

# Strategies to combat Bullying (Appendix 1)

## A1.1 Bullying – The facts

### A1.1.1 What is bullying?

Bullying is repeated harassment over a period of time, and is done in a way that makes it difficult for the person being bullied to defend themselves.

### A1.1.2 Types of Bullying

There are three main types of bullying.

**Verbal bullying**, including:

- ⊙ Teasing
- ⊙ Sarcasm
- ⊙ Name calling
- ⊙ Continually ignoring someone
- ⊙ Racist and sexist remarks

**Physical bullying**, including:

- ⊙ Taking money or personal belongings
- ⊙ Pushing, hitting, kicking and punching
- ⊙ Sexual abuse, including unwanted physical contact or comments

**Indirect bullying**, including:

- ⊙ Spreading rumours or starting gossip about the individual.
- ⊙ Getting the individual into trouble for no real reason.
- ⊙ Excluding the individual.
- ⊙ Sending the individual hurtful messages via texts, emails, phoning and letters.

Remember, bullying can happen outside of a school or college or even in the street or even sports venue. If someone is consistently doing any of these things, whether it's on the street, on the bus or in the workplace, it's still considered bullying.

### A1.1.3 Who is affected by bullying?

There are loads of reasons why an individual could become a victim of bullying. Perhaps they are:

- ⊙ Doing especially well at school, college, university or work and others are jealous;
- ⊙ Particularly tall, short, large or small;
- ⊙ From a different background;
- ⊙ From a different race or nationality;
- ⊙ Gay, lesbian or bisexual;
- ⊙ New, with no mates to back the person up;
- ⊙ Shy, giving the impression that the individual won't stand up for themselves;

Remember, it's the person who's doing the bullying who's in the wrong and there is nothing wrong with THE INDIVIDUAL.

If the individual has trouble convincing people at their school that bullying needs to be dealt with, remind their head teacher that "**schools have a similar duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under the Education Act 2002 (section 175)**".

### A1.1.4 How can you tell if someone is being bullied?

- ⊙ Their behaviour may have changed suddenly. Perhaps they've become depressed or withdrawn.

- ⊙ They may start avoiding college or work or sporting venue for no obvious reason.
- ⊙ They may seem happy at home but miserable at work or college or even at the sport's venue.
- ⊙ They may have bruises, scratches or any other physical injuries that aren't easily explained.

#### **A1.1.5 How can you can help someone who's being bullied?**

- ⊙ Listen to them and let them know you believe them.
- ⊙ Take their feelings and worries seriously.
- ⊙ Talk through their options with them.
- ⊙ Support them in standing up to the bully.

#### **A1.1.6 If you see someone else being bullied:**

- ⊙ Don't just ignore it. How would you feel if it was you, a family member or a friend and nobody helped out?
- ⊙ Try speaking to the person who you think is being bullied and encourage them to seek help.
- ⊙ Don't join in with bullying because you feel you have to. By joining in you're just being weak and spineless. If you don't do anything about the bully, there's no guarantee it won't be you next.
- ⊙ If appropriate, speak to your school/college about their anti-bullying policy and think about setting up a student council.

## **A1.2 If you're [being bullied](#) right now, what do you do?**

If you're being bullied [verbally](#), [physically](#) or [indirectly](#) by someone or a group of other people, you need to know how to deal with it.

### **A1.2.1 Don't panic!**

Don't panic, keep as calm as you can, and don't worry right now about the reasons why you think they're doing it to you. You just need it to stop as soon as possible. It's important you understand that they do NOT have the right to make you feel miserable. It is not your fault so tell yourself this over and over. Once you stop believing this, they have won. Don't let them!

You are not alone in this. Sadly most people have been bullied at some point in their lives.

### **A1.2.2 Try talking to them**

It might sound unlikely, but people who bully may not always be aware of how they are making you feel, so you could try telling them in a calm but firm manner. If there's a gang of them, try speaking to the ringleader when he/she is alone. But if that's impossible or if it doesn't work!

### **A1.2.3 Tell someone**

If you're being bullied, you really need to tell someone - someone you feel you can trust. There is strength in numbers, even if telling someone else about it doesn't feel like the strong thing to do. You stand a far better chance of getting the problem sorted if you let other people help.

