

See Something, Say Something

See Something, Say Something was produced by Bold Creative based in England. Commissioned by leading UK Children’s digital broadcaster Nickelodeon and Children’s Charity NSPCC, Bold Creative (a youth and social innovation agency) were asked to find an innovative way to highlight the impact of bullying on primary school children and with it provide support on how to combat the emotional effects. Adopting a factual documentary format, Bold Creative undertook a participatory led process across the UK – interviewing primary school children in a series of workshops nationwide. Sensitively undertaken, the children’s discussions covered first-hand accounts on the different forms of bullying that are taking place in the UK schools’ environment today; ranging from the playground to walking home. The resulting programme, told through the eyes of the bully, the bullied and the witness, startlingly reveals the true impact of bullying upon young people. Taking the form of documentary animation, this piece of ‘stealth learning’ or ‘edu-tainment’ has successfully reached millions of young people. The programme was developed for a national primary school audience as part of an annual UK anti-bullying campaign in November 2009.

See Something, Say Something was one of the PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL 2010 finalists in the 7-11 Non-Fiction category.

International experts’ opinions

Many international experts really liked the program as it dealt with a very common problem amongst children: bullying. “I really enjoyed it, because in my country, Chile and Santiago, we have during the last two years a lot of this kind of mechanisms in our schools. It’s a real problem – and fathers and teachers don’t know how to confront it. Mostly, in Americans movies, because what is happening is that some kids get together, and this group of kids feel cool perturbing other kids. That has something to do with media. For me, putting this on the table and showing it to kids in animation, feeling the frustration of a real problem – that is very important” (male expert, Columbia). Some felt that the program was successful in providing the solution to bullying: “It gives you some advice of how to handle a situation like that. In a way, I think, that is good for children to accept, because it is not like you have to do this or that. But, it creates understanding. I enjoyed it very much” (female expert, Germany). Some offered suggestions for counter bullying. “In Sweden, many scientists have being looking now at this kind of program against bullying. They have seen that the most important thing in schools is to activate those passive children – to stop the bullying. Because, often teachers or adults don’t react – they are not



Figure 1: The program is about bullying.

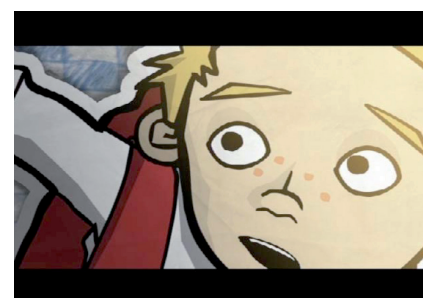


Figure 2: Many students get bullied in schools and do not have any idea what to do.

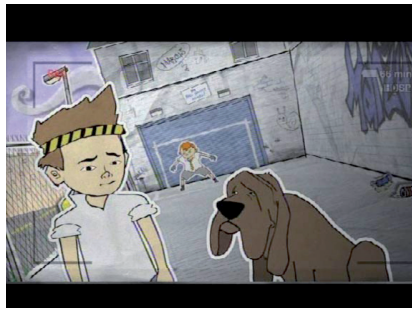


Figure 3: A dog was used to summarize the messages.



Figure 4: The use of animation to describe various situations was admired by the experts.



Figure 5: The program had many short stories demonstrating bullying.



Figure 6: There were many situations to show how bullying takes place.

lucky in their attempt to stop either. But, if that passive majority would say ‘stop’ then it works much better. I would like to see that too” (female expert, Sweden).

Almost all the international experts really admired the animation in the program. “I think it worked very well. You still realised, even though it was animated, that these were original quotes from children. It was my impression that this is really animation of real stories that children have told. They showed the problem from different perspectives: you have the victim, the bully, and you have a family” (female expert, Germany). “I especially liked the parts where they illustrated the emotions, because I think it is very hard to find a way to show it” (female expert, Germany).

