



What is bullying?

1. 'Behavior, usually repeated overtime, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, physically or emotionally. One person or a group can bully others'. Bullying can take lots of different forms and children and young people can be targeted for a number of reasons. Sometimes children and young people do not realize that what is happening to them.

2. Bullying and its types are:

Physical- Kicking, hitting, pushing, taking and damaging belongings.

Verbal- Name calling, taunting, mocking, making nasty comments, making threats.

Emotional – Leaving people out or deliberately ignoring, gossiping, spreading rumours.

Cyber bullying- Bullying using text messages or phone calls, picture or video clips on phones, instant messenger, email, chat rooms, and websites.

Racist or religious- Includes verbal and physical, in addition racist jokes, and graffiti, also refusing to play with people from different ethnic or socioeconomic background.

Sexual or sexist – Includes abusive name calling, gestures, comments about appearances, innuendos, and propositions

Special educational needs / disabilities – bullying will focus directly on the disability or impairment of the victim.

Bullying impacts on more people than the individual that is being bullied, it can also have a negative impact on the bystanders, friends and families or involved. There may be underlying reasons why the person displaying bullying behavior, is acting in this manner that needs to be addressed. No child or young person should have to tolerate bullying behavior and as an adult working with children or young people, it is your responsibilities to safe guard them against such incidents.

3. Warning Signs – There are many warning signs that may indicate that someone is affected by bullying – either being bullied or bullying others. Recognizing the warning signs is an important first step in taking action against bullying. Not all children who are bullied or are bullying others ask for help. It is important to talk with children who show signs of being bullied or bullying others. These warning signs can also point to other issues or problems, such as depression or substance abuse. Talking to the child can help identify the root of the problem.

- Signs indicating that a child is being bullied.
- Signs indicating that a child is bullying others.
- Why kids do not ask for help.





Signs indicating that a child is being bullied

Look for changes in the child. However, be aware that not all children who are bullied exhibit warning signs.

Some signs that may point to a bullying problem are:

- Unexplainable injuries.
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewellery.
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness.
- Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Kids may come home from school hungry because they did not eat lunch.
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares.
- Declining grades, loss of interest in school work, or not wanting to go to school.
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations.
- Feelings of helplessness or decreased self-esteem.
- Self-destructive behaviors such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide.

If you know someone is serious distress or danger, don't ignore the problem. Get help right away.

Signs indicating that a child is bullying others

Kids may be bullying others if they:

- Get into physical or verbal fights.
- Have friends who bully others.
- Are increasingly aggressive.
- Get sent to the principal's office or to detention frequently.
- Have unexplained extra money or new belongings.
- Blame others for their problems.
- Don't accept responsibility for their actions.
- Are competitive and worry about their reputation or popularity.

Why kids do not ask for help

Statistics from the 2008-2009 school crime supplement show, that an adult was notified in only about a third of bullying cases. Kids do not tell adults, for many reasons:





- Bullying can make a child feel helpless. Kids may want to handle it on their own to feel in control again. They may fear being seen as weak or a tattletale.
- Kids may fear backlash from the kid who bullied them.
- Bullying can be a humiliating experience. Kids may not want adults to know what is being said about them, whether true or false. They may also fear that adults will judge them or punish them for being weak.
- Kids who are bullied may already feel socially isolated. They may feel like no one cares or could understand.
- Kids may fear being rejected by their peers. Friends can help protect kids from bullying, and kids can fear losing their support.

4. Support the kids involved

All kids involved in bullying – whether they are bullied, bully others or see bullying – can be affected. It is important to support all kids involved to make sure the bullying does not continue and affects can be minimized.

- 4.1 Support Kids who are bullied
- 4.2 Address bullying behavior.
- 4.3 Support bystanders who witness bullying.

