

How can I help my child?

- 1 Find a quiet place where you won't be interrupted to speak to your child.
- 2 Tell your child that you are worried about them.
- 3 Ask them to tell you about the bullying (or other problem) they are experiencing.
- 4 If it is bullying, tell them that many people are bullied and that no one should have to experience that sort of behaviour.
- 5 Be prepared to listen in a non-judgemental way. Rushing in, though well intentioned, can be frightening and off putting.
- 6 Whilst you must acknowledge the victimisation of the child or young person, it is unhelpful in terms of encouraging their self-esteem to label them “a victim”. Encourage them to record and report any incident of bullying that they experience, if possible. This will help them feel less isolated and more in control.
- 7 Remember to report the bullying to your child's class teacher in the first instance, who may then inform the member of staff in charge of the school's anti-bullying policy or another nominated individual.
- 8 Tell your child never to endanger themselves by standing up to bullies in a situation where they may be outnumbered, for example. Reacting to bullying by fighting back is almost always an instinctive response, an emotional response. Those bullying generally tend to pick on and abuse another on their terms, behind closed doors and out of sight of a member of staff or a supervising adult.
- 9 Read the school's Anti-bullying, Behaviour, Complaints and Safeguarding/Child Protection policies.
- 10 Suggest your child's school put together a 'safety plan' to minimise further issues, which may include planning safe routes to and from school.

- Source: Beatbullying

Bullying: “the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power”
- Anti-bullying Alliance



BULLYING CAN BE: PHYSICAL • VERBAL • EMOTIONAL • CYBER

Children can be bullied because of their:

- race, religion or culture
- special educational needs and disabilities
- sexual orientation
- gender
- appearance and medical conditions
- home circumstances
- or anything else that makes them stand out as 'different'

How do I know if a child is being bullied?

Physical signs can be:

- injuries that a child or young person cannot or will not give a convincing explanation for
- torn or damaged clothing
- general symptoms of ill health
- bedwetting

Emotional signs can be:

- mood swings and apparent changes in personality
- constant anxiety or nervousness
- depression
- tearfulness
- lack of confidence
- hostility and defensiveness

Behavioural signs can be:

- being generally withdrawn
- exclusion from group activities
- eating disorders
- alcohol or drug use
- self-harming
- lashing out and abuse of others

Other signs can be:

- frequently "losing" money or possessions
- tired and sleepy
- lateness and truanting

Remember - whilst some or any of these symptoms may be because of bullying, it may be because of something else troubling a child or young person. It is important to discuss this with your child to find out what the problem is – see section 'How can I help my child?'

Some of the effects of bullying are easy to spot even without being told that bullying is taking place, but others can be less obvious....

How do I know if a child is bullying?

Often children and young people bully because they are being bullied and harassed in some way themselves.

Physical signs can be:

- using physical strength or physical presence to intimidate, influence and impress other pupils
- being overtly physical and confrontational with adults and peers

Emotional signs can be:

- refusal or inability to empathise with others
- desire to be in control
- inability or refusal to accept responsibility for actions
- a tendency to relate to others in a negative way

Behavioural signs can be:

- professing an exaggerated high self-opinion.
- professing indifference for areas and activities in which they do not excel. This may involve ridiculing other children and young people who have strengths in these areas

Remember - whilst some or any of these symptoms may be because of bullying, it may be because of something else troubling a child or young person. It is important to discuss this with your child to find out what the problem is – see section 'How can I help my child?'

Useful websites:

Advisory Centre for Education - <http://goo.gl/Ojt8QE>

Anti-bullying Alliance - <http://goo.gl/K5LwBS>

Anti-bullying Network - <http://goo.gl/DfRbaL>

Barnardo's - <http://goo.gl/ZQiolx>

Bullying UK - <http://goo.gl/E85G3Y>

Direct.gov - <https://goo.gl/05odG2>

Kidscape - <https://goo.gl/mTswJk>

NSPCC - <https://goo.gl/59gOwO>

Safe - <http://goo.gl/X3bjqw>

Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Board - <http://goo.gl/ip5nRl>