This could be a friend, your parents, a sympathetic teacher or tutor, someone in a year above you, a colleague at work - anyone who isn't going to make the problem get worse.

- ⊙ Tell them what has happened, in as much detail as you can, how it is making you feel and why you want it to stop. If the bullying is physical and you're being hurt, you need to make people aware of this too.
- ⊙ You need to make them listen and help you stop the bullying. Then, if you can, tell someone else. The more people who know about it, the more support you have. Keep telling them what the bullying is doing to your confidence and your happiness.
- ⊙ You could mention that you do not want to make a big fuss over it, but do share your worries.
- ⊙ It's a good idea to keep a diary and write down the place, date and time the bullying occurs as this is good evidence when the person is confronted. A list of a series of bullying incidents carries more weight than just one incident, so do go into detail in your diary.
- ⊙ You could also call a helpline like Childline or the NSPCC - they're there to help and can give real practical support. Their details are in the [Further Information](#) section (Appendix 1.7).

## A1.3 Standing Up To Bullying Behaviour

### A1.3.1 Dealing with bullying behaviour

Here are some tips you could try to reduce the immediate threat of bullying behaviour. They're NOT a guarantee to immediately stop it all happening, but remembering them may help next time you're faced with a threatening situation.

- ⊙ **Ignore it:** It's a good step to try and ignore the people bullying you, and the attention they get from making you feel bad because if you deprive them of the attention, there's little point in them bullying you. Ignoring them can be part of a solution, but it's easier said than done as it's very difficult to ignore if the bullying just goes on and on.
- ⊙ **Walk away:** There's no point listening to someone being abusive when you don't have to. Showing that you're not just going to stand there and take it shows that you're no easy target.
- ⊙ **Try to stay in company:** You are less likely to be bullied if there are other people around you. But if the people bullying you do manage to corner you away from a group of others, you need to try and deal with the situation as calmly as possible, retaining as much control as possible.
- ⊙ **Act assertive:** Assertiveness is not the same as being rude or aggressive. It's about you believing - and stating - that you have the right to be heard and respected as the person you are.

If someone challenges that right by behaving in an aggressive and bullying way towards you, you may find that simply showing that you are not the walkover they expect you to be may help. You do not need to instantly BE assertive, but if you can learn a few tricks about how to APPEAR assertive, you're less of an easy target.

- ⊙ **Don't panic:** If you're caught in the middle of an intimidating situation with the people bullying you, your main concern is to ensure that you get out of it as safely as possible. Try not to let on that you feel angry or upset about the way they're treating you.
- ⊙ **Stand tall:** Even if, deep down you do not feel it, standing upright so that you appear big and confident will actually make you feel bigger and more confident.
- ⊙ **Speak clearly:** Being clear, even in simply saying things like 'No', 'Don't do that', 'Leave me alone' or 'Stop'. It makes you sound more confident – and therefore you're being more of a threat to the intimidating behaviour. Practice it often, out loud, on your own; you will feel more in control. It does work.

Read on for advice on dealing with [violence and/or severe intimidation](#).

## A1.4 Severe Intimidation and Violence

### A1.4.1 Dealing with extreme situations

If your case of bullying is very serious and you're being ganged up on by people who are threatening to hurt or attack you - either now or the next time they see you - it is extremely frightening.

If you're faced with this situation, your main concern is your safety. It's also important to try hard to make it no worse than it already is for you.

These tips won't stop the bullying. But if it happens to you, try to remember them.

- ⊙ Try to keep as calm as you can.
- ⊙ Shout for help
- ⊙ **Keep your fists clenched if it helps** – but don't use them. Fighting back may escalate the problem and make it worse for you in the future. Staying passive and assertive without hitting back doesn't mean that you're a walkover, or that you're weak. But it might mean you don't get hurt.
- ⊙ It might sound a bit crazy but try to detach yourself from the situation by talking to yourself in your head. In your mind tell yourself that the immediate situation will not last for ever and that you will keep calm until it is finished.
- ⊙ Tell yourself that these people do not have the right to do this, and they do not have any right to make you feel like this. Tell yourself that you will get some help to try to stop it happening again.
- ⊙ Once the situation has calmed down and they have finished intimidating or hurting you, do exactly that.
- ⊙ **Don't carry with you a weapon or anything threatening:** It may be a really tempting idea because you might feel it would give you an upper hand in dealing with the situation. But it actually makes you the aggressor and far easier for the bullying people to get away with their behaviour. If they themselves have a weapon, they're less likely to use it if you don't have one. And again you're far less likely to get hurt.
- ⊙ Don't let them win. Tell someone and let them help you; don't suffer on your own.

