

# International Day Against Violence & Bullying at School including Cyberbullying

## What is Bullying?

Bullying is when someone is being hurt either by words or actions on purpose, usually more than once, feels bad because of it, and has a hard time stopping what is happening to them.



## Bullying can be:

### Physical

- hitting
- pushing and shoving
- fighting
- tripping
- yelling at someone
- making rude gestures
- taking or breaking another person's things

### Emotional

- name calling
- making fun of someone
- laughing at someone
- leaving someone out on purpose
- starting rumors or telling lies about someone
- sending mean messages on a computer or cell phone
- trying to make someone feel bad about who they are



## Where Does Bullying Happen?

Bullying can happen anywhere. It can occur in your neighborhood, while going to school, at school, and while on-line.

## What is Cyberbullying?

Using technology—internet, email, cell phones, social media, pictures—to hurt or harm someone else; for example:

- Sending mean text messages
- Posting statements online that are unkind or not true
- Sending or posting pictures that are not yours to share
- Making negative comments online about someone
- Agreeing with someone who posts something hurtful

*Bullying is never okay, cool, or acceptable.*

No one EVER deserves to be bullied.



**STAND UP  
STAY STRONG  
SPEAK UP  
STOP BULLYING**

UNESCO Member States have declared the **first Thursday of November of every year**, the **International Day against Violence and Bullying at School Including Cyberbullying**, recognising that school-related violence in all its forms is an infringement of children and adolescents' rights to education and to health and well-being. It calls for the strengthening of partnerships and initiatives that accelerate progress to prevent and eliminate violence and bullying at school including cyberbullying.

UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education, Stefania Giannini, said: "This International Day calls for a major step up in ambition to prevent and eliminate violence and bullying at school including cyberbullying. We know what works; from strong political leadership and collaboration between partners and the community, to better data, teacher training and positive school environments. It's time for these to be fully applied, so we can put an end to the devastating issue of school violence."

### Bullying affects a large number of children and youth.

School-based bullying probably affects between 18 and 31 percent of children and youth, and cyberbullying probably affects about 7 to 15 percent of youth. Some young people are more likely to be bullied: youth with disabilities, obese youth, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth.

### The harm caused by bullying can last a long time.

Bullying can have long-lasting effects on youth who are bullied, for youth who bully others, and for youth who witness bullying. These consequences include poor school performance, anxiety, depression, and future delinquent and aggressive behavior. The harmful results of being bullied can last into adulthood.

Bullying can have long-lasting consequences for those who are bullied:

- Children and youth who have been bullied can experience problems such as sleeping problems, headaches, stomachaches, and bedwetting.
- Psychological problems are also common after being bullied, and can include depression, anxiety, and especially for girls, self-harming behavior. Anger, aggression, use of alcohol, and conduct problems are common, especially for boys.
- Children and youth who have been bullied can suffer academic problems such as poor grades or test scores.
- The harmful consequences of being bullied can last into adulthood.
- Children and youth who both bully others and are bullied themselves are at even greater risk of experiencing harm as a result.
- Individuals who are bullied or who bully others—or both—are much more likely to consider or attempt suicide, compared to children who are not involved in bullying.

### Bullying CAN Be Prevented.

Reducing the presence and impact of bullying will require many groups working together: families and schools, communities, health care workers, the media and social media, and federal and state governments and agencies.

### What young people should know about bullying.

How young people act is influenced by the attitudes and behavior of their peers. Peer groups have influence over whether bullying happens. Some peer groups tolerate and even encourage bullying behavior, while others actively discourage it from happening. Having friends can protect a young person against being the target of bullying.

Young people who are present when bullying happens but who take no action—not helping either the bully or the target of bullying—are known as bystanders. It is relatively rare for bystanders to come to the aid of a student who is being bullied. But when bystanders do nothing, it can also send a message that bullying is acceptable.

### What can young people do to prevent and reduce bullying?

#### Be aware that:

- bullying has harmful consequences for everyone involved in bullying behavior, not just students who are the targets of bullying.
- some children and youth are more likely to be bullied, including LGBT youth, youth with disabilities, and obese youth.

Young people can help prevent bullying in their schools. Youth should work with their school communities to

implement bullying-prevention programs that have been shown to be effective. The programs that appear to work best have a mix of activities for all students—such as using class time to discuss bullying—and additional help for the students at highest risk of being bullied.

Gay-straight alliances can help buffer LGBT youth against bullying. These alliances are usually student-led, school-based clubs that aim to improve the school climate for LGBT youth and educate the school community about LGBT issues.

### Some strategies have NOT been shown to work.

- No tolerance policies, which suspend students for bullying, do not appear to be effective at stopping bullying or making schools safer. They may lead to increased academic and behavior problems for the young people involved.
- Encouraging youth to fight back when bullied may perpetuate the cycle of violence
- Some peer-led approaches—peer mediation, peer-led conflict resolution, forced apologies, and peer mentoring—may not be appropriate or effective at preventing bullying.
- Approaches that group youth who bully together may reinforce aggressive behavior and result in higher rates of bullying.
- Conflict resolution approaches, even when facilitated by adults, are not typically recommended in situations of bullying, because they suggest a disagreement between two peers of equal status or power, rather than an instance of peer abuse.
- There is little evidence that short-term events or brief assemblies to raise awareness—particularly those that focus on youth suicide—are effective at changing a climate of bullying or leading to lasting effects on bullying.

## IF YOU'RE BEING BULLIED

- 1 Tell someone you trust
- 2 Keep a record of what's happening
- 3 Don't retaliate
- 4 Surround yourself with people that make you feel
- 5 Don't blame yourself – it is NOT your fault
- 6 Be proud of who you are

Source: New international day against violence and bullying at school including cyberbullying. (2020, January 15). Retrieved October 23, 2020, from <https://en.unesco.org/news/new-international-day-against-violence-and-bullying-school-including-cyberbullying>

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