

Top tips for children

Kidscape is here to help. We are here to help children and families going through a bullying situation, and we are here to work with teachers and other professionals to keep children safe.

We can only stop bullying by working together.

What is bullying?

Bullying is any behaviour that is intended to **hurt**, is **repeated** and where it's hard for the person or people on the receiving end to defend themselves (in other words - the **bully has the power**). Children are most often bullied by other children, but can also be bullied by adults.

What does bullying look like?

Children tell us that the most frequent form of bullying is name calling (don't believe the old sticks and stones rhyme - words can hurt as much or more). Bullying can also be physical and emotional, and can take place face to face and online (cyberbullying).

Targeting 'difference'

Children that bully very often target any kind of 'difference'. We are all unique but for some of us there may be something which means we stand out. We should all be proud of who we are and if you are bullied it is never your fault.

Difference between bullying and banter

'Banter', or teasing is very often fun between friends and family but it can slip into bullying behaviour if we're not careful. Make sure that what you say to others isn't actually hurting their feelings. If they are sad or distressed stop, and say sorry.

What to do if I'm being bullied

- 1) Remember it's not your fault.** You might feel scared, sad and embarrassed but it's the person or people doing the bullying that need to change, not you.
- 2) Get help.** Don't suffer in silence. Think of an adult who could help you. Tell them you think you are being bullied and you need their help to stop it. If they don't give you the advice you need, go to the next person until you find someone that can help you stop it. No one has the right to hurt you. It is a strong person that asks for help.
- 3) Keep a record.** Try and keep a diary of events. This should include what happened, when and with who. Your parent or carer might be able to help you do this.

4) Know your friends. Make sure you only hang around with people who make you feel good about yourself. If someone makes you feel sad, scared or makes you do things you don't want to do they are not your friend.

5) Practice standing up for yourself. It can help to practice standing or sitting up tall in the mirror, making eye contact and saying a clear, firm 'No'. Don't let the person bullying you get a reaction from you.

6) Seek a place of safety. If you are at risk of harm there is no shame in taking yourself away from the situation. Do whatever it takes not to get hurt. If that means finding a safe place at break or lunch time like a classroom or the library then do it. Just make sure you seek help as soon as you can.

7) Remember no one has the right to hurt you. If someone has physically hurt you in any way, has touched you in a way that made you uncomfortable or is trying to get you to do something dangerous or risky then seek help. If the person you talk to doesn't listen or take you seriously, don't blame yourself, **find someone who will help.**

8) Love yourself. When you are bullied it can make you feel sad and lonely and like you are rubbish. You are not rubbish. You are amazing and wonderful and life will get better. Do things that make you feel good about yourself. That might be playing with a pet, going for walks, doing sports, singing, watching funny videos, playing games, writing down your feelings as poems or songs. We want you to know you are not alone. Thousands of children go through bullying every day. **Together we will stop it and you will be okay.**

9) Stand up for others. We all have a part to play in stopping bullying. If you see children who are scared or lonely stand or sit with them. Don't join in bullying behaviour by laughing or sharing cruel posts. Make it clear to those doing the bullying that you don't find it funny or like it. Stand up for others who are different. Show them you think they are great just as they are.

Who can help

These are organisations that offer advice and help to children and teenagers going through a bullying situation:

Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk

Childline: www.childline.org.uk

The Mix: www.themix.org.uk (for under 25s)

YoungMinds: www.youngminds.org.uk