### A1.5 Bullying at work

If you feel you are being picked on, singled out or treated unfairly by your boss or colleagues at your place of work, you may well be being bullied.

Only you will be able to assess whether you're the victim of bullying or just poor management, but the chances are you're a victim of workplace bullying if you find that you're...:

- ⊙ Being shouted at.
- ⊙ Being criticised all the time.
- ⊙ Having your responsibilities taken away.
- ⊙ Being given trivial tasks to do.
- ⊙ Continuously being picked on in front of your colleagues - and/or in private.
- ⊙ Having your chances of promotion removed.
- ⊙ Regularly being made fun of, or being the butt of unpleasant jokes.
- ⊙ Being regularly and deliberately ignored.
- ⊙ Being excluded from work activities.
- ⊙ Being deliberately overloaded with work.
- ⊙ Getting impossible deadlines (which you suspect your boss knows you won't be able to make).
- ⊙ Being consistently attacked in terms of your professional or personal standing.

You do not have to put up with it. A long period of bullying behaviour can take its toll on your health, causing [stress](#), [anxiety](#), [panic attacks](#) and a loss of [confidence](#). It can also impact upon your [relationships](#) and [family life](#).

Here's a list of steps to take:

- ⊙ **Don't ignore it.** You have the right to be treated equally and as fairly as everybody else under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. This means your employer has a duty to protect your health, welfare and safety. If this isn't happening, then your employer - as well as the person bullying you - may face a punishment of a fine or paying compensation. So it really is in their interests as well as yours to stop it happening.
- ⊙ **Try talking to the person** calmly and confidently, saying that you find their approach and behaviour to you unacceptable. Standing up directly to the bullying behaviour like this - preferably in front of some other colleagues - may be all it takes to stop it happening again. People who bully do not like their authority undermined.
- ⊙ **You should tell someone**, especially as most bullying behaviour goes on in secret, or away from a group of colleagues. You might also be bullied over emails, on the phone or in writing so don't try and face it on your own; there is strength and often comfort in numbers, and you may find that other people are also going through the same thing.
- ⊙ **Keep a diary** and log the times and dates of bullying behaviour - and exactly what that behaviour is. When the person bullying you is tackled, your account of what's been going on will be important. Bear in mind too that an account of one incidence on its own carries less weight than a more detailed list so make it as in-depth as you can.
- ⊙ **Join a union.** The union will listen to you and ensure you have the best advice. The union can give you free legal advice, support you, put you in touch with support groups and approach the employer on your behalf. You do not have to tell your employers.
- ⊙ **Tell your manager or supervisor.** If it is one of them who is bullying you, go to their manager. Take your diary with you as evidence to back up what you have to say. You could gently remind them that by law they have to do all they can to stamp it out.

## **A1.6 If You're Bullying Someone**

**If you're bullying someone, or you're part of a group or gang who are intimidating people, then you need to realise the very real and damaging effect you could be having on someone else's life.**

Bullying is not a joke. You may think that it's just an extreme name for what you see as some harmless teasing or mucking about, but even name-calling can be very hurtful and you could be causing real, lasting distress.

Ask yourself why you do it and think about your answer.

There are many reasons why people threaten, scare or intimidate others. Some do it to get attention or to make them feel superior over someone else. Making someone else feel small will make them feel big and more important.

Others do it because they see it as a way of fitting in. They may not realise the impact it has on the other people. They may feel jealous of them. Often they pick on the person or people they know who will put up the least resistance.