4.1 Support Kids who are bullied

- Listen and focus on the child. Learn what’s been going on and show you want to help.
- Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.
- Know that kids who are bullied may struggle with talking about it. Consider referring them to a school counselor, psychologist, or other mental health service.
- Give advice about what to do. This may involve role playing and thinking through how the child might react if the bullying occurs again.
- Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child. The child, parents, and school or organization may all have valuable input. It may help to :
Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe. Remember that changes to routine should be minimized. He or She is not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, consider rearranging classrooms or bus seating plans for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary, such as switching classrooms or bus routes, the child who is bullied should not be forced to change.
Develop a game plan. Maintain open communications between schools, organizations, and parents. Discuss the steps that are taken and the limitations around what can be done based on policies and laws. Remember, the law does not allow school personnel to discuss discipline, consequences, or service given to other children.
- Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.





Avoid these mistakes

- Never tell the child to ignore the bullying.
- Do not blame the child for being bullied. Even if he/she provoke the bullying.
- No one deserves to be bullied.
- Do not tell the child to physically fight back against the kid who is bullying. It could get the child hurt, suspended or expelled.
- Parents should resist the urge to contact the other parents involved. It may make matters worse. School or other officials can act as mediators between parents.

Follow-up: Show a commitment to making bullying stop. Because bullying is behavior that repeats or has the potential to be repeated, it takes consistent effort to ensure that it stops.

4.2 Address Bullying Behavior

Parents, school staff and organizations all have a role to play.

- Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
- Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.
- Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she was bullied.

For example

- Sometimes children bully to fit in. These kids can benefit from participating in positive activities. Involvement in sports and clubs can enable them to take leadership roles and make friends without feeling the need to bully. Other times kids act out because something else – issues at home, abuse, stress, is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may be in need of additional support, such as mental health services.
- Use consequences to teach. Consequences that involve learning or building empathy can help prevent future bullying. School staff should remember to follow the guidelines in their student code of conduct and other policies in developing consequences and assigning discipline. For example, the child who bullied can
 - Lead a class discussion about how to be a good friend.
 - Write a story about the effects of bullying or benefits of team work.
 - A role plays a scenario or makes a presentation about the importance of respecting others, the negative effects of gossip, or how to cooperate.
 - Do a project about civil rights and bullying.
 - Read a book about bullying.





- Make posters for the school about cyber bullying and being smart online.
- Involve the kid who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the child can:
 - Write a letter apologizing to the student who was bullied.
 - Do a good deed for the person who was bullied or for others in your community.
 - Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damage.

Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences.

- Zero tolerance or “three strikes, you are out” strategies don't work. Suspending or expelling students who bully does not reduce bullying behavior. Students and teachers may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or expulsion is the consequence.
- Conflict resolution and peer mediation don't work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset kids who have been bullied.
- Group treatment for students who bully does not work. Group members tend to reinforce bullying behavior in each other.

Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved continue find ways to help the child who bullied to understand how what they do affects other people. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good friend.

4.3 Support bystanders who witness bullying

Even if kids are not bullied or bullying others they can be affected by bullying. Many times, when they see bullying, they may not know what to do to stop it. They may not feel safe stepping in the moment, but there are many other steps they can take.

- Stop bullying on the spot.
When adults respond quickly and consistently to bullying behavior they send the message that it is not acceptable. Research shows this can stop bullying behavior overtime. There are simple steps adults can take to stop bullying on the spot and keep kids safe.

Do:

- Intervene immediately. It is okay to get another adult to help.
- Separate the kids involved.
- Make sure everyone is safe.
- Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
- Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
- Model respectful behavior when you intervene.





Avoid these common mistakes

- Don't ignore it. Don't think kids can work it out without adult help.
- Don't immediately try to sort out the fact.
- Don't force other kids to say publicly what they saw.
- Don't question the children involved in front of other kids.
- Don't talk to the kids involved together, only separately.
- Don't make the kids involved apologize or patch up relations on the spot.

Get Police help or medical attention immediately if:

- A weapon is involved
- There are threats of serious physical injury
- There are threats of hate-motivated violence, such as racism or homophobia.
- There is serious bodily harm.
- There is sexual abuse.
- Anyone is accused of an illegal act, such as robbery or extortion- using force to get money, property, or services.

EFFECTIVENESS AND REVISION DATES

This Policy was in effect from 1st May 2017 as Anti Bullying Policy. It will be renewed in March 2027

Saji Oommen
Principal

