

If your child is bullying others

- Stay calm; concentrate on the behaviour rather than blaming the child.
- Explain why bullying is harmful.
- Encourage the child to explain why they have behaved in this way – and look for ways to do this more positively.
- Get them to take the perspective of the target – how does it make them feel?
- Provide boundaries for their behaviour and consequences if those boundaries are broken.

1 IN 4
CHILDREN
REPORTED
BEING BULLIED
IN THE PAST
12 MONTHS

Source: Rigby, K. and Johnson, K. 2016 The Prevalence and Effectiveness of Anti-bullying Strategies Employed by Australian Schools

For support for your child, contact Kids Helpline at www.kidshelpline.com.au, Beyond Blue at www.beyondblue.org.au or Headspace at www.headspace.org.au to chat to someone.

If your child is threatened or told to harm themselves, report the abuse to the police and also the social media site or ISP.

For more information and advice on bullying, visit the National Centre Against Bullying website at amf.org.au/ncab



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Keeping children safe from violence

BULLYING HURTS



What is bullying?

Bullying is serious and widespread. One in five Australian schoolchildren is bullied face-to-face and one in seven is bullied online, ie cyber bullied.

Bullying is a misuse of power in relationships. It is not accidental behaviour, it is repeated and deliberate – and is intended to cause harm to another less powerful person or group.

Disagreements, conflicts or fights between equals are not bullying.

Bullying is never okay. Stopping it is everyone's responsibility.

Types of bullying

- Name-calling or cruel teasing, telling lies or spreading rumours.
- Physical bullying such as hitting, shoving, abusing someone's belongings.
- Threatening behaviour.
- Excluding from social events or refusing permission to join a group.
- Cyber bullying through electronic communication including mobile phones, text messages, social networking sites and apps, games, emails, instant messages and more.

Bullying is harmful because it can cause

- Anger
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Fear
- Loneliness



It affects

- The person being bullied – the target.
- The person bullying – the bully.
- Others also feel uncomfortable, angry, confused about what to do and fearful it might happen to them. It can make environments feel – and be – unsafe.

Signs that a child might be the target of bullying

- Changes in mood.
- Changes in sleep, eating, socialising behaviour.
- Drop in school performance or unwillingness to go to school.
- Unexplained scratches, bruises, torn clothes or lost belongings.

If your child is being bullied

- Stay calm. Listen to their story without interruption or expressing your own feelings. You may experience anger, sadness or other strong emotions. These are about you and are not helpful to your child.
- Thank them for coming to you with their concerns. Many young people tell no one.
- Note the situations, places, times and names of those involved.
- Remind them that it is normal to feel hurt, it is never OK to be bullied and the behaviour won't stop unless something is done.
- Tell them to stay calm, to try not to show emotion, look confident, not fight back, leave the situation as soon as possible and avoid the places where bullying occurs.
- Ask what they would like to happen (it may not be what you think is appropriate). Punishment is often counter-productive.
- Help them join other groups outside of school.
- If they are being bullied online, block the people who are sending messages, ignore the behaviour, change passwords and save evidence via screenshots.
- Work with the school as the situation probably arose out of a school-based relationship. Make an appointment to speak with a principal or coordinator. Take your notes. Gain assurance that your child will be safe. Give the school time to address the situation, but make a further appointment to establish progress.