

**[C] COMMUNITY CLASSROOM**



# THE GRADUATES

# LOS GRADUADOS

A FILM BY BERNARDO RUIZ



# Youth Action Guide

Module 4. Bullying

**American GRADUATE**  
Let's make it happen.

**cpb**  
Coalition for Public Broadcasting

**[ITVS] WOMEN & GIRLS LEAD**

**[I]NDDEPENDENTLENS**

# MODULE 4

**Theme:** Bullying

**Story:** Juan Bernabe – Lawrence, MA

**Organizing Strategy:** The Arts



## OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Investigate how bullying can be an obstacle to Latino youth, especially with regards to immigrant, undocumented, racial, socioeconomic, and LGBTQ groups.
- Explore how the arts can be a powerful way to bring different voices into dialogue, and how they can be tools for increasing self-esteem and combating stereotypes and negative images.
- Practice and perform a short artistic work with a group

## ACTIVITY (60 minutes)

### I. BULLYING ROLES (5 minutes)

- Prepare the board or project on-screen these four terms, roles in bullying situations:  
**VICTIM • PERPETRATOR • BYSTANDER • ALLY**
- Announce the name of each role and have the group come up with short definitions of each: For example, groups might come up with description of what the person does in a bullying scenario, how they might act, what they might say, etc.
- Do a quick classroom poll by show of hands: Who has been a victim of bullying? Who has been a perpetrator? Who has been a bystander? Who has been an ally? Call on a few hands for each role to share stories and talk about how they felt and what they might have done differently.

### II. REFLECTIONS ON BULLYING (10 minutes)

- Count off numbers 1-4. Assign each participant their respective number below to write a reflection on a bullying situation they have seen, heard of, or experienced.
  1. Recent immigrant who does not speak much English
  2. Lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-questioning (LGBTQ) Latino teen
  3. Undocumented student
  4. Student whose family doesn't have a lot of money
- Reflections should include each of the four roles from the introductory activity: VICTIM, PERPETRATOR, BYSTANDER and ALLY.
- After taking a few minutes to write the reflection have all participants stand up and circulate around the room. They need to find a partner – mix it up by having them find a partner the same height, same color shirt, etc. Have partners take turns reading and sharing their reflections, and then switch and have them find a different partner. Do this for a few rounds.
- Return to seats to take volunteers and call on participants to share out anything that struck them from their conversations.



### III. THE GRADUATES/LOS GRADUADOS FILM MODULE

(16 minutes film + 10 minutes discussion)

- Screen the module spotlighting Juan's story. Preface by reading or distributing the background text about him from the Community Cinema Discussion Guide.
- Discuss reactions and responses
  - Do you relate to Juan? What similarities and differences do you see in his situation and yours or people you know?
  - How do you feel about Juan's mother's reaction to finding out that he is gay? How did her attitude change over time?
  - What skills, knowledge and support did the arts programs provide Juan with? What programs like those exist in your school or community?
  - What do you think accounts for Juan's desire to give back to the Lawrence youth community, despite the bullying he experienced there?
  - What experiences do you have in creating art or participating in performance? What did you gain from those experiences?
  - What artistic talents do you have or would like to pursue?
  - Who are some artists that inspire you?

### IV. GROUP POEM PERFORMANCE

(15 minutes prep + 10 minutes performance)

- Break the entire group of participants into smaller groups and assign one of the following suggested poems to each. You may also substitute these with poems, songs, or other works of art of your choice. Depending on the size of your group, there may be up to eight people in a group and that's fine. If there are less than three people in the groups then don't use all of the poems and have fewer groups:
  - POEM A: "Four Skinny Trees" from *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros (publisher: Vintage Books) Available online here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDn4wwBj1RU>
    - In this vignette from *The House on Mango Street*, a young Latina contemplates her feelings and place in the world. She likens her perseverance to the trees that grow outside her window, existing against odds in the concrete of the city.
  - POEM B: "In Colorado My Father Scoured and Stacked Dishes" from *Slow Lightning*, by Eduardo C. Corral, (publisher: Yale Series of Younger Poets). Available online here: <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poem/243752>
    - In this poem by the 2011 winner of the prestigious Yale Younger Poets Prize, the speaker reflects on the journey that his father – an undocumented immigrant – endured and how those struggles have shaped both father and son
  - POEM C: "Canada in English" from *Border-Crosser with a Lamborghini Dream (Camino del Sol)* by Juan Felipe Herrera (publisher: University of Arizona Press), Available online here: [http://www.democraticunderground.com/discuss/duboard.php?az=view\\_all&address=103x355093](http://www.democraticunderground.com/discuss/duboard.php?az=view_all&address=103x355093)
    - California's first Latino Poet Laureate voices a young Latino immigrant in an English-only classroom struggling to understand and fit in. Like Poem B, the boy also reflects on his father's journey to the U.S. as he finds himself facing the void between the authority of the teacher and the defiance of his classmate.



