

Anti-Bullying Week 2021

Every year since 2004, schools across Britain have supported Anti-Bullying Week which provides school children and school staff with information on the effects of bullying. It aims to raise awareness and to highlight ways of preventing bullying from happening. This year's event is being held from Monday 15th to Friday 19th November 2021.

Different each year, in 2021, the theme is 'One Kind Word'. This theme reminds us of the importance of being a kind person and using kindness to promote hope and positivity. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic left many people isolated and scared, so the theme this year is a powerful way of promoting kindness as a way of stopping hurtful behaviour and working together for a positive future. Together, we must look, listen and work together to notice bullying. Then we must tell a responsible adult whom we trust.



Types of Bullying

Bullying which involves intentionally hurting (such as pushing, pinching, hitting or kicking someone) is called **physical bullying**. Often, there are marks or bruises that are visible. Snatching or breaking someone's possessions can also be called physical bullying.

Verbal bullying, although it doesn't leave any physical marks, can affect us mentally for a long time. Furthermore, the fact it doesn't leave visible injuries means that it is harder for others to identify. It involves hurtful comments, such as calling people names, teasing them or threatening to harm them. Name-calling is one of the most common ways that people are bullied.

Bullying by excluding someone from a game or a conversation or instructing others to do so is known as **social bullying**. It can also include deliberately embarrassing someone in front of their friends or family.

There is also a more worrying version of bullying that has emerged in recent years: **cyber-bullying** involves the use of the internet or social media to engage in **verbal** or **social bullying**. It can happen when using smart-phones, laptops, tablets or gaming consoles. Hurtful messages, texts or emails can be sent. Cyber-bullying is particularly disturbing for a few reasons; it can happen at any time, day or night, and the person bullying cannot see the harm caused.

What Is Bullying?

Frequently, there are times when children or young adults fall out with their friends or family. They may do something in anger just to provoke a reaction or they may call a sibling or friend a name through jealousy. Games can sometimes get a bit too rough. Later, the perpetrator may feel guilty and apologise. This behaviour, though hurtful and upsetting to others, is not intentional nor repeated so it is not usually described as bullying.

Bullying is repetitive, deliberate, hurtful behaviour that involves a power imbalance between the person bullying and the person bullied (the victim). This means that the person who is bullying may consider themselves stronger, faster, more intelligent or better-looking than their victim. Bullying is the behaviour that makes the victim's life utterly miserable. Potentially, the bullies themselves are unhappy; it is surprisingly common for a person bullying to be currently being bullied themselves (known as the bully-victim).

What Effects Does Bullying Have?

The effects of bullying are damaging and long-lasting. Bullying may not only have an effect on the victim's physical health, but on their mental health, too. Victims may feel alone and display a change in behaviour. They may appear quiet and withdrawn, refusing to join in with activities. Being bullied makes people feel miserable, upset and scared. Furthermore, it can make concentrating on schoolwork very difficult. The bully-victim may also appear upset or anxious as they change role from sometimes being bullied to sometimes bullying others.



Getting Help

You have the right to be safe, in school and elsewhere. It is crucial that you tell someone about any bullying. If you are being bullied, or you know someone else is being bullied, you must tell an adult whom you trust. This could be someone at home or an adult at school, or it could be going online to speak to a charity, such as Childline. You should never be told to ignore bullying or to make it better by changing who you are. Bullying is never acceptable. It is the children doing the bullying who need to change their behaviour. However, you must never try to solve it alone. Somebody can always help.