

What is bullying?

Bullying is when people deliberately hurt, harass or intimidate someone else. These are some of the ways in which young people describe what bullying is:

- Being called names
- Being teased
- Being punched, pushed or attacked
- Being forced to hand over money, mobile phones or other possessions
- Receiving abusive or threatening text messages, emails or online comments
- Having rumours spread about them
- Being ignored or left out
- Being picked on because of their religion, gender or race.

Bullying can be a one-off thing or it can go on for a long time—and bullying can happen to anyone.

What should I do if I am bullied?

Bullying in any form is hurtful and unacceptable and can make your life miserable. Ignoring bullying won't make it go away—you need to tell someone what is happening. Breaking the silence is the most important part in fighting back against bullying.

If the bullying is happening at school talk to your parents or carers as well as your form tutor, teacher or year office. The school might not know what is happening, but they have an Anti-bullying Policy to tackle it. If you don't feel that you can speak to a member of staff, maybe a friend can do it for you?

If the bullying is happening outside school talk to your parents or carers, close relatives (such as grandparents, aunts and uncles) or even your friends' parents. Youth workers and leaders may be able to help too.

If the bullying is happening online—tell a trusted adult—your parents or carers or a member of staff at school. You can report abusive posts on Facebook and other social media platforms and you can also contact the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP).

Keep reporting the bullying until it stops. It might not stop the first time you tell an adult and they try to stop it—if the bullying continues, tell them again. **Don't put up with it—no one deserves to be bullied.**

If you think a crime has been committed—talk to an adult who can report what is happening to the Police. The types of things that might need to be reported to the Police are:

- You have been physically assaulted or attacked
- Sexually assaulted or touched in a way that's uncomfortable
- Someone has stolen from you
- You're bullied because of your race, sexual identity or disability
- Someone has posted naked photos of you online
- If you are threatened with a weapon or knife.



What can I do to stop it?

If you are being bullied:

Try to avoid the bully when you are alone. Try and avoid the bully if you can and stay away from places where bullying happens. Don't give them an opportunity to get you alone. Don't hide or stay away from school, but, if you can, take a different route to school or class. If you can, travel to school with a parent or a friend whenever you think you might run into the bully.

Try to be brave and don't react to the bully. Try not to show the bully that you are scared or upset. You might get angry or want to fight back, but this can make things worse. Bullies are looking for a reaction from you so getting upset or angry will let the bully know that they are hurting you and make it more likely that they will bully you again in the future.

If you can, tell the bully to stop. If you feel brave enough, it's OK to say "What you just did is not OK with me, it is not nice so please stop doing it". If speaking up seems too hard or not safe, walk away and stay safe.

Tell someone you trust, don't ever be afraid to ask for help. This can be scary if the bully has told you that they will get you if you say anything. This is how they control you so they can bully you again. They are also afraid of getting in to trouble. It's very important that you tell an adult about what is happening, this is not grassing or telling tales. Bullying is wrong and needs to be stopped before someone gets hurt. Tell your mum and dad or a member of staff what has happened and tell them you are frightened of the bully. Having told someone, if it happens again **tell someone again**.

Keep a diary or record the bullying. Sometimes adults just don't understand—we may say something like "It will be OK, don't worry about it" or "Just stay away from them". You might be worried that your teacher won't take it seriously and even make things worse by saying something to the bully without actually punishing them. Keeping a diary or recording of the bullying is very powerful and makes it real for adults. It proves that this is happening and gives the adult all the evidence that they need to make it stop.

Be Cyber-Savvy. Don't ever give your name, age, address or contact details to ANYONE online without your parents' permission. If you are being bullied online, delete or block that person—you can ask an adult for help with this, but you probably know more about computers than they do!

Tips from other young people

- "No matter how alone you might feel, there is always someone you can talk to and someone who can help."
- "Bullying is not your fault, and things can get better."
- "Nothing they're saying is true, you are more than what they're saying and doing to you."
- "You are worth so much more than you think. Being bullied is scary, painful and really hard - but you don't have to suffer in silence. Speak to someone you trust to let them know what is happening and together, you can work to make it better."

