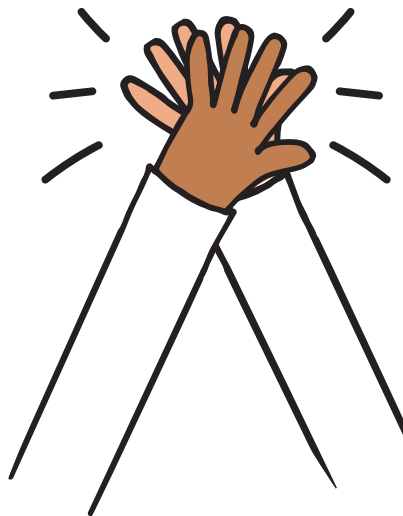


What can a child (with a helpful adult) do to counteract the critical inner voice?

1. **Acknowledge the negative feelings caused by the thoughts.** Articulating feelings helps normalize big emotions, especially after disappointments. It also helps children feel less alone when they know others see their struggle.
2. **Find evidence for and against their thoughts.** Have students question whether the things their mind “said” are true. Remember that some thoughts could very well be true so we don’t want to dismiss those thoughts right away.
 - a. *What are the chances of that happening?*
 - b. *What would I tell a friend who is having these thoughts?*
 - c. *Is this thought true? What is the evidence for that? What is the evidence against that?*
 - d. *How have I done well or succeeded?*
3. **Talk back to the “thinking mistakes.”** If there’s not enough evidence to show their thoughts are true, you can help them come up with a more balanced thought. If there is evidence to show the thoughts are true, validate the feelings the child has and ask them how they would like to problem solve the situation. You may need to help them come up with ideas if they get stuck.
4. **Have a growth mindset.** There are certainly things the child can’t do. But one day, they may! It’s important to have this mindset that growth is achievable. Also, notice the child’s strengths and all the things they *can* do.

NEXT STEPS IN THE CLASSROOM

- **Ask students for examples of their “thinking mistakes.”** Was there a time:
 - They thought they’d fail at something but didn’t?
 - They thought someone was mad at them but wasn’t?
 - They thought they couldn’t learn how to do something new but did?
- **Follow the steps above.** Encourage a growth mindset in your classroom and remind students of their strengths too. There are things they can’t do yet, but you might be able to work on those things in class.



Student Activities



“Say No to the Bully” and “Famous Fails” emphasize unique strengths and ask students and classmates to recognize each other’s talents.

SAY NO TO THE BULLY

Materials: “Say No to the Bully” monster, speech bubbles, pens, pencils, markers, crayons

