

What is Bullying?

Bullying is typically repeated behaviour that is intended to cause harm to another person(s). A person participates in bullying if he or she directly carries out, assists or encourages the behaviour in any way. Those that engage in bullying behaviours are perceived to be in a position of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal, social and/or electronic. In some instances bullying is an illegal activity.

There are three types of bullying:

1. **Physical:** a person is harmed or their property damaged. Some examples are:
 - slapping, hitting, pinching, punching, kicking
 - locking in a confined space
 - unwelcome touching
 - extortion
2. **Verbal:** a person's feelings are hurt through insults and name-calling. Some examples are:
 - name-calling
 - unwelcome teasing
 - taunting
 - spreading rumours, gossiping
 - racist or homophobic comments
3. **Social:** a person is shunned or excluded from groups and events. Some examples are:
 - excluding from a group
 - threatening or insulting graffiti
 - threatening notes, letters, emails, telephone calls
 - threatening words, actions or weapons

Bullying may be obvious or hidden. Children who are being bullied or are bullying others may:

- complain of being poorly treated
- change their behaviour (for example, sleeplessness, loss of appetite, angry outbursts, being sick in the morning, become more aggressive towards siblings)
- be unwilling to leave the house, change their route to school, or skip school
- come home with torn clothes, unexplained bruises, new clothes or other items, or money not accounted for

- talk about responding to others in a way that may result in the school taking disciplinary action
- start doing poorly in school

The terms harassment and intimidation are sometimes used when referring to bullying situations involving junior and senior high students.

Harassment is any behaviour or comment that is hurtful, degrading, humiliating or offensive to another person.

Intimidation is the act of causing fear in order to force or influence someone to do, or not to do, something.

Some examples of harassment and intimidation include:

- name-calling
- unwelcome teasing
- locking in a confined space
- racist or homophobic slurs
- unwelcome touching
- threatening notes, letters, e-mails
- threatening words, actions or weapons
- taunting
- excluding from a group
- spreading rumours
- threatening or insulting graffiti
- stalking
- extortion