- POEM D: "To live in the Borderlands means you" from *Borderlands/La Frontera* by Gloria E. Anzaldúa (publisher: Aunt Lute Books). Available online here: <http://www.revistascisan.unam.mx/Voces/pdfs/7422.pdf>
  - In this manifesto of identity from the landmark anthology *Borderlands/La Frontera*, pioneer Chicana queer feminist Gloria Anzaldúa calls out to all marginalized peoples to stand up, raise voices, survive, and resist.
- POEM E: "Heart of Hunger" from *The Immigrant Iceboy's Bolero*, by Martín Espada (publisher: Cordillera Press). Available online here: [http://martinespada.net/Heart\\_of\\_Hunger.html](http://martinespada.net/Heart_of_Hunger.html)
  - Through the sweeping vantage of this poem, the observer traces the journeys of Latin American and Caribbean immigrants into the struggles and hopes of the United States. Brooklyn-born Puerto Rican author Martín Espada is widely regarded as "the Latino poet of his generation."
- POEM F: "Snow," an excerpt from *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*, by Julia Álvarez (publisher: Chapel Hill, Algonquin Books). Available online here: <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/romance/spanish/219/13eeuu/alvarez.html>
  - In this excerpt from her widely acclaimed breakthrough novel, Dominican writer Julia Alvarez paints a striking image of a young immigrant girl experiencing her first North American winter.
- Have groups read, discuss and prepare to perform their assigned poem in front of the group. Depending on time, they can divide up the stanzas or lines, work out choreography, set the scene with props or costumes, or even make a video. Emphasize being creative and conveying the feeling behind the words of the poem.
- Have each group perform their poem. After the performances, discuss reactions: what struck them about the poems and performances, how it felt to perform, how they related to the poems, etc.



## TAKING IT FURTHER

The previous activity is an introduction to engaging with the topic and exploring the corresponding strategy. The following research and development activities can be done as outside assignments or can be the focus of future sessions to develop this organizing strategy for your campaign. Depending on your priorities, you may choose to go deeper here or with any of the other modules over the course of weeks or even months:

- Break into committees to explore and develop other art forms through which to raise awareness, express voices and talents, and spotlight the issue of bullying:
  - Visual art: murals, illustration, photography
  - Literature: essays, poetry, stories
  - Performance: drama, poetry slam, dance, music, film
- Organize and plan a performance or visual art exhibit with a focus on bullying. It can be displayed in your school, or you can reach out to local libraries, community centers, and businesses to host the exhibit.
- Organize and plan “guerilla” or “flash mob” art events: impromptu poetry readings in public places, live painting, temporary installations, cards with art or poetry that you hand out, etc.
- Create and exhibit works of art on an online page like Tumblr or Instagram and promote and share with your school, community, and beyond through social media. Create and exhibit short films on sites like YouTube and Vine and host a film festival.
- Read and discuss the article “There is no movement for justice without the arts: Interview with Jeff Chang and Favianna Rodriguez” about the arts-based organization CultureStrike (<http://culturestrike.net>), which aims to raise awareness about immigrant and migrant workers’ rights.  
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## A SUCCESS STORY: 67 Sueños

The 67 Sueños was born out of the recognition that the majority of migrant youth were not being included in the debates about their future that were happening nationally. Their goal is to raise those/our underprivileged migrant youth voices to expand the debate and the legislative possibilities. This youth-led organization uses media as diverse as painted murals, video, audio, and more to create compelling narratives about young migrants’ lives. For more information, visit their website: (<http://www.67suenos.org>)

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## About American Graduate

**American Graduate: Let's Make it Happen** is helping local communities identify and implement solutions to the high school dropout crisis. American Graduate demonstrates public media's commitment to education and its deep roots in every community it serves. Beyond providing programming that educates, informs and inspires, public radio and television stations – locally owned and operated – are an important resource in helping to address critical issues, such as the dropout rate. In addition to national programming, public radio and television stations across the country have launched on-the-ground efforts working with community and at risk youth to keep students on-track to high school graduation. More than 1000 partnerships have been formed locally through American Graduate, and CPB is working with Alma and Colin Powell's America's Promise Alliance and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

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QUIET PICTURES

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