



**Don't face
it alone**

#SpeakOutAboutBullying

Advice for Schools and Educators

See it. Speak out. Support them.

Thousands of young people experience bullying behaviour every day. They often don't speak out about it because they are scared of what might happen or they are unsure about who to tell or how to report it online. We want to change this by showing young people that they deserve to be heard and that help and support are available.

Experiencing bullying behaviour can make young people feel small, lonely and like they have no voice. They may think that even if they did manage to say something, no one would believe them.

If you know or suspect that a young person is experiencing bullying behaviour, it's important to listen to them. You can help students take action against bullying behaviour by giving them the confidence to speak out. As a role model, the more you show you care, the more likely they are to share. You can also look out for the signs and create a safe and supportive environment where young people trust you and the school to speak out.

No-one should face bullying alone.

Understanding Bullying



"One of the biggest things my students tell me is that when they trust me enough to speak to me about a problem, worry or concern - be that bullying or something else - I ask them 'How do we make the situation better?'. They often tell me this makes them feel like they have some of that power and control back, rather than an adult taking over and solving it for them or trying to and making a mess. Instead, together we reflect, discuss and solve it."

Staff Anti-Bullying Lead



"Bullying behaviour is repeated, negative behaviour that is intended to make others feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe. This can happen both online and offline."



"Eventually I came out of it the other side without vulnerability or fear of going through it again, because I got help when I spoke up"

Student Anti-Bullying
Ambassador

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Experiencing bullying behaviour is an unpleasant part of too many children's lives, with around a quarter of pupils experiencing some bullying behaviour during their primary school years and one in six 10-15 year olds reporting having experienced it, according to a study by the Department for Education. Online bullying is a serious issue, with one out of five children aged

10-15 years in England and Wales experiencing at least one type of online bullying behaviour according to the Office for National Statistics.

Bullying behaviour can be physical, verbal or indirect. Indirect bullying behaviour can involve the spreading of rumours, deliberately excluding someone or online bullying.

Bullying behaviour can have long term effects on young people, including:

- Mental health problems like depression and anxiety
- Trouble forming friendships
- Lack of acceptance by peers
- Becoming suspicious of other people
- Poorer school performance

(source: NSPCC)

Signs to Look Out For

These signs may indicate your student is experiencing bullying behaviour:

- Change in body language, mood, participation, overall behaviour (e.g. loud to quiet, quiet to loud)
- Change in peer-group dynamics in the classroom
- A student who may seek more attention from staff
- A student who has started spending less time with other students
- Physical marks or damage to personal property including clothing
- Less or more device use, or appearing nervous when using a device may indicate online bullying behaviour

Whilst these signs are not exhaustive and don't necessarily mean that your student is experiencing bullying behaviour, they are worrying. Staff should follow up with the student in line with your school's safeguarding procedure.

What should you do if a young person reports bullying behaviour to you?

Listen

Letting a young person feel heard is key. 'The most important thing you can do is listen'. Try not to judge and encourage them to explain in their own words.

Take what they have to say seriously, if they have chosen to tell and trust you then this problem, worry or concern is important to them so treat it that way.

Thank them

A young person who is experiencing bullying behaviour needs to know that they have done the right thing by talking to you about this. They might be worried that by telling you, the problem will get worse.

Thank them for being open about it and let them know you'll do your best to help sort things out.

Make a record

Listen to a young person to understand what has happened, and record what, where, when and why. This will help if you need to escalate the issue within school. Your school will have a specific reporting route and process which you will need to follow. Refer to your school's Anti-Bullying policy for more information.



SUPPORT NETWORKS

Support networks can be very powerful. Help young people to identify someone they can turn to if they have a problem, worry or concern.

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Think who else needs to be involved

You may need to speak with another trusted person or organisation about what has happened to resolve the bullying behaviour, so it's important to not promise to keep what they have told you a secret. You could say something like "Thank you for telling me. I need to speak with someone about this so that you can have the best support to resolve it and make sure you're safe." Ideally, help the young person to feel safe so that, together, you can share with anyone else that might need to know, like a Head of Year or Form Tutor.

Work together and think of joint solutions

Ask them what they would like to do about the situation, so you can decide the next steps together. It's important not to take over their problem but to help the young person feel in control. Ask them "What can we do about this together to make you feel better?"

It may be that a simple alerting of another member of staff will help inform them of what is going on in their classroom/supervision and enable that member of staff to catch the bullying in action.

Young people have told us that treating it sensitively could include a member of staff saying "it's come to my attention" or "another student has told me about your behaviour. This is your chance to stop before it is taken more seriously."

It's important to give students the chance to change their behaviour and learn from mistakes.

How to respond to bullying behaviour

- If it's happening in certain lessons or a particular area, make sure staff are aware.
- Refer to your school's Anti-Bullying policy and follow the procedure.
- Speak with a colleague - Form Tutor, Head of Year or Class Teacher - what behaviour have they witnessed and what action can you take together?
- If the bullying behaviour is taking place online between two pupils consider how you can sensitively make the person exhibiting bullying behaviour aware that you know what is happening and give them chance to stop. Support the young person who is experiencing bullying behaviour to use the reporting tools that exist on every platform.

The Department for Education states: "If an incident of bullying outside the school premises or online is reported to the school, it is important that it is investigated and appropriate action is taken. This will send a strong signal to pupils that bullying will not be tolerated and perpetrators will be held to account."

- If you are concerned a young person is in danger or concerned about their welfare, speak to your designated safeguarding officer.
- For more advice see: www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

For more help and resources visit

DontFaceItAlone.com



Follow us across social media @AntiBullyingPro

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For support, students can
Text SHOUT to 85258 or
contact Childline on **0800
111 childline.org.uk**