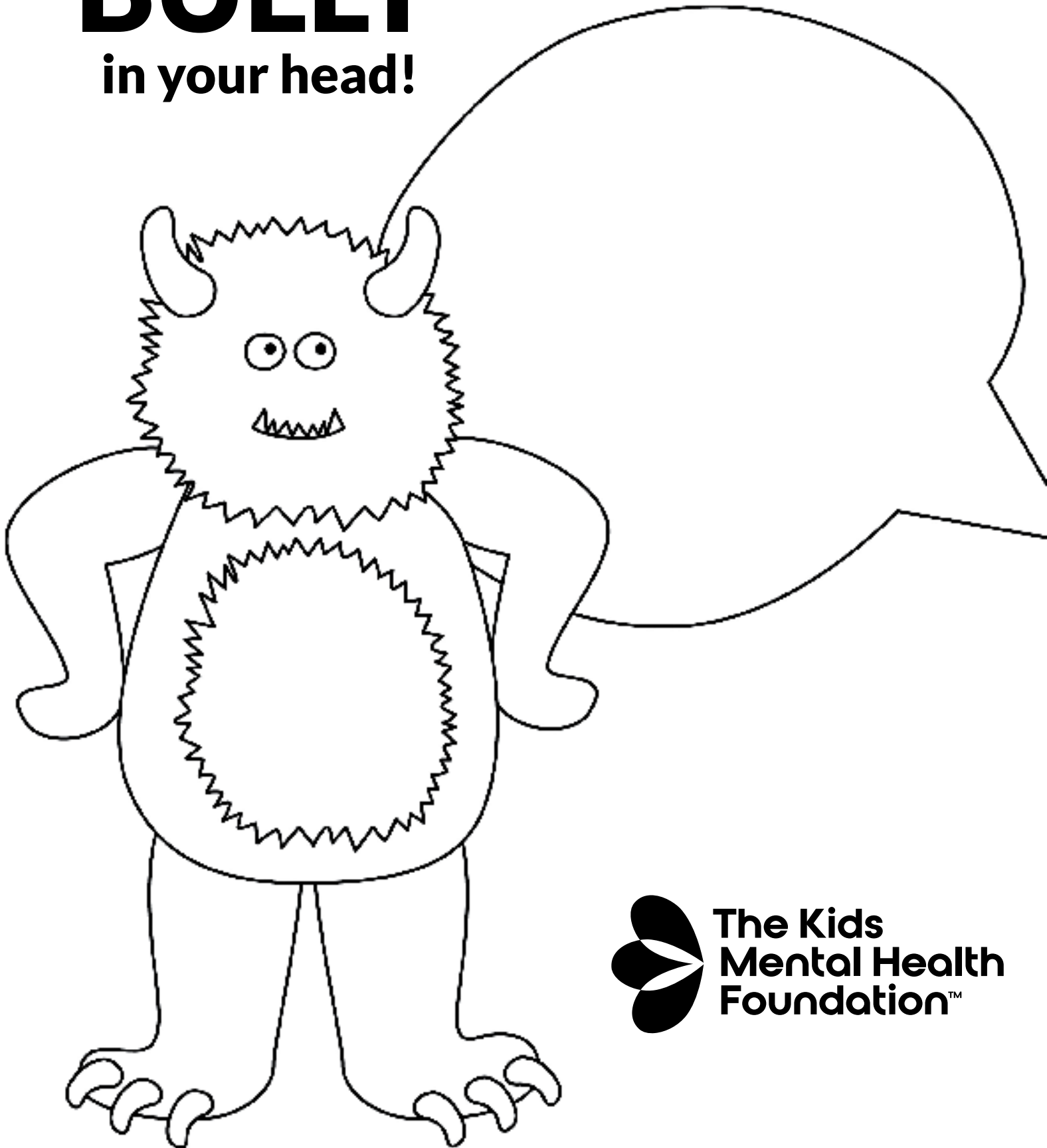
Objectives: We hope to:

- Explain what negative self-talk looks like.
- Help students respond to that criticism.

DIRECTIONS

1. Print and pass out the worksheets with the monster and speech bubble.
2. Explain to students that this monster is the “bully in your head,” and he’s a big liar!
 - a. The bully monster is always trying to make them feel bad about themselves. He tells them all the things they’re “not good at” or the “bad things that may happen” but sometimes he lies or is wrong.
 - b. Have them color the monster and write in the speech bubble the “negative self-talk” the monster is lying about.
3. Once they do that, encourage them to write a “response” to the monster. Have them cross-out the negative statement from the monster. Then, discuss how they can “talk back.” Is what the monster said really true?
4. Encourage students to share their monsters and responses with the class.

Say "NO" to the
BULLY
in your head!



Student Activity



FAMOUS FAILS

Materials: Famous people photos, pens, pencils, markers, crayons

Recommended individuals: Abraham Lincoln, Anna Konkle, Beyonce Knowles, Billie Jean King, DJ D-Nice, Elizabeth Arden, George Lucas, Katherine Johnson, Katie Couric, Jesse Owens, Mark Grossman, Melissa Claire Egan, Sonia Sotomayor, and the Wright Brothers

Objectives: We hope to:

- Help students see that even famous, smart people have failed in their lives.
- Feel inspired by the determination and drive of others.

DIRECTIONS

1. Split the class into groups.
2. Give each group a photo of the famous individual. Ask students to research this person's life. This research can be done online or in the library.
3. Pose these specific questions to the groups:
 - a. *How did this person "fail" in their life?*
 - b. *What was their response to that failure?*
 - c. *What lessons can we learn from this person?*
4. Have students present their famous individual to the class. This can be a presentation slideshow or poster.

LINKS TO MORE:

Interested in learning more about helping your child combat negative self-talk?

