

A guide to bullying

for young people



Introduction: What is bullying?

What do you think bullying means?

The NSPCC define bullying as:

'An intentional behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone.

It can happen anywhere - at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.'

However, just be mindful that bullying doesn't need to be repeated often, one off comments can still make a big impact.

What are the different forms of bullying?

- Physical bullying: hitting, slapping or pushing someone
- Verbal bullying: name calling, gossiping or threatening someone
- Non-verbal abuse: hand signs or text messages
- Emotional abuse: threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone
- Exclusion: ignoring or isolating someone
- Undermining, constant criticism or spreading rumours
- Controlling or manipulative behaviour
- Making silent, hoax or abusive calls

Impact of bullying on attendance

1 in 5 young people have experienced some sort of bullying in the UK. Bullying can often be linked to school absence. Research shows that the proportion of pupils who were absent from school due to anxiety or mental health problems was higher amongst pupils who had been bullied.

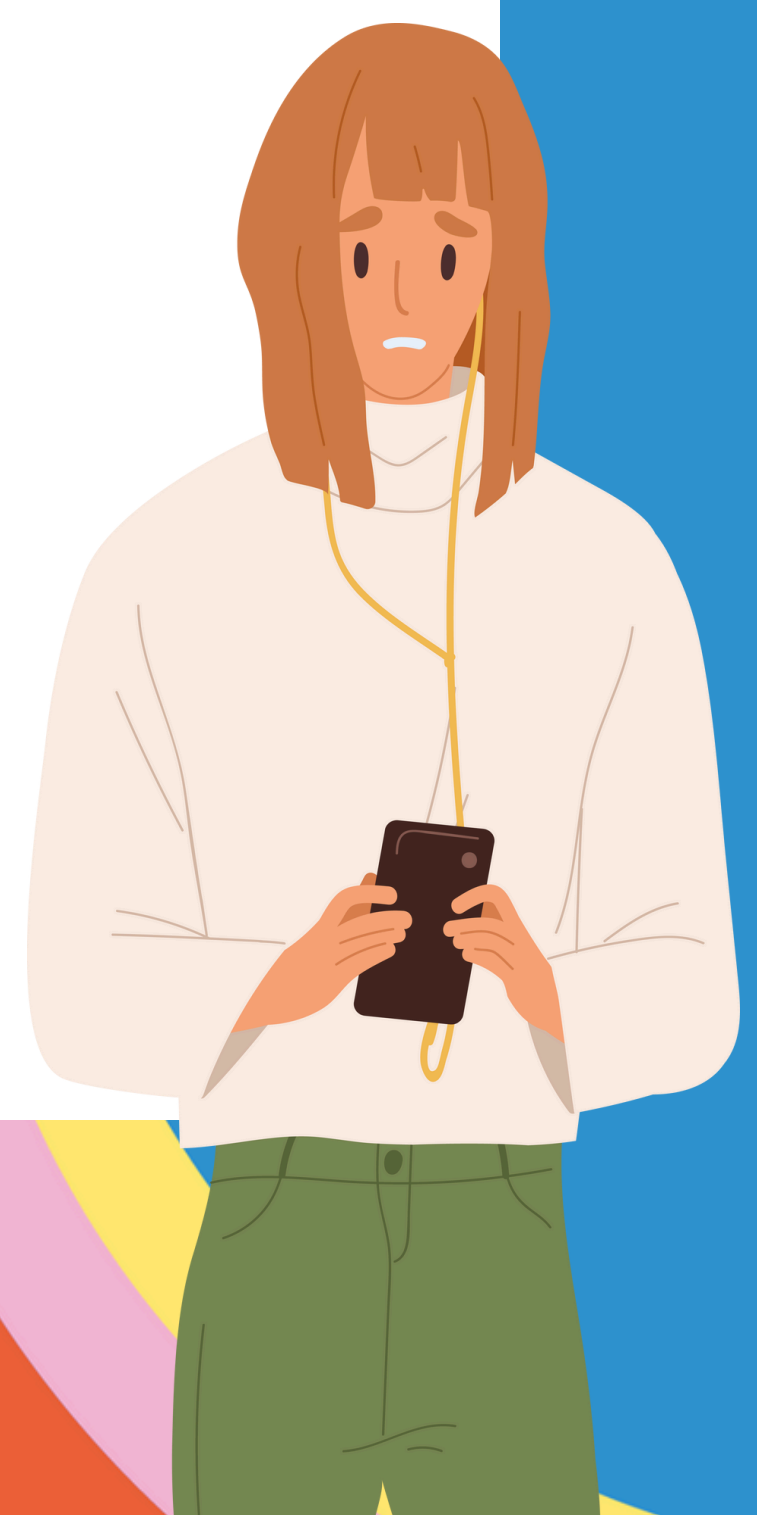
In a survey of 13,387 12-18 year olds, 18% of respondents said they had missed school because they were being bullied within the past 12 months (Ditch the Label, 2020).

