



DEALING WITH **BULLYING**

Explains what bullying is, ways you can manage as well as some useful resources and websites for more support.

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What is Bullying?

Bullying is any unwanted physical, verbal, or online behaviour, this is any behaviour repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying can include actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone, or purposely excluding someone

Types of bullying:

- **Verbal bullying** - this can be saying or writing nasty/insulting things. For example:
 - Insulting/name-calling
 - Taunting or teasing
 - Sexual comments or references
 - Threats
- **Social bullying** - This involves hurting someone's reputation and/or relationships. For example:
 - Spreading rumours or fake stories about someone
 - Encouraging others to avoid/not be friends with you
 - Deliberately leaving someone out of social situations
 - Embarrassing someone in public on purpose
- **Physical bullying** - this can be hurting someone or destroying things they own. For example: - Attacking someone: hitting, pinching, kicking
 - Tripping over or pushing
 - Stealing someone's possessions/money
 - Breaking someone's things
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- *More examples of specific types of bullying:*
 - **Homophobic bullying:** being bullied because of your sexual orientation
 - **Racist bullying:** being bullied because of your skin colour/culture.
 - **Sexist bullying:** bullying being focused on you being the opposite sex
 - **Transphobic bullying:** bullying because of your gender identity
 - **Cyberbullying:** targeting online, can sometimes be anonymously
 - **Religious bullying:** being bullied because of your faith or beliefs
 - **Siziest bullying:** being bullied because of your size.

How can bullying affect me?

Bullying can be a very traumatic and stressful experiencing. Being bullied can make you feel very isolated and alone. It can also make you feel worthless and very anxious. Bullying in any form is hurtful and unacceptable and can make your life miserable. Being bullied can affect your mental health, both now and in the future. These feelings are personal and may vary, but below are some examples of how you might be feeling

- **Anxious** - feeling worried all the time, feeling of looking over your shoulder.
- **Worthless** - feel like no one likes you, or that you aren't worth anything.
- **Hopeless** - like things will never get any better
- **Depressed** - feeling sad, low, or tearful
- **Stressed** - feeling overwhelmed and like the bullying has got on top of you
- **Frustrated** - angry at the bullying situation
- **Sick** - feeling uneasy or nauseous or experience some stomach pains.
- Wanting to hurt yourself or maybe someone else.

You may also be feeling...

- Like you can't enjoy the things you used to
- Have trouble sleeping or being able to relax
- Find concentration or focusing on school/work
- Have flashbacks of the bullying
- Experience nightmares
- Have trouble eating- either not being able to eat or overeating
- Feel you don't want to be around friends and family as much as you did.

If you are feeling like you are struggling with intense low mood or anxiety please see our booklets on these topics, we also have some more information if being bullied is affecting your sleep, eating or you are self-harming.

There is also a relationship between bullying and suicide. Bullying is not considered a cause of young people wanting to take their own life, but it may make you feel more at risk and can be something that contributes. If you are struggling with suicidal thoughts please see our booklet on more information, guidance, and support.

How can I manage?

It's important to know that bullying is not your fault and it can get better. Also, that ignoring the bullying might not make it go away so it can be good to tell someone

If bullying is happening at school

It's important to be able to tell someone what is going on, whether that's a parent/carer or a teacher. The school will have an anti-bullying policy in place. If you feel like you can't go to a parent or your teacher, you might have a friend that you feel you can confide in and could maybe come with you to talk to a teacher. You might also be able to talk to a school counsellor about what's going on or the student nurse.

If bullying is happening outside of school

Try and talk to someone you trust about it whether that's a friend, relative or a mental health professional that you talk to.

If bullying is happening online

Tell a trusted adult- e.g., a parent or a teacher. If the bullying is happening over social media you can also report them.

Take care of yourself

Nobody deserves to be bullied and it can be a really stressful time and take a toll, it's important to take care of yourself during this time, both your mental health and your physical health.

Talking to someone you trust

If you feel you have someone in your life that you trust and can always talk to, reach out to them when you are suffering with low mood. It might feel weird at first and it can be hard to talk about how we are feeling but once you get used to it sharing your experience can sometimes help you feel better. This person could be a friend or family member or if you feel you don't have anyone in your life you'd like to talk to about your mood you can always speak to a professional, the Samaritans run a 24hr helpline that you can call whenever and talk about how you're feeling confidentially.



Practice self-care

Taking time out to look after yourself, by just doing something you enjoy/makes you feel good can help improve your low mood and your quality of life. Self-care is really personal but some ideas of things you could do when feeling low are:

1. Listen to your favourite song
2. Paint or draw
3. Comfort food
4. Make your bed, fresh sheets
5. Get creative, make something
6. Take a long shower/bath
7. Meditate
8. Spend some time in nature/go for a walk
9. Cook/bake something as a treat
10. Write out your thoughts

Look after your physical health

A poor diet, lack of exercise and sleep can affect your mood and make it harder for you to be able to deal with stressful life events so it's important to look after yourself.

- **Try to get good sleep:** Sleeping too much or too little can be common when you're feeling low. Getting into a good sleeping pattern can help improve your mood by increasing your energy levels. See our booklet on sleep for tips.
- **Sticking to a healthy diet:** Eating regularly and keeping your sugar levels stable will make a difference to your mood. If you are experiencing some problems with food see our booklet on Food issues for help with this. It's also important to avoid recreational drugs and alcohol, although you may lean towards these to cope with difficult feelings, in the long run they can make your low periods worse and/or last longer.
- **Try and do something active:** Exercise is a great way to increase your endorphins and improve your mood. This doesn't have to be strenuous activity, you could try walking, running, swimming or yoga something gentler could still give you a boost to your mood.



Helpful Information

Websites

StopBullying.gov: <https://www.stopbullying.gov/>. StopBullying.gov provides information from various government agencies on bullying, cyberbullying, prevention and response.

Bullying UK: <https://www.bullying.co.uk/>. Bullying UK, part of Family Lives, is a leading charity providing advice and support to anyone affected by bullying.

YoungMinds: YoungMinds is the UK's leading charity championing the wellbeing and mental health of young people. www.youngminds.org.uk

Childline: <https://www.childline.org.uk/>. If you're under 19 you can confidentially call, chat online or email about any problem big or small.

TheMix: <https://www.themix.org.uk/>. Offers support to anyone under 25 about anything that's troubling them.

CybersmileFoundation: <https://www.cybersmile.org>. The Cybersmile Foundation is a multiaward-winning nonprofit organization committed to digital wellbeing and tackling all forms of bullying and abuse online. We work to promote kindness, diversity and inclusion by building a safer, more positive digital community.

Kidscape: <https://www.kidscape.org.uk> is a London-based charity. Its focus is on children's safety, with an emphasis on the prevention of harm by equipping children with techniques and mindsets that help them stay safe.