

Keeping Your Child Safe: **Bullying**

A decorative graphic consisting of three wavy, overlapping lines in shades of orange and pink, extending horizontally across the middle of the page.

Bullying

Definitions of bullying

Schools can develop their own definition.

Most definitions (including DfES) consider bullying to be:

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

Bullying

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

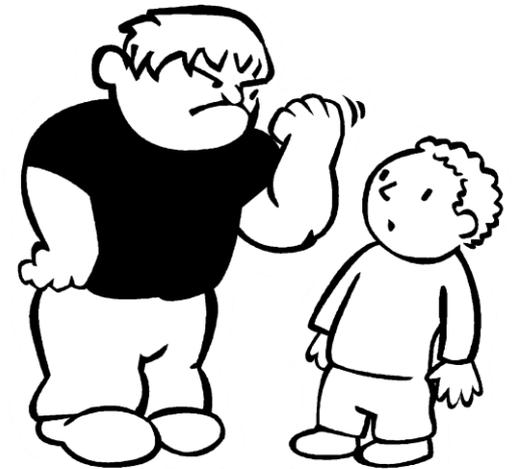
Indirect - spreading nasty stories, leaving someone out, not letting someone participate



Bullying

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



Bullying

Dealing with bullying

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

Second, ask to see the school's anti-bullying policy.

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

Possible signs of bullying

- be frightened of walking to and from school
- change their usual route
- not want you to go on the school bus
- beg you to drive them to school
- be unwilling to go to school (or be 'school phobic')
- feel ill in the mornings
- begin truanting
- begin doing poorly in their school work
- come home regularly with clothes or books destroyed
- come home starving (bully taking dinner money)
- become withdrawn, start stammering, lack confidence
- become distressed and anxious, stop eating
- attempt or threaten suicide
- cry themselves to sleep, have nightmares
- have their possessions go missing
- ask for money or start stealing (to pay the bully)
- continually 'lose' their pocket money
- refuse to talk about what's wrong
- have unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches
- begin to bully other children, siblings
- become aggressive and unreasonable
- give improbable excuses for any of the above

Recommended approaches for bullied children

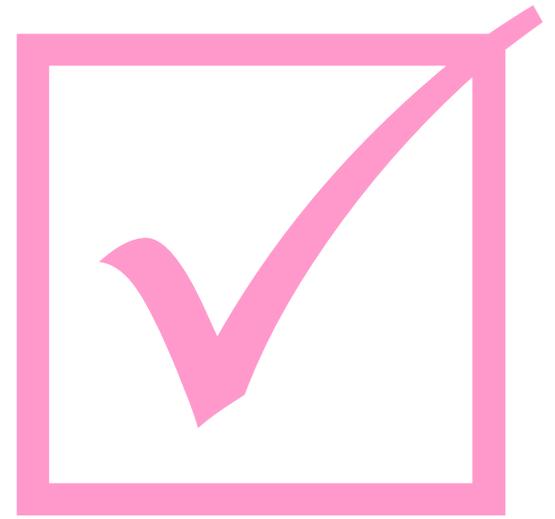
- **calmly talk with your child** about his/her experience and feelings
- **listen and make a note of what your child says**
- **reassure your child** that he/she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying
- **agree next steps and way forward** (ask child for suggestions)
- **develop and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

Adapted from www.kidscape.org.uk

Bullying

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
- Try and make a joke of it, ask the bully to repeat themselves
- Keep a diary of what is happening
- Get involved with other activities



Issues for parents

- 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



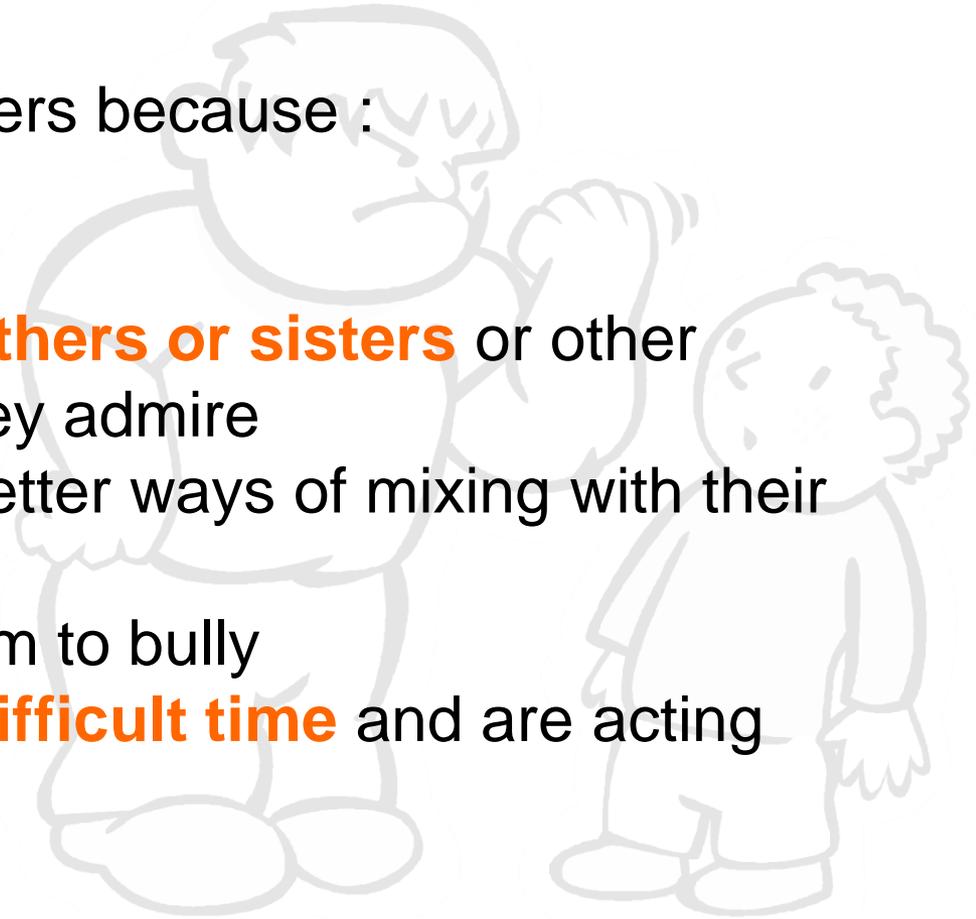
If parents are not happy...

- Carefully read the relevant policies and other documents from school
- Arrange to raise concerns with the Head teacher and/or Chair of Governors and work towards a resolution
- Make a formal complaint, following the procedure available from the school

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



Bullying

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 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

Kidscape

-Tel: 0207 730 3300

- www.kidscape.org.uk

Bullying Online

www.bullying.co.uk

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



Bullying