Check out these links at [KidsMentalHealthFoundation.org](https://www.kidsmentalhealthfoundation.org).

Pushing Back Against Negative Self-Talk:

Search “self talk” at KidsMentalHealthFoundation.org or [click here](#).

4 Ways to Encourage A Child Who’s Hard on Themselves:

Search “encourage” at KidsMentalHealthFoundation.org or [click here](#).



Welcome to the Caregiver Guide for The Mooderators. This series is in partnership with The Kids Mental Health Foundation, created by the experts at Nationwide Children's Hospital.

The Kids Mental Health Foundation and GoNoodle are working together to bring caregivers fun, engaging episodes that cover various mental health topics. We hope these guides can give you more insight into children's mental health and activities you can bring into your home.

Objectives

"Bully in Your Head" focuses on negative self-talk, the inner voice that shames us and weakens our self-confidence. For children, this voice can be especially powerful, especially when they haven't learned ways to counteract it.

In this guide, we will:

- Identify negative self-talk
- List where critical inner voice originates
- Name ways to fight negative self-talk

Self-Talk: What It Sounds Like

We all have an inner voice that guides us. This self-talk seems to provide a running commentary on our day. That voice can be friendly, and sometimes it can be discouraging.

For children, their self-talk is often "all or nothing." They may perform poorly on one test, and suddenly, they're "terrible at math." They need encouragement to realize these thoughts are untrue.

We all experience both positive and negative thoughts – it's normal! Some kids may struggle with constant negative self-talk. There are many potential reasons:

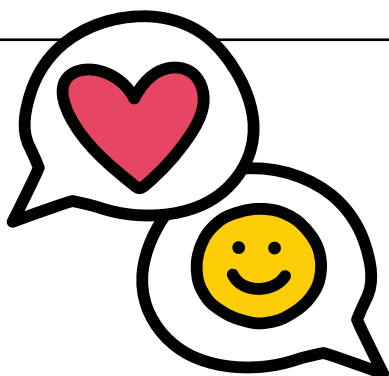
- Perfectionism
- Low self-esteem
- Lack of resilience to challenges
- Friendship with peers with similar negative self-talk

NEXT STEPS IN THE HOME

As a parent, it can be challenging to see our child struggle. We want them to have self-confidence and resilience to face challenges.

How can you help your child counteract this negative voice?

- **Acknowledge the negative feelings.** Articulating feelings helps normalize big emotions, especially after disappointments. It also helps them feel less alone when they know others see their struggle.
- **Find evidence for and against their thoughts.** Have your child question whether the things their mind “said” are true. Remember that some thoughts could very well be true so we don’t want to dismiss those thoughts right away.
 - What are the chances of that happening?
 - What would I tell a friend who has this same thought?
 - Is this thought true? What is the evidence for that? What is the evidence against that?
 - How have I done well or succeeded?
- **Talk back to the “thinking mistakes.”** If there’s not enough evidence to show their thoughts are true, you can help them come up with a more balanced thought. If there is evidence to show the thoughts are true, validate the feelings the child has and ask them how they would like to problem solve the situation. You may need to help them with ideas if they get stuck.
- **Have a growth mindset.** There are certainly things your child can’t do. But one day, they may! It’s important to have this mindset that growth is achievable. Also, notice your child’s strengths and all the things they *can* do.



At-Home Activities

Say No to the Bully

- Print the worksheet with the monster and speech bubble.
- Explain to your child that this monster is the “bully in your head,” and he’s a big liar!
 - The bully monster is always trying to make them feel bad about themselves. He tells them all the things they’re “not good at” or the “bad things that may happen” but sometimes he lies or is wrong.
 - Have them color the monster and write in the speech bubble the “negative self-talk” the monster is lying about.
- Once they’ve done that, encourage them to write a “response” to the monster. First, have them cross-out the monster’s statement. How can they “talk back” to the monster? Is what it said really true?

Accomplishments Box

- Help your child celebrate how far they have come by celebrating their accomplishments throughout the year.
- Every week, encourage your child to write what they have learned or accomplished on a piece of paper (“I learned how to use the monkey bars!”) and place this note in a box.
- At the end of the week, read out their accomplishments. You can also glue these onto a piece of paper and display them in your home.

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