

## Slide 1



Even though everyone agrees bullying is not acceptable, it can still happen. Your child may be bullied or even be a bully at some time. It is natural to feel distressed and angry at the thought of your child being bullied.

If bullying is not addressed or discussed and little or no action is taken it could have a significant impact on the health and well being of your child. This may include low self esteem, depression and poor academic achievement.

This presentation will provide you with some information about how to deal with bullying, what to do if your child is a bully and sources of help for you and your child.

💡 *Ask group what they consider to be bullying. Refer to next slide.*

## Slide 2

**Definitions of bullying**

Most definitions (including DfCSF) consider bullying to be:

- deliberately hurtful
- repeated over a period of time
- difficult for victims to defend themselves

Bullying

Here we can see a definition of what is meant by 'bullying'


## Slide 3

**Bullying may include:**

**Physical** - hitting, kicking, hair pulling, taking belongings, damage to property, deliberately disrupting work or play

**Verbal** - name calling, insulting, saying nasty things, hurtful teasing, put downs, threats

**Indirect** - spreading nasty stories, leaving someone out, not letting someone participate



**Bullying**

It is important to remember that these types of bullying methods can also be used by adults as well as children. For example: in the workplace, at home.

Bullying can also be:

**Racist** - Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.

**Sexual** - Unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.


**Homophobic** - Any hostile or offensive action against lesbians, gay males or bisexuals or those perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

**Abuse of the vulnerable** – This may include children with physical disabilities, on the autism spectrum, or with special educational needs. There are also accounts of bullying towards children who are carers and children who have suffered a death in the family.

## Slide 4

**Why do people bully?**

- Expel their anger or frustration
- Feel powerful
- Gain admiration, raise status or sense of belonging
- Feel there is someone 'less' than themselves
- Get their own back for something
- Communicate/maintain their power/dominance
- Bigotry and dislike for particular groups
- For fun



The illustration shows a larger, more muscular character on the left, representing the bully, and a smaller, thinner character on the right, representing the victim. The bully is standing with one hand on his chin, looking at the victim. The victim is standing with a slightly hunched posture, looking down.

**Bullying**

The national organisation Kidscape found that even though bullies focus on different characteristics of the child (over weight, being clever, wears glasses etc) it is still power that is the main reason for their bullying behaviour.

Therefore, in order to reduce bullying the reasons why someone bullies and the benefits 'pay off' they get from doing it must be addressed.

## Slide 5

**Dealing with bullying**

**First**, discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere.

**Second**, encourage your child to feel good about themselves, have empathy for others and communicate and manage their feelings well.

**Third**, watch out for signs that your child is being bullied, or is bullying others.

**Fourth**, familiarise yourself with appropriate anti-bullying policies (e.g. schools, colleges, youth clubs).

Bullying

Parents have an important role in helping schools deal with bullying, which can start at an early age.

**First**, discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere. Show them how to resolve difficult situations without using violence or aggression.

**Second**, Children are less likely to bully if they feel good about themselves, have empathy for others and communicate and manage their feelings well.

**Third**, watch out for signs that your child is being bullied, or is bullying others. Parents and families are often the first to detect that a problem exists. Don't dismiss it. If you are worried, contact the relevant organisation where the incident took place immediately.

**Fourth**, familiarise yourself with appropriate anti-bullying policies (e.g. schools, colleges, youth clubs). All schools should have one. It is a document that sets out how the school deals with incidents of bullying. You have a right to know about this policy, which is for parents as much as staff and pupils.



