



Who gets Bullied?

Nearly everyone is bullied at some time in their lives: by brothers and sisters, by neighbours, by adults or by other children. If you are being bullied, you may feel scared, vulnerable and quite alone but you owe it to yourself to try and sort out the situation so that the the bullying stops. **Remember, no-one deserves to be bullied.**

It is surprising that all sorts of people who are now very successful adults were bullied when they were young. It is encouraging to know that it is possible to succeed, in spite of being tormented at school. All of these well-known people were bullied in some way at school - Gok Wan, David & Victoria Beckham, Barack Obama, Nicola McLean, Will Young, Rihanna, Alan Davies, Jonathan Ross, Phill Jupitus, Jamie Redknapp, Jessica Alba.

For some, the bullying went on for years; for others it was less frequent. All of them feel that bullying is wrong and that it was not their fault, but the fault of the bully looking for a victim.

What can I do if I am being bullied?

Your school may already have a way of dealing with bullying. For example, some schools

- have anti-bullying guidelines and procedures for dealing with incidents
- encourage anyone who is being bullied, or has witnessed bullying to tell someone about it
- have 'bully boxes' where people can leave notes about what is happening
- have student meetings or even 'courts' where problems like bullying are discussed and dealt with
- have specially assigned students or teachers who are there to help

If your school has an anti-bullying system, use it to get help. If you're not sure how it works then talk to a teacher.

Some schools ignore bullying but *don't become resigned to being a victim*. You can still help yourself and ask others to help you.

Tell a friend what is happening.

Ask him or her to help you. It will be harder for the bully to pick on you if you have a friend with you for support.

Try to ignore the bullying or say 'No' really firmly, then turn and walk away.

Don't worry if people think you are running away. Remember, it is very hard for the bully to go on bullying someone who won't stand still to listen.

Try not to show that you are upset or angry.

Bullies love to get a reaction - it's 'fun'. If you can keep calm and hide your emotions, they might get bored and leave you alone. As one teenager said to us, 'they can't bully you if you don't care'.

Don't fight back if you can help it.

Most bullies are bigger or stronger than you. If you fight back you could make the situation worse, get hurt or be blamed for starting the trouble.

It's not worth getting hurt to keep possessions or money.

If you feel threatened, give the bullies what they want. Property can be replaced, you can't.

Try to think up funny or clever replies in advance.

Make a joke of it. Replies don't have to be wonderfully brilliant or clever but it helps to have an answer ready. Practice saying them in the mirror at home. Using prepared replies works best if the bully is not too threatening and just needs to be put off. The bully might just decide that you are too clever to pick on.

Try to avoid being alone in the places where you know the bully is likely to pick on you.

This might mean changing your route to school, avoiding parts of playground, or only using common rooms or lavatories when other people are there. It's not fair that you have to do this, but it might put the bully off.

Sometimes asking the bully to repeat what they said can put them off.

Often bullies are not brave enough to repeat the remark exactly so they tone it down. If they repeat it, you will have made them do something they hadn't planned on and this gives you some control of the situation.

Keep a diary of what is happening.

Write down what details of the incidents and your feelings. When you do decide to tell someone, a written record of the bullying makes it easier to prove what has been going on.



Who can I tell?

Usually it's difficult to sort out the bullying on your own or even with the help of friends. You should think seriously about telling an adult. It's the only way to get the bullying stopped.

If you need help, don't be embarrassed about asking. Everyone needs help sometimes and asking for help to stop bullying doesn't mean that you are weak or a failure.

Telling about bullying isn't 'telling tales' or 'grassing'. You have the right to be safe from attacks and harassment and you should not be silent when you are being tormented and hurt.

Often, people don't tell about bullying because they are afraid the bully will find out and things will get worse. This is a natural fear but schools can put a stop to bullying without the bully learning who told, especially if the bully has several victims.

Even if the bully does find out, it is better to have things out in the open.

Staying safe online

Alongside the wonderful and exciting things that the web brings, there can be hidden dangers as well - for example

- in chat-rooms, people can pretend to be someone that they aren't and entice you to meet them (that's one of the reasons we don't have a online discussion or chat-room on the Kidscape website)
- you can receive unwanted and nasty emails, texts or have something posted on a web site about you. This is known as [cyber bullying](#)
- people can use your personal details for their own purpose

There are a few rules that you need to stick to make your time on the Internet or in chat-rooms as safe as possible. Rather than list them here, there are a couple of websites that you can visit to get advice

- Try [Childnet International](#) and follow the SMART rules.
- For advice on chat-room safety have a look at [Chatdanger](#).
- [thinkuknow.co.uk](#) and has some straight talking advice on many aspects of online safety - follow the sections from the dropdown box on the opening page.
- [CEOP](#) has some useful information, and will also let you report anything you've seen or experienced on the internet that has made you feel threatened or uncomfortable.

If you do encounter problems with something you do on the Internet, **TELL SOMEONE**. You'll not only be protecting yourself but other people of your age as well.

Your parents, teacher or a trusted adult will be able to help you. If they want some advice, then get them to read [this page](#).

The Government's Department for Children, Schools and Families have also produced [guidelines on cyber bullying](#)



Making friends

by Michele Elliot

Richard, 11 "I want to make friends, but I don't know how. In my last school I was bullied and kicked around and didn't have any friend. The kids at this school seems to be OK, but I just know I'll do something wrong. Help."

Funny, isn't it, that we just think everyone knows how to make friends. A lot of people don't and I have even found that some bullies end up bullying because they don't know what to do either. Then they get stuck with the label of bully and don't know how to change.