Have you ever wanted to miss a day at school because of something someone said or done?

Can you think of any impacts of bullying?

Here are some to consider:

- Fear of judgment
- Loss of confidence and self-esteem
- Internalised negativity
- Anxiety and depression
- Isolation and withdrawal
- Fear of retaliation
- Impact on creativity and originality



Top tips to overcome bullying

Talk to a trusted adult

If you're dealing with bullying, tell an adult you trust—like a parent or teacher. They can often step in and help without the bully even knowing how they found out. It's really important to speak up, especially if things seem like they could get physical. Things like threats, or physical attacks are serious, and if they're not reported, it could just encourage the bully to get worse. Don't let it slide—reach out for help.

Ignore the bully and walk away

Bullies like getting a reaction. If you walk away or ignore them, you're telling them that you don't care.

Walk tall and hold your head high

Using this type of body language sends a message that you're not vulnerable.

Practice confidence

Practice ways to respond to the bully verbally or through your behaviour. Practice feeling good about yourself.

Don't get physical

You're more likely to get hurt or end up in trouble. Instead, find another way to deal with your anger. Try exercising, writing down how you feel, or doing something creative. If you write angry emails, posts, or notes, make sure you delete or tear them up afterward.

Stand up for friends and others you see being bullied

Your actions help the victim feel supported and may stop the bullying.

Find your (true) friends

If people are spreading rumours or gossip about you, talk to your friends about it. They can support you and help you feel safe.

Join your school's bullying or violence prevention programs

Another option is peer mediation, where you and the bully can try to work things out with the help of a student mediator. If your school doesn't have a program like this, think about starting one yourself!

Try to talk to the bully

Try letting them know that what they're doing is serious and hurtful. This can be helpful if you notice someone in your own friend group starting to pick on or exclude someone else.

Talk about it

It can really help to talk to someone like a guidance counsellor, teacher, or friend—anyone who can give you the support you need.

#STOPBULLYING



Don't be a bystander

What is a bystander?

A bystander is someone who does not get involved in a situation where someone else needs help. Bystanders are those people who watch an argument at the school gates, and the crowd that gathers to watch a playground fight. Although they don't participate, they encourage the bully, who will feel driven on by the audience.

Most of us have been a 'bystander' at some time. We justify it by saying that it's natural to be curious about unusual events; that there may be good reasons for not getting involved in other people's business, such as fear of getting hurt ourselves, and that we're not doing any harm.

'Doing nothing' has a real impact on events and may cause harm. To tackle bullying we must understand the responsibilities of peer and adult bystanders who want to seek solutions to bullying and take action where it is needed.

How can bystanders help when tackling bullying behaviour?

We know that bystanders play a significant role in bullying. Proactive and preventative interventions implemented at individual, class, school and community level have the potential to reduce bullying, alongside reactive strategies to deal with bullying incidents when they occur.

Adults must also recognise their own bystanding behaviours and model positive actions by looking at their own systems, structures and policies and do some audits and research into how they may be framing, encouraging and justifying bullying and harassment among pupils.

Follow these steps if you see someone being bullied...



Take Action: If you witness bullying, it's crucial to take action. Don't just walk away or ignore it.



Speak Up Safely: If you feel safe, you can ask the bullies to stop. However, if confrontation seems risky, it's best to seek help.

