



Understanding Bullying Behaviour



What is Bullying Behaviour?

Bullying behaviour is like a dark cloud that hovers over the sunny days of your childhood and adolescence. It's when someone repeatedly and intentionally hurts, excludes, or intimidates you. It can happen anywhere: at school, online, or even in your own neighbourhood.

We believe that young people have the power to Inspire Change and Make a Difference. However, we know that when a person is bullied, it impacts on their dreams and aspirations, their academic ability, and their overall emotional well-being, and this can have a major impact on their mental health.



The Effects of Bullying Behaviour

Although there are three main groups that are affected by bullying behaviour - those who are affected by the behaviour, those who display the behaviour, and the bystanders who see it happen, 'bullying' can encompass and affect the entire school community, families and friendship groups.

Bullying behaviour creates a culture of fear and has a negative impact on everyone involved. One incident of bullying behaviour is serious enough but when it is persistent over a period of time, it becomes a devastating problem. The detrimental impact bullying behaviour can have on the physical, emotional, academic, social and personal well-being of a person cannot be underestimated. Bullying behaviour causes great distress which can continue right through adulthood.



The 4 Forms of Bullying behaviour

**BULLYING GENERALLY TAKES
ON ONE OF FOUR FORMS:**

**PHYSICAL, VERBAL,
INDIRECT AND ONLINE**



Am I Being Bullied?

Bullying behaviour isn't always obvious. It can be subtle, like leaving you out of activities or giving you mean looks when the teacher isn't watching. And with the rise of social media, it can follow you home, invading your safe space and making you feel like there's no escape.

The effects of bullying behaviour can be devastating. It can chip away at your self-esteem, making you doubt your self-worth and abilities. It can also lead to emotional and physical health problems. And because it often happens over a long period of time, it can feel like you're trapped in a never-ending nightmare.



Read the following questions and see if any apply to you. This list is not exhaustive and more can be found on our website.

- **Does anyone make nasty comments to or about you?**
- **Are you being made fun of for how you look or act?**
- **Do you feel alone or isolated at school?**
- **Has anyone spread spiteful and/or untrue rumours about you?**
- **Are you purposely excluded from a group?**
- **Has anyone physically hurt you on purpose?**
- **Do you ever receive nasty emails and/or text messages?**
- **Do you ever feel anxious and afraid about going to school?**

The more questions you answer yes to, the more likely it is you are affected by bullying behaviour. The first thing to understand is no-one deserves to be bullied and you have the right to be safe. Secondly, you are not alone. There are people who can help you. Thirdly, it is important to talk to a trusted adult and tell them what has been going on.

What Can I Do?

Tell Someone!

There are several things you can do and not do if someone is displaying bullying behaviour towards you. Different strategies can work in different situations. Don't be afraid to let someone know that you are being bullied – other people can be a great help. If you are being bullied at school, tell a close friend or a trusted teacher. Of course, you can always speak to a parent or other family member.

Don't think it's your fault.

Nobody deserves to be bullied. Don't let anything negative that is said about you to take root in your mind. If you allow this to happen, you will believe them and be robbed of your self-confidence, and they would have won.

Don't fight back.

When a person is affected by bullying behaviour, emotions run high and hitting back can make the situation far worse and result in a serious injury.

Don't keep it to yourself and just hope the bullying will just 'go away'.

Bullying very rarely just 'stops'. As hard as it is, it is important to tell someone if you are being bullied. Keeping it to yourself can cause stress, make you feel distracted and disengaged. When someone is affected by bullying behaviour, it can also cause embarrassment, isolation and fear and it's important to let someone know what is happening to you.

Don't skip school because you're afraid of the person.

For some people, the risk of getting caught truanting is better than facing the person who is hurting them, however, missing school is not the answer. Not only will you isolate yourself from your friends, but your schoolwork and grades will suffer. Of course, the main issue with this is that you will get into trouble. This can then add to the stress you are already going through.

Don't be afraid to tell.

As hard as this might be, it is so important to tell someone if you are being bullied. It may seem scary to tell someone, but telling will not only get you help, but it will also make you feel less afraid. If you have told someone before and they haven't done anything – tell someone else. If you tell a teacher or school counsellor about what is happening, ask them what they are going to do to help you. It is their job to help keep you safe. Most adults really do care about bullying behaviour and will do everything they can to help you. Keep telling until someone does help you and the bullying stops.

Help Stop Bullying Behaviour

Perhaps it isn't you that is being bullied, but you know of someone who is. Maybe that person is not a close friend, but a classmate or someone else you know. Have you ever stood and watched someone being bullied?

Bystanders are those who witness bullying behaviour happening yet don't do anything to stop it. Very often, this is because they don't know what to do or they are afraid of retaliation.

If you witness any form of bullying behaviour, it is important to tell someone. By doing nothing, you are sending a message to the person who is displaying the behaviour that their behaviour is acceptable – and it isn't!



Report it: If you are affected by bullying behaviour or you see it happening to someone else, report it. Speaking out against bullying behaviour can be scary, but if we don't do this, it will continue.



Help Raise Awareness: There are many ways you can raise awareness of bullying behaviour and the damage it can do. Talk about it at school. Maybe you could deliver an assembly with some of your peers. Working together as a team, you can support each other to instigate social change.



Stand Up For Others: Everyone has a part to play in stopping bullying behaviour from happening. If you see it happening to someone else, never join in. Instead, tell someone who can help stop it. Offer the person some support and friendship.



Be a Positive Role Model: Treat people with respect and kindness and encourage others to do the same. You won't like everyone you meet, and you won't be friends with everyone, but we all deserve respect. Never display bullying behaviour towards another person or join in if someone else does it – online or offline.

Don't be part of the problem, be part of the solution.

Further Help and Information

If you find it hard to speak to someone you know, BulliesOut have a team of trained Mentors available to speak to you online.

Drop them an email:

mentorsonline@bulliesout.com

Become a BulliesOut Ambassador.

Further information can be found under the 'Get Involved' section of our website.
www.bulliesout.com



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