Perhaps the best way to think about making friends is to decide what makes a friend. I asked a group of 13 year old boys and girls to come up with a list of what they liked about their friends. They said that good friends:
show an interest in what people do

- are good at giving compliments without going overboard
- go around with a pleasant expression on their face
- laugh at people's jokes
- are kind
- ask, not demand, to join in
- offer to help others with work or carry things
- invite people to do something
- hang around places where other students are
- are welcoming to new students
- are good at thinking of something interesting to do
- are willing to share
- are humorous and tell jokes
- are fair
- are good at organising games or activities

Changing Schools

Are you moving to secondary school soon? Hopefully you'll be happy at the new school. But maybe you've been bullied at your current school and you're concerned that the bullies are moving to the same school.

Well you can always get your parents to contact the secondary school NOW and make them aware of the situation. That way the school can ensure that the bullying doesn't continue and that you are not put in the same class as people who have bullied you before.

And if you're worried generally about moving to secondary school then read our Moving Up! leaflet which has lots of useful tips for making friends, coping with the homework etc.

It is exciting and sometimes a bit frightening to go to secondary school. There will be new things to learn, the school may be bigger, you will have more teachers and more homework.

You will also make new friends and have fun.

Kidscape has talked to lots of young people and has gathered together some tips that helped them to make the move easier. Read them and try to:

- Talk over your fears
- Relax
- Enjoy yourself!



How can I protect myself?

Here are some suggestions from Kidscape and teenagers we spoke to who were concerned about their safety

- Avoid taking short-cuts through dark or deserted places.
- Never hitchhike, take rides from strangers and try to avoid walking home alone.
- If someone approaches you asking directions, keep your distance or walk away and pretend not to hear.
- If you are threatened, yell and run away, if possible.
- If you are being followed, go into a shop or towards people.
- Try crossing the road to see if the person follows.
- Do not wear a iPod\mp3 player\personal stereo as it prevents you being aware of what is happening around you.
- Keep your mobile hidden when you're not using it.
- Think twice about getting the latest 'phone model - expensive handsets could attract

- potential thieves and muggers
- Avoid empty carriages on trains.
 - On buses or the underground, sit near the driver or guard.
 - If you are attacked, think of what you might do. Would you talk your way out of it or pretend to do what you are asked, while waiting for a chance to get away? Only you can decide what to do in the event.
 - If you do have to defend yourself, take a deep breath and try not to panic. Use anything you have to hand to defend yourself - keys, an umbrella, the heel of your shoe, hairspray.
 - Remember that anything you do or any item you use is to provide you with an opportunity to get away. Unless you are trained in self-defence, it is absolutely senseless to stay around.
 - If you are faced with a knife or another weapon, probably your best defence is to remain calm and either give the attacker whatever possessions he or she demands. If they are going to assault you, you might try to talk your way out. Whatever you do, it must be your decision.

'Getting Away' Strategies to Practice

- If someone grabs your arms with their hands, jerk your arm away in the direction of the attacker's thumb - this is the weakest part of anyone's grip.
- If someone grabs you from behind, bend forward and come back quickly, slamming your head against their face or chin (the back of your head is very hard, but it may hurt you as well).
- If they have a weapon and you think you have a chance to do something to get away, scrape your heel down the inside of the attacker's leg, or kick them in the knee hard. Then stamp on their instep with all your weight. Then run in the direction of shops or people!
- Kicking someone in the genitals or poking them in the eyes is not as easy as you might have heard. If you kick up at an attacker, they may just grab your leg and you will end up on the ground.
- Only ever try something you feel confident you can complete, or you might just do enough to make the attacker even more angry.
- The best advice is to practise the two or three techniques you think you could use until they are automatic.
- Finally, if you are attacked, tell someone - ring the police, talk to a parent, a teacher, a friend. **Do not keep it to yourself.**



Quick Come Backs

1 “Hey Stupid, Smelly, Minger” or other name calling

Come Back = Ignore The Bully. Bullies want to upset you, if you ignore them, they don't get what they want, and that's good for you.

2 “I'm gonna beat you up” or similar threats.

Come Back = Yell “STOP” as loud as you can! Bullies don't want others to know what they're up to, if you attract the attention of someone near by, the bully will back off.

3 “Just wait till I get you alone!”

Come Back = Stick with others. Kids who bully hate a crowd, if you hang out with a friend or adult, the bully is less likely to do anything to you.

4 “HAHA! What a Cry Baby!”

Come Back = Smile, or at least don't look upset. Bullies feel power when they upset you, if you act cool, they have no power over you.

5 “You'll be sorry at lunch or playtime”

Come Back = Stay away from where bullying happens. Bullies want to get you in unsafe areas

where they are in control. Avoid danger spots. – If your locker is near the danger, ask a teacher to change lockers – if lunch time is dangerous ask a teacher to sit closer to adults – On the playground stay near adults or children you trust.

6 “you're a shrimp”

Come Back = YES I know, everyone seems taller than me. Bullies want to argue so they can cause trouble, if you agree, they have nothing more to say.

7 “Hey Fatty!” “What a Stupid outfit” “Hey Four Eyes”

Come Back = Smile And laugh. Give some facts, like “I wear glasses as my eyes are weak and these help me see better. Im not fat, just big boned. If you can't think of anything, just smile and laugh and walk off. Bullies count on you being upset, don't let them have power over you. Do something unexpected to show you don't care what they say!

8 “We Don't want you to play with us!”

Come back = Be direct “ I don't like being left out and I want to play” Bullies want you to accept what they say, if you tell them directly what you want and how you feel, you let them know they are not in charge.