*Ask group what signs could there be if your child was being bullied.*

## Slide 6

**Possible signs of bullying**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•be frightened of walking to and from school</li><li>•change their usual route</li><li>•not wanting to go on the school bus</li><li>•beg you to drive them to school</li><li>•be unwilling to go to school (or be 'school phobic')</li><li>•feel ill in the mornings</li><li>•begin truanting</li><li>•doing poorly in their school work</li><li>•come home regularly with clothes or books destroyed</li><li>•come home starving (bully taking dinner money)</li><li>•become withdrawn, start stammering, lack confidence</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•become distressed and anxious, stop eating</li><li>•attempt or threaten suicide</li><li>•cry themselves to sleep, have nightmares</li><li>•have their possessions go missing</li><li>•ask for money or start stealing (to pay the bully)</li><li>•continually 'lose' their pocket money</li><li>•refuse to talk about what's wrong</li><li>•have unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches</li><li>•begin to bully other children, siblings</li><li>•become aggressive and unreasonable</li><li>•give improbable excuses for any of the above</li></ul>
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Bullying

👉 *It is not necessary to go through each individual sign. It is not intended to be an extensive or exhaustive list. **Indicate that in some cases these could be linked to other concerns or worries a child has whilst growing up.***

There are a number of possible signs that could indicate if your child is being bullied, however, some children are good at hiding their feelings. The first you may know of a problem is when your child suddenly doesn't want to go to school, or says they are ill when certain lessons are on the timetable.

Don't forget that if you didn't know your child was being bullied then the school may not have realised it either.

## Slide 6 (Continued)

If you have noticed a change in your child's behaviour and you think they are being bullied, but you're not sure, ask a few simple questions:

- What did they do at school today?
- Did they do anything they liked?
- Did they do anything they didn't like?
- Who did they play/hang out with?
- What sort of games/ activities/lessons did they participate in?
- Did they enjoy them?
- Would they have liked to play different games with someone else?
- Are they looking forward to going to school tomorrow?

*👏 These questions may change depending on the age of the child/young person?*

*💡 Ask the group when is the best opportunity to speak to your child e.g. in the car to and from school, round the dinner table.*

## Slide 7

**Recommended approaches for bullied children**

- **calmly talk with your child** about his/her experience and feelings
- **listen and make a note of what your child says**
- **reassure your child** that he/she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying
- **Seek advice** from local/national sources of help
- **agree next steps and way forward** (ask child for suggestions)
- **develop and practice appropriate responses**
- **explain to your child** that should any further incidents occur he/she should report them to a teacher/youth worker etc immediately

Adapted from [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

**Bullying**

Before agreeing next steps and ways forward it is useful to get further advice and guidance on the range options/techniques available to you and your child.

This slide highlights some options you may want to consider.

Closely monitor your child and make sure you check how they are coping and dealing with the situation. If you have spoken to the school, college, young persons service regarding this issue, contact them to see if they to have continued to monitor the situation and how.

## Slide 8

**Tips for those being bullied** 

- Tell a friend what is happening
- Don't be afraid to walk away
- Try not to show that you are upset or angry
- Don't fight back if you can get help
- Try to avoid being alone
- Keep a diary of what is happening
- Get involved with other activities

**Bullying**

Here are some recommended approaches for young people to use to help defuse a bullying situation.

**Tell a friend what is happening** - Has your child got a friend they can hang around with? It will be harder for the bully to pick on your child if they have a friend with them for support.

**Don't be afraid to walk away** - It is important for your child to understand the importance of walking away and to not worry about what people think. 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 – its 'fun'. By keeping calm and hiding their emotions, the bully might get bored and leave them alone. As one teenager commented, 'they can't bully you if you don't care'.

**Don't fight back if you can help it** - The bullies maybe bigger or stronger than your child. If they fight back they could make the situation worse, get hurt or be blamed for starting the trouble.

**Try to avoid being alone in the places where you know the bully is likely to pick on you** - This might mean changing their route to school, avoiding parts of playground, or only using common rooms or lavatories when other

people are there. It's not fair that your child has to do this, but it might put the bully off.

### **Slide 8 (Continued)**

**Keep a diary of what is happening** - Get them to write down what details of the incidents and their feelings. When they decide to tell someone, a written record of the bullying makes it easier to prove what has been going on.

### **Slide 9**


**Issues for parents of school children**

- My child does not feel safe because the bully is still in school.
  
- The bully isn't being dealt with. Our concerns are not being taken seriously.
  