**It's really important that you realise the impact of your bullying behaviour can have on people. Don't assume they'll get over it easily.**

People who are bullied may become frightened to go to school, feel too intimidated to go to work - or even to go out at all. This can make them withdrawn, lonely and rejected. Many people who suffer bullying become depressed, some even suicidal.

If you're intimidating behaviour, name-calling and slagging off becomes violent or emotionally traumatic, the effect on your victim can last years and can cause that person real and in some cases irreparable damage.

### **A1.6.1 Think about what you're doing**

Do you know why you bully people?

- ⊙ Get to the cause of the problem rather than taking it out on other people.
- ⊙ Maybe you're trying to stop it happening to you.
- ⊙ Maybe you get [bullied at home](#).
- ⊙ You might have a reputation as a ringleader and feel you'll lose face if you change your behaviour.

Talk to a friend, adult, teacher or colleague to get help. Feel good about changing the way you act around people. You can choose the sort of person you want to be.

## **A1.7 Further Information**

### **A1.7.1 Bullying Online**

Heaps of advice about bullying. Website: -[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

### **A1.7.2 Bully Free Zone**

Raises awareness of alternative ways of resolving conflict, and of reducing incidences of bullying

Address: Bully Free Zone, 23 Palace Street, Bolton. BL1 2DR

Website: -[www.bullyfreezone.co.uk](http://www.bullyfreezone.co.uk)

### **A1.7.3 Bullywatch**

Aims to support and help anyone who is involved with bullying issues e.g. victims, bullies and witnesses.

Phone: 01454 318753

Email: -[bullywatch@hotmail.com](mailto:bullywatch@hotmail.com)

Website: -[www.bullywatch.org](http://www.bullywatch.org)

### **A1.7.4 Careline**

Telephone counselling for anyone experiencing bullying and other problems.

Phone: 0113 2302 226 (Leeds)

Phone: 020 8514 1177 (London)

### **A1.7.5 Childline**

The UK's free, 24-hour helpline for young people in trouble or danger.

Phone: 0800 1111 (Free - the lines can be busy so please keep trying)

Website: -[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

### **A1.7.6 Connexions**

If you're aged 13 to 19 and living in England, Connexions Direct offers information on a wide range of topics as well as confidential advice and practical help. Advisers are available from 8am to 2am, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. Connexions Direct is part of the Connexions Service and you can also use the site to find your nearest Connexions Centre.

Phone: 08080 013219

Website: -[www.connexions-direct.com](http://www.connexions-direct.com)

### **A1.7.7 Kidscape**

This charity focuses on preventing abuse before it happens and has lots of advice for people affected by bullying. It also runs workshops and can help schools develop their anti-bullying policies.

Phone: 020 7730 3300

Website: -[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

### **A1.7.8 NSPCC: Child Protection Line**

A 24-Hour, Free, confidential counselling advice and info service.

Phone: 0800 800 5000

Textphone for hearing-impaired people: 0800 056 0566

Website: -[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Email: -[help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

### **A1.7.9 Need 2 Know**

Are you being bullied? Know someone who is? Perhaps you're doing the bullying? No matter what your situation, get help and support with the Need2Know website.

Website: -[www.need2know.co.uk](http://www.need2know.co.uk)

### **A1.7.10 TextSomeone**

Gives school pupils the power to report incidents of bullying, theft, crime or any unwanted behaviour in confidence, 24 hours a day, seven days a week by text message, email or voice message.

Website: -[www.textsomeone.com](http://www.textsomeone.com)

### **A1.7.11 Bullying at work**

**Connexions** A guide to tackling bullying at work

Website: -[www.connexions-direct.com](http://www.connexions-direct.com)

### **A1.7.12 Further reading**

The NSPCC recommends these books:

- ⊙ ***Bullying*** by Michele Elliott (Hodder)
- ⊙ ***Don't pick on me: how to handle bullying*** by Rosemary Stones (Piccadilly Press)
- ⊙ ***You can beat bullying: a guide for young people*** published by Kidscape

#### **Other Books**

- ⊙ ***Bullying: What Have I Ever Done To You?*** by Robert Higgs.  
There is also a website with some useful related articles.  
Website: -[www.roberthiggs.co.uk](http://www.roberthiggs.co.uk)