

Stand Up to Bullying

Take a Stand

Students should be able to go to school knowing they won't be embarrassed, hurt, or bullied.

To make your school bully-free, everyone needs to work together and stand up to bullying.

What all students can do

Here are some things you can do to help make your school a safer, more inviting place for everyone.

Make others feel accepted. You can help other students feel accepted by simply noticing them, making eye contact, and giving them a friendly smile. Just saying "hi" can help someone feel like he/she belongs.

Welcome new students. Reach out to new students. Invite them to hang out with you or your group, and get to know them. Introduce them to other students with similar interests.

Be supportive. Many students feel out of place, or like they don't belong. Be supportive to students who may be having problems—and to those who just seem like they need a friend.

Peer pressure is usually seen as a bad thing, but it can also be used for good. When students join together behind a cause or in support of a classmate, others are likely to follow.

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Bystanders

Students who see or witness bullying are bystanders. They are the ones who have the most power to stop bullying! *Bystanders have a choice.* They can be part of the problem, or they can be part of the solution. Bystanders can choose to ignore bullying, support it, or they can take steps to stop it.

What bystanders can do

- ▶ Speak up immediately. Stand tall, be confident, and tell the bully to stop. "C'mon, cut it out."
- ▶ Distract the bully. "Hey, we need to get to class."
- ▶ Speak to the one who's being bullied. Ask him/her to come with you, and walk away together.
- ▶ If you sense the situation may be dangerous, leave immediately and find an adult.
- ▶ If you don't feel comfortable speaking up, walk away. Do not give the bully an audience. Later, find the student who was bullied and offer your support. "I'm sorry that happened to you. You don't deserve to be treated like that."
- ▶ Report any bullying incident you see to a trusted adult.

Studies have shown that whenever bystanders intervene, bullying often stops within seconds. Bystanders are the key to stopping bullying!

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Facts & Info

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, harmful, and repeated. Bullying is always unacceptable!

Here's what you need to know about bullying.

Types of Bullying

Physical bullying

- ▶ pushing, shoving, hitting, kicking
- ▶ stealing or damaging one's property
- ▶ hazing a member of a team or group

Verbal bullying

- ▶ making insulting or embarrassing comments
- ▶ teasing or calling people names

Social bullying

- ▶ spreading rumors, lies, or gossip
- ▶ intentionally damaging one's social status
- ▶ excluding someone from a group

Cyberbullying

- ▶ posting hurtful or embarrassing messages or pictures
- ▶ sending harassing or threatening text messages

Bullying is different than teasing. Teasing happens between people who generally like each other. In bullying situations, there is a power imbalance and an intention to do harm.

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Targets

If you or a friend are being targeted by a bully (or concerned you may be targeted), the tips and advice presented here will give you some ideas on what you can do. *No student should have to worry about dealing with a bully at school, after school, or online.*

What to do if you're being bullied

Speak up and speak out. Look the bully in the eye, remain calm, and speak in a confident, respectful voice. Be assertive, and tell the bully to stop.

Walk away. Calmly walk away and ignore the bully. Don't show fear. Anger, fear, and other reactions give bullies what they're looking for.

Keep a record. Include the people involved, dates, times, places, and the specific things that were said, done, sent or posted online.

Tell an adult. Talk to a teacher, counselor, coach, or parent—any adult you trust. Explain what has happened and ask for their help and advice.

Get involved in school activities. You'll have fun, make new friends, and focus on something positive.

If you are the target of a bully, it's important for you to remember that it is not your fault. No one deserves to be bullied, harassed, or intimidated!

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Cyberbullying

Students today use all sorts of devices to communicate with their friends. But when students use their phone, tablet, or computer to harass, threaten, or embarrass others, it's cyberbullying—and it's not okay.

If you are the target of a cyberbully, here are some things you can do.

- ▶ Immediately block or delete the cyberbully's number, profile, or email address.
- ▶ Don't respond or retaliate. Ignore it. Cyberbullies who don't get a reaction often get bored and quit.
- ▶ Tell an adult you trust. Also tell your friends. Don't let anyone bully you into silence!
- ▶ Save, print, or screenshot all messages or posts. Keep a record of where it's coming from and when it happens.

Most importantly, don't let a cyberbully get you down. Do things with your family and friends, and stay busy with activities you enjoy. Focus on the positive people and things in your life!

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Bullies

Bullies often have problems they don't know how to deal with. Bullies, as well as targets, need help and understanding. If you've ever bullied someone, think about why you did it—and about the effect it may have had.

Why do bullies bully?

Power and control – Many bullies want to show they're superior and powerful by controlling others.

Boredom – Some bullies are simply bored. They entertain themselves by harassing others, not stopping to think what effect it might have.

Intolerance – Bullies are often intolerant of people who look or act different than they do. These bullies target those with different backgrounds, beliefs, etc.

Justice – Some students bully for revenge. They want to get even for a perceived wrong.

To impress others – Some students bully in order to increase their status or to impress others, often bragging about what they've done. They think it's a way for them to earn admiration and respect.

Being a bully can be hard. People may act friendly, but they aren't true friends. And always having to prove how tough you are can be tiresome.