- My child is being labelled a bully but s/he is really a victim/scapegoat
  
- Child X hasn't been excluded

Bullying

If your child is bullied it can also raise issues for you as a parent.

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**If parents are not happy...**

1. Speak to the class teacher, form tutor or head of year initially about your concerns.
2. Ask to see the school's anti bullying policy.
3. Involve the head teacher.
4. If the situation remains unresolved, parents have the right to complain in writing to the chair of governors.

**Bullying**

If at anytime you raised concerns with your child's school but feel they are not being addressed appropriately it is important to remain calm and try not to demand action.

You may want to consider the following:

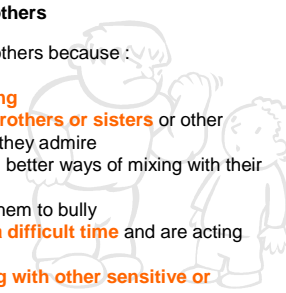
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## Slide 11

**If your child is bullying others**

Children sometimes bully others because:

- they don't know it's wrong
- they are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family whom they admire
- they haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with their school friends
- their friends encourage them to bully
- they are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings
- they are masking/dealing with other sensitive or personal issues



Bullying

If you are informed that your well-behaved son or daughter has been accused bullying, your first reaction might be disbelief. You can also expect them to deny it.

Before you dismiss the thought, listen to what the school has to say about it. Parents rarely complain to a school at the outset of bullying, there's usually been a history of unhappiness.

You need to take what the school says seriously and work with staff on a solution. There are times when people are unjustly accused of being bullies but a thorough investigation should reveal this.

Sanctions against your child could include a warning, detention, temporary or permanent exclusion (expulsion). A violent, one-off incident harming another pupil could be grounds for expulsion.

Depending on the seriousness of the situation the victims parents may choose to call the police.

## Slide 12

**Recommended approaches for children who bully**

- Investigate incident/s
- explain why their behaviour is unacceptable
- criticise behaviour not your child
- make child aware of impact/consequences
- determine sanction or support needs
- seek ways to change behaviour
- believe in change
- praise change/appropriate behaviour

**Bullying**

Recommended approaches for children who bully:

**Investigate incident/s** - Find out all the facts including the actions of the other children involved.

**Explain why their behaviour is unacceptable** - Do they realise what they are doing and what harm it can cause?

**Criticise behaviour not your child** - For example – “What you did was wrong” instead of “You are bad”, “You are a bully”

**Make child aware of impact/consequences** - Explain that the bullying must stop and that the situation could become worse if it doesn't (the possibility that your child might be suspended from school or that police action might have to be taken in some cases).

**Determine sanction or support needs** - Does your child need some additional support to help address the reasons they bully? What sanctions will be placed upon the child e.g. no TV or use of game console/computer.

**Seek ways to change behaviour** - Seek help from local or national support services e.g. Kidscape, Parentline Plus, Connexions.

**Believe in change** - Change can happen and you and your child must believe it. Give your child the confidence to try and change their behaviour.

**Praise change/appropriate behaviour** - Give your child plenty of encouragement if they don't repeat the bullying and are able to use alternative responses.

## Slide 13

**Bullying by text and email**

Be careful when giving out telephone numbers/email addresses.


Keep a note of the times and dates of abusive messages/emails.

Don't reply to them or delete them so that you can make a complaint to the police or the school.

Making anonymous or abusive phone calls is also a criminal offence.

Bullying

There has been an increase in accounts of bullying using the internet. This is usually carried out using email, social network sites (facebook/myspace/Bebbo) or instant messaging (msn). Bullying by mobile phone and texting is decreasing. This slide highlights some measures that can be used to address the situation.

 *Please inform audience of any local services or resources that are attending the event.*

## Slide 14



Kidscape  
Tel: 0207 730 3300  
[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)


Childline  
Tel: 0800 1111 (24 hours)  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Bullying Online  
[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

Parentline Plus - Tel: 0808 800 2222 (24 hours)



Bullying

 *The Police should be contacted if the problem is not resolved i.e. persistent bullying.*