

POIGNANT SCENARIOS:

Three third graders approach me.

“Mrs. B, this is Karen, and Karen is gossiping about Delia; she told Tom that Delia liked him and then told Delia that Tom liked her, and that’s gossiping!” Delia nods her head in agreement.

Mrs. B: “Wow, that’s wonderful, Delia. I like it when people say others like me, don’t you?” Delia ponders this.

Karen suddenly throws her hands up in the air and says, “Aggggh, there are even posters on the wall saying ‘no gossiping,’ and I know I shouldn’t, and I’m trying not to, but sometimes it just slips right on out.”

A very serious fourth grader approaches, and striking his chest with a closed fist, announces: “Mrs. B, you can count on me. I *am* your Warrior against bullying!”

A third grader: “Mrs. B, I’m getting bullied all the time, and I hate it.”

Mrs. B: “My goodness, have you told your teacher or your counselor?”

Student: “No, they can’t do anything about it.”

Mrs. B: “Why would you say that?”

Student: “It’s my brother.”

First Girl: “That girl in the striped shirt just called Jackie a jerk.”

Jackie: “Yeah, she’s being mean to me and Alicia.”

Mrs. B to Jackie: “Ahh, did you used to be that girl’s best friend?”

Jackie: “Yes, but now Alicia and I are best friends.”

Mrs. B: “Your old friend might feel left out now—like you might if she’d stopped being your friend. Do you think that could be why she seems unhappy?”

The girls look at each other and nod in unison. “Yeah,” they say as though it hadn’t occurred to them. They put the warrior sticker on their blouses, and leave to sign the banner.

Mrs. B sits down beside the girl in the striped shirt who is hugging a notebook and looking dejected. “Hi. Are you feeling a bit sad today?”

She nods yes, and big tears ring her eyes.

Mrs. B: “Can you tell me what’s making you feel so sad?”

She nods yes, opens her mouth to speak, but the words won’t come out.

Mrs. B: “Do you feel kind of like you’ve lost your best friend?”

She nods, the tears puddle on her cheeks. She tries to speak, but the words stick.

Mrs. B: “I’ll be here for the rest of the day and tomorrow if you want to talk with me about it, okay?”

She nods. Class is over. She jumps up, turns and gives me a huge hug and a bigger smile.

Every session left me feeling inspired and happy to be working with these wonderful children.

