

Alerting Adults

Read the scenario and then answer the reflection questions below.

Alerting Adults Dilemma

Ella and Mike are best friends in fifth grade who both love using a popular messaging app to stay connected after school. Last week, Ella received several mean messages from an anonymous account. The messages mentioned specific details about Ella's clothes and things that happened at school, so it must be someone who knows her.

"You looked ridiculous in that sweater today," one message said. "No wonder nobody wanted to sit with you at lunch."

Ella, upset and confused, showed these messages to Mike. Ella made Mike promise not to tell anyone else about the messages. "If my dad finds out, he'll take my phone away," Ella explained. "And if we tell Mr. Clarke, everyone will find out and it'll just get worse."

Yesterday, Ella received another message that said: "Maybe you should just switch schools where no one knows what a loser you are." Ella has started making excuses not to go to school and seems more distant each day.

Should Mike tell a trusted adult about the situation and break Ella's trust, or respect Ella's wishes and try to handle it without adult help?

Take a Stand

On your own: What do you think Mike should do? Explain your perspective.

On your own: If Mike decides to tell an adult, who might be the best person to approach?

Circle all that could be good options:

- Mr. Clarke (their teacher)
- The school counselor
- Mike's parents
- Ella's parents
- Another trusted adult: _____

Alerting Adults

NAME _____

DATE _____

Stand Back

As a group: Where do your classmates stand? Listen to their perspectives.

Look Again

On your own: Look again at your original response. What had you not considered that other people brought up? Maybe you changed your mind, maybe you didn't—that's OK! Either way, you heard other views. How has your thinking shifted after hearing your classmates' perspectives, even if you haven't changed your mind?

Look Beyond

As a group: Look beyond this specific case. How does this dilemma remind you of other situations we've explored in class or that you've seen, heard about, or experienced?

Complicate It!

Discuss these questions in your group, and share responses. Be sure to hear all perspectives—the more perspectives, the better!

- What if Mike notices Ella has started responding to the bully with equally mean messages?
- What if Mike recently went through a similar cyberbullying situation and tried handling it alone, which led to serious consequences?
- What if Mike discovers the mean messages are coming from someone he's also friends with?