

# BULLYING

Bullying can happen to anyone. It might happen to you, your friend or someone online. People being bullied often feel helpless and alone, or worried about what the bully might do next. The impact of bullying can last longer than the act itself. Experiencing such incidents can increase a person's chances of developing anxiety or depression.

## What is bullying?

When a person or a group of people repeatedly threaten or harm another person intentionally in order to have power over them. The targeted person or group feels hurt of those actions and words and often finds it hard to stop what is happening to them.

## Who is a bully?

The person causing deliberate harm to someone else.

## Types of bullying

Bullying can take many forms. Examples include

### Cyber

Using technology like internet, email, cell phones, social media, pictures to hurt or harm someone else. This can include sending threatening messages, posting gossip, posting someone's secrets, posting embarrassing photos, etc.

### Social

Spreading rumors, leaving someone out on purpose, telling others not to be friends with someone, not inviting someone to social occasions, embarrassing someone in public, breaking up friendships etc.

### Physical

Punching, tripping, kicking or stealing and/or destroying someone else's property, sexual assault, unwanted touching.

### Verbal/Emotional

Name calling, teasing, making insulting remarks, threatening, disrespecting or demeaning a person's race, disability, appearance, faith or sexual orientation.



Centre for Counselling & Career Advisory

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# BULLYING. NO WAY!

## Why Do People Bully?

It is a learnt behaviour. There are several reasons why people bully others. Most likely ones are that they may be

- ❖ Feeling jealous of the person being bullied; their relationships with others, their ability to make friends, for being popular or because the person being targeted has a loving family.
- ❖ Seeing it as a way of being popular or making themselves look tough and in charge.
- ❖ Wanting to get attention or to make other people afraid of them. Feeling lonely, unimportant and left out.
- ❖ Bullied before. They may have been teased to a point where they feel insignificant, which makes them so angry that they have to take it out on someone else.
- ❖ Having problems at home. It is common for a bully to have had problems at home. This could be physical or verbal abuse that could turn a normal person into an aggressive and emotional being.
- ❖ Having low self-esteem. If someone feels they are not worthy, attractive or smart enough, they find ways to make themselves feel better about themselves. Whatever the reason, the easiest way for them to achieve that is by putting someone else down.
- ❖ Seeing others as being different. They may bully others because they appear different to them for instance their hair colour, religion, culture, race, sexuality or disability.
- ❖ Not even understanding how wrong their behaviour is and how it makes the person being bullied feel perturbed.

**A bully could fall under one or maybe even all of the above reasons**

*Some change with time while others remain a bully for the rest of their lives. It just depends on whether something or someone can change their mentality or not. Different circumstances and events can transform someone into a cool and understanding person. Unfortunately, it can also turn them into a complete bully.*

## Impact of Bullying

It has detrimental effects on a person's health, wellbeing and learning. People who are the targets of bullying often experience extreme fear and stress, feelings of loneliness, humiliation and insecurity. Other effects may include

Low self-esteem Irritability  
Anxiety **Anger**  
Absenteeism  
SELF-HARM Lack of Confidence  
Loss of Interest in Activities they used to enjoy  
Suicide Change in Sleep and Eating Patterns  
**Depression**  
Alcohol and Drug Abuse

**Research shows that the emotional effects of bullying can last well into adulthood**



## What can you do if you are being bullied?

When someone is being bullied there are two important things to think about – looking after yourself or the person being bullied, and taking action to try to stop the onslaught. If you think you are being bullied, you should

### Ask the Bully to Stop

Confidently and assertively tell them that they do not care for their behaviour, and you would appreciate if they stopped calling your names (or whatever it is).

### Stay Calm

Bullies love a reaction, do not give them one. Stay calm. Bullies often say or do things because they want a reaction from their victim. If you are not bothered by what they say or do, they may well leave you alone and find a more rewarding target.

### Look Confident

Practice showing confidence. Stand tall. Walk proud. If you look confident and make eye contact, the bully probably will not pick on you. Research shows that people who walk and stand confidently are much less likely to be attacked.

### Have Others' Support

Do not give the bullies opportunities. As much as possible, have other people around for support or talk to an adult you trust for ideas and help.

### Be Alert

Think fast. How can you get out of the situation safely?

### Ignore it and Walk Away

Fighting back can make the situation worse, and you may get hurt. Get away. Find safety or call for help.

### Have a plan

For dealing with bullies. Think of things to say ahead of time and practice them at home.

### Get help from someone

If the above strategies fail to stop the bullying, get help from a friend, family member, an advisor or a counsellor. It is important to ask for help as and when needed.

### Look after yourself

There are many people who can support you, including friends, teachers, family members, counsellors, advisors or parents. If your feelings of stress, anxiety or sadness get too intense, a counsellor, youth worker or a doctor can help. You can talk to a counsellor in person.

### Try out some new hobbies

There are many people who can support you, including friends, teachers, family members, counsellors, advisors or parents. If your feelings of stress, anxiety or sadness get too intense, a counsellor, youth worker or a doctor can help. You can talk to a counsellor in person.

### Exercise

Working out has proved to make people happier, healthier and less stressed. If you are worrying or feeling stressed about bullying, try doing some physical activities, such as taking a long walk, swimming, and playing team games.



*You may not be able to stop the bully doing hurtful things, but you can take control over how you respond to them and how you look after yourself. You might decide to do more things that you enjoy, focus on your positive or helpful thoughts, spend time with friends you trust, or exercise to cope better with the stress*



# Be a friend not a Bully

**If you witness bullying.... , you have several options:**

- ❖ If safe, stand up. It only takes one person to make a difference. You may intervene straight away, saying, for example, "I do not think that is an acceptable way to talk to anyone" or you can say, "Stop! Do not bother him" or redirect the situation by saying, "Let's go! The teacher is coming."
- ❖ Do not join in. If you see someone being bullied do not join in. If the bully wants your help, say no, and walk away.
- ❖ Tell an adult. Do not be a bystander and watch someone being hurt.
- ❖ You can tell a trusted adult or academic advisor in confidence of what is going on.
- ❖ Be a friend. You can involve them in your group and make them less of a target, helping to ensure they are not left alone where the bully can find them.
- ❖ Be supportive. Help the person take steps to protect themselves; you can help them to report the incidents to someone they trust, or suggest talking to an adult or to a counsellor about how the bullying is affecting them.
- ❖ Do not bully or attack back. Do not show support to the bully by laughing, cheering or joining in. Focus on supporting your friend by letting them know you are there to help.

**'Never be bullied into silence.  
Never allow yourself to be made a  
victim. Accept no one's definition  
of your life, but define yourself.'**

## **FOR APPOINTMENT:**

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