

# INTERVENING SAFELY

# IN BULLYING SITUATIONS



As an organisation dedicated to anti-bullying, we hear from thousands of staff and students throughout the UK each year and we make sure to really listen to what they tell us.

The personal experiences and information that is shared with us forms the basis of our training. Our aim is to deliver training that will help you stand for what is right and stay safe whilst taking action in your schools!

One of the most common questions we get asked by our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors is “how do we intervene in a bullying situation without putting ourselves at risk?” We know that there are thousands of students out there who want to help when they see a bullying situation taking place. But many students are afraid that they are singling themselves out and putting themselves in harm’s way.

## OUR TOP FIVE WAYS TO SUPPORT SOMEONE, WITHOUT PUTTING YOURSELF AT RISK

**1.** Intervention doesn’t have to be physical, just like not all examples of bullying behaviour are physical. However, if you do see **physical bullying** behaviour and you’re concerned about your own safety, it’s important to be an Upstander. You could find a responsible adult who can address the situation. If safe to do so, try to encourage the person experiencing the bullying behaviour to leave with you. Encourage other onlookers to leave the situation too – someone who is exhibiting bullying behaviour will often stop if they no longer have an audience. Speak to the person who is experiencing bullying behaviour in private and be someone who they can talk to and who listens to them. Remember to offer a supportive ear but don’t promise to keep what they say a secret, as you may need to tell a responsible adult, like a teacher or parent, about what has happened. You could also walk the person to and from school or between classes if possible, which may make the bullying behaviour less likely to happen as the person is not on their own.

**2.** If you see **harmful behaviour** online and don’t want to single yourself out by addressing it directly, you can use the platform’s online tools to report comments or pictures you think are harmful. You can also advise the person who is experiencing bullying behaviour to block another user or report a post themselves. Often, reporting is completely anonymous so no one will know who reported a post or user. After this, make sure you check-in and offer your emotional support to whoever it is and let them know they are not alone. This can be as simple as sending a message asking them if they are ok.

**3.** If you hear **verbal bullying** behaviour being directed at someone or a group, consider whether it’s appropriate to speak out by being an Upstander. If you can, calmly address the person/people displaying bullying behaviour by asking them why they feel it’s necessary to say what they’re saying and how they would feel if someone was targeting them in this way. If this escalates the situation, find your school’s Anti-Bullying Ambassadors to help. If your school doesn’t have Anti-Bullying Ambassadors yet, speak to a trusted adult.

**4.** Not all intervention methods need to happen immediately and some can be done throughout the entire school. For example, if you think that students in your school are reluctant to speak out about bullying behaviour because of the fear of retaliation or being called a ‘snake’, why not speak to your teachers about introducing an anonymous reporting tool on your school’s computers? This could be a simple report button where students can anonymously report bullying behaviour without the consequence of it coming back to them.

**5.** Finally, remember that you do not have to intervene alone! If you see something that concerns you, speak to your friends and address the situation in a non-confrontational manner together. Use one another for support and be the change you want to see in the world by acting as the Upstanders in your school and community.

We hope these tips help. We know that it can be hard to single yourself out, put yourself at risk and be the one person to stand out and say something. That is exactly why we work tirelessly to train students to become Anti-Bullying Ambassadors in both Primary and Secondary schools. We need people like you to stand up and make a 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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