

## WHAT IS BULLYING?

- ☹️ “When another kid tries to hurt or scare you.” (Physical bullying; intimidation)
- ☹️ “When someone says bad stuff about you behind your back.” (Relational bullying)
- ☹️ “When someone calls you names or makes fun of you.” (Emotional abuse)
- ☹️ “When kids leave you out.” (Shunning)
- ☹️ “When kids gang up on you and try to make you give them your money or your stuff.” (Extortion)
- ☹️ “When someone copies you in a way that makes you look dumb.” (Mimicking)
- ☹️ “When other people say or do things to bother you over and over on purpose.” (Harassment)
- ☹️ “When someone tries to make you do something that will get you into trouble.” (Coercion)
- ☹️ “When someone tries to use their power to make you feel bad.” (Bullying)
- ☹️ “Using Facebook or the Internet to say mean things or lies about you, or to spread rumours about you” (Cyber-bullying)
- ☹️ Racially or **ethnically-based** verbal abuse and **gender-based** put-downs are also bullying.

Bullying makes people upset. It can make children and teens feel lonely, unhappy and frightened. It can make them feel unsafe and think there must be something wrong with them. Children and teens can lose confidence and may not want to go to school anymore. It may even make them sick.

Bullying can have an effect on learning. Stress and anxiety caused by bullying and harassment can make it more difficult for children and teens to learn. It can cause difficulty in concentration and decrease their ability to focus, which affects their ability to remember things they have learned.

Bullying is painful and humiliating, and kids who are bullied feel embarrassed, battered and shamed. If the pain is not relieved, bullying can even lead to consideration of suicide or violent behaviour.

**Students are most vulnerable to bullying during transitions, such as from elementary to high school, or starting a new school.**

## What To Do if You are Being Bullied

1. **Walk with awareness, calmness, and confidence.** People are less likely to be picked on if they walk and sit with awareness, calmness and confidence. That means keeping one's head up, back straight, taking assertive steps, looking around, having a peaceful face and body, and moving away from people who might cause trouble.
2. **Leave in a powerful, positive way.** The best self-defence tactic is called "target denial," which means "don't be there." Veer around the bully in order to move out of reach. Leave the area where the bully is with awareness, calmness and confidence, but keep track of where the bully is.
3. **Set clear boundaries.** If a bully is following or threatening you in a situation where you cannot just leave take charge of your space by setting clear boundaries as soon as a problem is about to start.
4. **Use your words.** Tell, don't ask, the bully to stop in a calm, but clear voice, and using polite, firm words – not whiney and not aggressive.
5. **Protect your feelings from name-calling.** You can teach yourself to take the power out of hurting words. In a safe place, like your bedroom or with your friends, say the hurtful words out loud and imagine throwing them away. Then say something positive to yourself. e.g. If someone says, “You’re stupid” you can throw those words away and say, “I’m smart.” If someone says they don’t want anything to do with you throw those words away and tell yourself you will find another person to hang out with. Saying something mean back almost never solves the problem.
6. **Speak up for inclusion.** Being left out is a major form of bullying. But walking away and becoming a recluse isn't the answer. Be persistent in looking for opportunities to be included.
7. **Be persistent in asking for help.** Tell an adult you trust what is happening in the moment clearly and calmly and persistently even if these adults are very distracted or rude - and even if asking for help has not worked before.