The experts appreciated the fact that the program was successful in providing the perspectives of everyone. “I was really impressed that in ten minutes you can get all the perspectives, and you also get a key solution: You should go talk to an adult. You have to offer something. You cannot leave the children with no explanation or some tools. Here you go: ‘What happened and what was the solution of the problem?’ The answer: ‘Yes, I went to my teacher.’ I thought it was a very effective use of minutes, because this is a very complex, very hard problem to deal with in order to do the right thing” (female expert, Sweden). They specifically appreciated the fact that the program showed the perspective of the children, “I really like it when it is a real kid’s voice and story, because then you believe it. It is kind of cool that it was told out with the distance, it added a distance in a good way, I think, in that it was animated. I probably could have dealt with just one of them, like just the first story by itself was the strongest, I thought. So, if they would have just used that as a PSA, just that little story, and then pepper different stories throughout the programming block; that would be cool” (male expert, Qatar).

While the experts liked the different perspectives, some also suggested that maybe it was too much in one episode. “I really liked each piece, but I thought it was a bit too much all-together. My favourite one, I think, was the first one, because I found it very interesting to choose the perspective of the bully, which is not done very often. So I thought it is a good part to start with” (female expert, Germany). They admired the format of the program. “I also think this format or genre, gives a child freedom as well to deal with a topic. Sometimes it is better to deal with it at a distance” (female expert, Jamaica). “I thought it was authentic, but I thought it was a bit like confession type, but I think, they were honest. They had experiences themselves, so it was ok” (male expert, Norway).

The international experts had conflicting opinions about the script of the program. Some found the script too verbose. “The problem is not the animation idea; the problem, I think, is the script. They are very didactic in a way. If you look at it as a child watching television, and this program starts, I think many children will go away, because they feel like it is stuff from school or something like that” (male expert, Germany). Some however liked the special concept. “I liked the way it was edited together, because it brings different angles. There is a concept there, even if maybe it was done in one piece. It really touched me, the different stories. All together, they gave you a whole way of seeing this subject. Maybe it is even stronger than to see it done in bits and pieces” (female expert, Israel). Some were happy with the animation of the program. “I think also this storytelling inside is so beautifully done with such special care, pointing out: what is so important? What is important in getting this experience out? What the child learns out of this?” (female expert, Slovenia).

Many international experts were critical about the dog in the program. “I was also irritated by the talking dog, because the animation style and what the children had to tell was strong enough in itself. They told the solution that they found, so the dog wasn’t necessary at all to repeat it again. That really made it didactic, in a way” (female expert, Germany). Another expert added, “I didn’t like the dog. I thought the dog made it sort of ‘in the face’ in explaining – ‘Oh you did well’, and it patronised the child” (female expert, Netherlands).

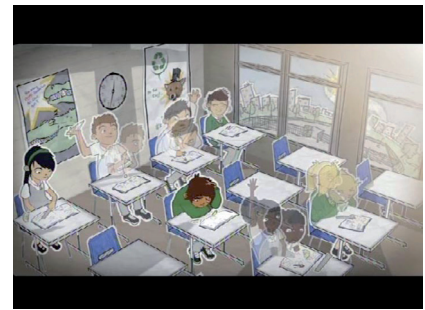


Figure 7: Many times students do not know how to tackle bullying.

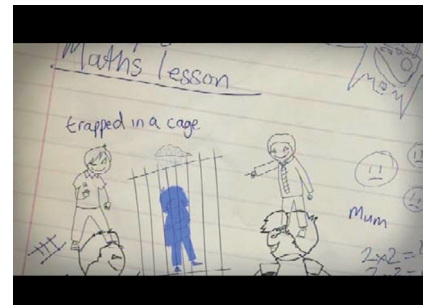


Figure 8: The program reveals the true impact of bullying on young people.

Screenshots from See Something, Say Something © Bold Creative

Target Audience 8,1	Idea 8,1	Script 7,9	Realization 8,2
Average Score per Category by experts' voters at PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONALE 2010			