

# REPORTING VS. SNITCHING



At the Diana Award, we interact with thousands of students and staff members throughout the UK every year and sometimes we notice specific trends about bullying behaviour. Some of these trends are fun, like TikTok challenges and Fortnite dances but some trends can be harmful and even dangerous. This article examines the difference between reporting instances of bullying behaviour and students calling one another 'snitches', 'grassers' or 'snakes' if they speak to a teacher.

## FIRSTLY, WHAT IS REPORTING?

'Reporting' is when someone sees an example of something harmful, dangerous or upsetting and they act on this by telling a responsible adult. In school, this could be telling a teacher if someone experiences bullying behaviour. At The Diana Award, we encourage every student to report instances of bullying behaviour and this is one way we can all be Upstanders in our society and support one another. As Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, you should make sure that your school has a strong and accessible reporting system. Reporting can also be done online, with every social media and most digital platforms having 'Report' buttons which is how you can address harmful, dangerous or upsetting behaviour online. These reports are sent to professionals who will decide whether the person displaying bullying behaviour has broken their community guidelines and possibly even the law. Another example of reporting is when someone sees or hears of someone breaking the law and calls the police – for example, if you were to see someone being attacked in the street, you might call the police. We all know this is the right thing to do as you are reporting a serious incident. Reporting bullying behaviour is no different.

## SO, WHAT IS SNITCHING?

'Snitching', on the other hand, is the term given to someone for speaking to an adult or reporting something but is used derogatively and is meant to imply that reporting is doing the wrong thing. One of the most common insults we hear in schools is the term 'snake', used to describe someone who has spoken to a staff member. If this term is commonly used for students speaking out about bullying behaviour, this will make other students much less likely to seek help when they are at risk and may make bullying situations a lot more likely to place without consequence. Using the term 'snake' for someone doing the right thing can be damaging, as it is promoting harmful bullying behaviour and creating an environment in which doing the right thing is punished. This could lead to others being too afraid to speak up. At The Diana Award, we encourage and support every person to have the bravery and strength to speak out and act when encountering a harmful or bullying situation and to be the change we want to see in the world as the Upstander. If you hear this language being used and you feel safe doing so, we recommend pointing out the potential harm.

It can be helpful to think of the difference between these two terms like this: 'snitching' gets someone **into** trouble, whereas 'reporting' gets someone **out** of trouble.

We understand that often, in a world of Bystanders, it can be hard to single yourself out, put yourself at risk and be the one person to stand out and say something, but that's exactly why we work tirelessly to train Anti-Bullying Ambassadors in both Primary and Secondary schools. We need people like you to be the difference and to support anyone you think may need it.

## FURTHER SUPPORT\_

What is The Diana Award Crisis Messenger? The Diana Award Crisis Messenger provides free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK. If you are a young person in crisis, you can text DA to 85258. Trained volunteers will listen to how you're feeling and help you think the next step towards feeling better.

We're proud to be the only charity set up in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales, and her belief that young people have the power to change the world. It's a big mission but there are two things within it that we focus our charity's efforts on – young people and change.

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Throughout all of our programmes and initiatives, 'change' for and by young people is central, including our anti-bullying work which encourages change in attitudes and behaviours.

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We hope you found this resource useful and wish you all the best in your anti-bullying journey. If you would like to help us create more resources and train even more Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, you can make a £5 donation by texting CHANGE 5 to 70470 or visit [diana-award.org.uk/donate](https://diana-award.org.uk/donate)

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