

AREA TITLE: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

AREA TITLE BULLYING

About...

What is bullying?

Bullying is a form of abuse. Bullying is when someone hurts someone else either physically or emotionally without any reason. All forms of bullying are wrong. Bullying often happens in school and pupils who have a disability, including those on the autism spectrum, are more likely than others to be the victim of bullying.

There are lots of ways you might be bullied at school. Here are some of them:

- Being called names
- Having lies or rumours spread about you – and trying to get you into trouble
- Hitting, punching, biting and pushing
- Having things taken away from you, hidden or stolen
- Having your belongings damaged or broken
- Having money stolen from you – or demanding money from you
- Posting insulting messages about you on the internet or by instant messaging (sometimes called cyber-bullying)
- Receiving silent or abusive phone calls or text messages

The main thing to know is that bullying is wrong. No one has the right to hurt you, either physically or emotionally. You must also remember that it is not your fault. Everyone is different, and bullies often pick up on differences in order to cause distress but you have just as much right to be different as anyone else. If you are on the autism spectrum you might find it difficult to recognise that a bully is behaving differently towards you. But if you feel at all worried or anxious about the things someone is saying to you, or making you do, please tell someone you trust about what is happening.

What should you do?

Bullies can be very clever at making sure no one sees them bullying you. They also often make you promise not to tell anyone. Bullying is wrong, and it is not your fault. If you are being bullied at school, the first thing you should do is tell an adult about what is happening. This person might be your Mum or Dad or a teacher. Sharing the problem with someone will help and is the first step towards stopping the bully from hurting you any more.

Who can help you?

Your school has a duty to protect you from abuse and should have an anti-bullying policy. The Government has written clear guidelines for all schools to follow which aim to tackle the problem of bullying in schools. In addition, there are specific guidelines for schools about the bullying of pupils who have special educational needs, such as those on the autism spectrum. There is a link to these guidelines given in the LINKS section below. If you feel you are being bullied, you must tell an adult.

There are lots of organisations which have been set up to tackle the problem of bullying. There are some links given below to other organisations which may be able to help you. We suggest you have a look at the information on their websites about what to do if you are being bullied.

Get help from...

ChildLine 0800 1111 UK wide free and confidential helpline for children. You can talk to ChildLine about anything – no problem is too big or too small.

Kidscape 020 7730 3300 UK wide charity committed to keeping children safe from abuse. Offers a helpline for parents and guardians, online advice for children and parents and carers and training for those working with children.

Bullying UK A web based charity set up by a parent and her son with direct experience of bullying. The website gives lots of advice and information about how to combat bullying at school and other situations.

Need2Know A website offering children and young people advice and help about all sorts of topics and issues which might affect them, including bullying.

CBBC The Childrens' BBC website offering advice and help with a wide range of topics including bullying.

Beatbullying Website for young people dedicated to stopping and preventing bullying

Links

ChildLine Factsheet - information sheet for primary school pupils about bullying. Produced by ChildLine, a service run by the NSPCC.

ChildLine Factsheet – information sheet for secondary school pupils about bullying. Produced by ChildLine, a service run by the NSPCC.

Tackling Bullying - listening to the views of children and young people

Author: Christine Oliver and Mano Candappa

Published by: The Thomas Coram Research Unit, The Institute of Education, University of London

Date: 2003

Bullying involving children with special educational needs and disabilities

Author: The Department for Children, Schools and Families

Published by: Teachernet: Online publications for schools

Date: 2008

Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools

Author: The Department for Children, Schools and Families

Published by: Teachernet: Online publications for schools

Date: 2007

Bullied cartoon a short cartoon for 4 – 6 year olds about bullying from Children First for Health

Dealing with bullies information for 6 – 11 year olds about bullying and how to deal with bullies (Australian website)

Bullies - easy read information Easy Read information aimed at younger children explaining bullying and what to do about it (Australian website)

Case Studies

Bullying - Ask Doc A real life question about bullying from Keith, aged 10 on the Children First for Health website

Bullying and self harm by Zara, age 15 A real life story about bullying and the consequences for 15 year old Zara

Bullying - by Sarah A real life story about bullying from Sarah

Department for Children, Schools and Families – case studies about how some schools have successfully tackled bullying

National Autistic Society - Make School Make Sense for Me – children and young people with autism speak out about their experiences of school

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