



Don't face it alone

#SpeakOutAboutBullying

Advice for Young People

See it. Speak out. Be supported.

Thousands of young people experience bullying behaviour every day. They often don't speak out about it because they are scared of what might happen or they are unsure about who to tell or how to report it online. We want to change this by showing young people that they deserve to be heard and that help and support are available.

Experiencing bullying behaviour can make you feel small, lonely and like you have no voice. You may think that even if you did manage to say something, no one would believe you.

But when you finally work up the courage to share this burden, something incredible often happens... people say, 'I'm here for you'.

Speaking your mind can seem scary but it's worth it. It can take time to find the right listener to understand the problem. But the more helpful people that recognise your situation, the better you'll feel.

If a friend tells you they are experiencing bullying behaviour, it can be a very upsetting and emotional time. You may feel unsure about what to do to help them. It's important to listen and let them know you are there for them.

Understanding Bullying

No-one should face bullying alone.



"Eventually I came out of it the other side without vulnerability or fear of going through it again, because I got help when I spoke up"

Student Anti-Bullying Ambassador

"Bullying behaviour is repeated, negative behaviour that is intended to make others feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe. This can happen both online and offline."

Experiencing bullying behaviour is an unpleasant part of too many children's lives, with around a quarter of pupils experiencing some bullying behaviour during their primary school years and one in six 10-15 year olds reporting having experienced it, according to a study by the Department for Education. Online bullying is a serious issue, with one out of five children aged 10-15 years in England and Wales experiencing at least one type of online bullying behaviour according to the Office for National Statistics.

Bullying behaviour can be physical, verbal or indirect. Indirect bullying behaviour can involve spreading rumours, deliberately excluding someone or online bullying.

Experiencing bullying behaviour can make you feel sad, lonely or depressed. It can affect your concentration and how well you do at school which is why it is important to try and do something about it.

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How to support a friend who is experiencing bullying behaviour

If you're worried about a friend, speak to a trusted adult to let them know what is happening. This could be a teacher, a parent/carer or another adult you trust. Ideally try and go together to an adult and tell them together, your friend will appreciate your support and help.

Don't promise to keep a secret

When it comes to bullying behaviour, you can't promise to keep secrets, as this might not be the best way to support your friend.

You could start your conversation with them by saying something like "I really want to help you. I hate that you're experiencing bullying behaviour and I want to help it stop. I'm here to listen and to support you but I can't promise to keep a secret; if you tell me something that makes me worried about you or someone else is at risk of harm, then I will need to tell a responsible adult."

Let them know you are there to listen

Bullying behaviour can make someone feel very alone; let them know that you are there to support and listen to them. Send them supportive messages and check-in regularly. Ask them how you can help, rather than just telling them what they need to do. This is a way you can empower them and give them back control. By listening well and allowing them to come up with their own solutions, you are being a supportive friend.

Encourage them to speak to a trusted adult at school

Encourage them to talk to a favourite teacher, Head of Year or any adult in the school about the bullying behaviour they are experiencing. Together, you could work out what they would like to say by writing it down and practising together. You could even offer to go with them to speak with the teacher if they would like you to.

Encourage them to screenshot/report/block

If the bullying behaviour is taking place online, encourage your friend to take a screenshot. They can use this evidence when reporting to a trusted adult.

Tell them about the importance of reporting on social media – they can report any photos, comments or videos that make them feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe. They could also use the block function so that the person displaying bullying behaviour online can no longer get in contact or see what they are posting.

Encourage them to speak to a trusted adult at home


Whether this is their parent/carer, cousin, granny... having the support of someone in their home is so important. Encourage them to think about who this person could be.

Encourage your friend to keep a diary of events

It might be hard for your friend to recall exactly what has happened when they come to speak to a trusted adult. By writing down when, where, who and what has happened, it will be easier for your friend to recall events.

Give them further support

You could suggest to your friend that they get in contact with Childline on 0800 1111 or text SHOUT to 85258 where trained volunteers will listen to how they are feeling and help them think through the next step towards feeling better. There are LOADS of organisations out there who are ready to listen and help your friend.



For support, young people can **Text SHOUT to 85258** or contact Childline on **0800 111 childline.org.uk**

Tell them how awesome they are!

Experiencing bullying behaviour can make someone feel low and might make your self-esteem drop so make sure to tell your friend how great they are! You could also do something fun together to take their mind off things like baking a cake or watching a film. Choose something you both love and it will make you both feel positive!

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What to do if you're experiencing bullying behaviour

It can be hard to tell someone that you're experiencing bullying behaviour but it's important to speak out because you deserve to be heard.

You don't have to suffer in silence

Don't bottle things up. If you are experiencing bullying behaviour, it's important that you talk to a trusted adult. This could be a family member, a teacher or another adult who you trust. They will be able to listen and offer support.

You might be worried about the problem getting worse, but try and explain this worry to the person you speak out to. Let them know that you want to work with them to solve the problem and you would rather they didn't take over your problem, worry or concern. It's also important to ask the person to keep in touch with you and to check in with you.

Try and practice what you want to say and how, some people find it easier to write a letter or email rather than face to face.

Save the evidence

Keep a record of what's been going on – remember the 4 W's: What, Where, When and Who. This will help the person supporting you to understand the situation and help you to resolve it.

If you are experiencing online bullying behaviour, screenshot the evidence, report it to the platform or social media company, and block the user. It can be tempting to reply to online bullying behaviour but it's always best not to reply, instead take a break from the screen, and try and connect with someone face to face like a trusted adult or friend or on the phone and tell that what is happening. If you engage with the person displaying bullying behaviour, it could get worse and

you could say something in the heat of the moment that you later regret.

Find your Support Network

A support network is a group of people and organisations who you can go for support; it can be helpful to consider your support network in advance, so that if something happens, you know who to go to. A support network could include a friend, a family member, a staff member/teacher or an organisation like SHOUT text helpline or Childline, both of which are free and confidential.

Remain Positive

It can be hard to remain positive, but a problem shared is a problem halved; after speaking to a trusted adult, you will have taken the first step towards resolving the situation. Remember to talk to friends or family members about how you're feeling and always seek support – there are lots of organisations out there who are there to help and listen to you.

"They focused on my appearance and they always had something to say about how I looked but my friends would hype me up all the time, so I had that counterbalance."

Youth Board Member,
June 2021

For more help and resources visit

DontFaceItAlone.com



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For support, you can
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111 childline.org.uk