Talk to Someone: Reach out to a teacher, parent, or friend for support. If you're hesitant, consider leaving an anonymous note for a teacher to inform them of the situation.



Addressing Cyberbullying:



Remember, cyberbullying can be as damaging as in-person bullying. If you know it's happening, confide in someone you trust.

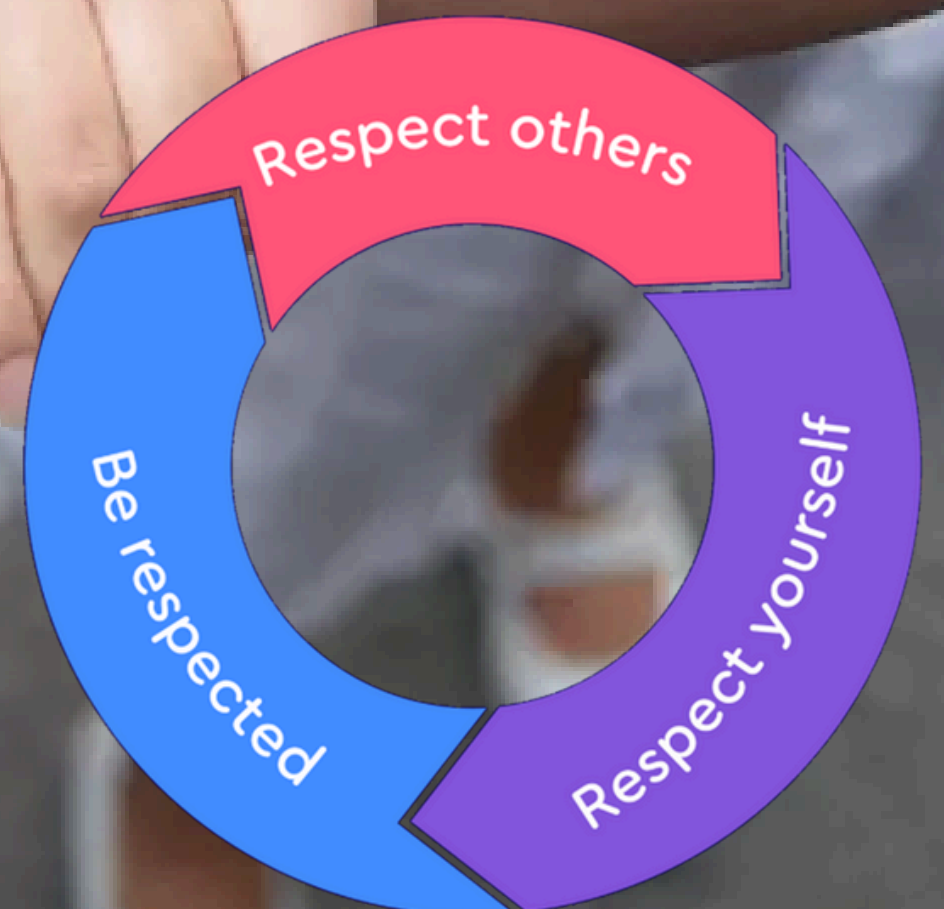


Online Behaviour Matters: Encourage others to treat people online as they would in person; respectful behaviour should be consistent across both environments.

The Respect Cycle

How can you choose respect?

- Active listening: Get other people's perspective without interrupting
- Stay calm and take a break: If you feel disrespected and this overwhelms you, take a break and do some breathing before responding
- Use I statements: 'I feel, I think' to express how you feel to someone
- Agree to Disagree: Being respectful of other people's views even if you think they're wrong
- Use Respective Language: Think about your tone of voice and how you address others



Follow us

Follow us on social media to get access to more resources, self-help tips and support service information.



@mymhst

Remember to reach out to your support system if you've been affected by anything you've experienced online.

Support services

Local Support

Hull & East Yorkshire

Mind

01482 240200

heymind.org.uk

Hull Thrive

howareyoufeeling.org.uk

Young Healthy Minds

eastridinghealthandwellbeing.co.uk

SUPPORT

National Support

Childline

0800 1111

childline.org.uk

Young Minds

youngminds.org.uk

Anna Freud

annafreud.org

Kooth

Podcast
on Spotify