

ipoweri

tips on how to deal with bullying

Bullying takes on many different forms and happens in all aspects of people's lives - at school, at home, at work, by past friends, by family/carers, and by strangers. Below are some suggestions on what you can do. It is not an exhaustive list and different situations will need different action. Choose what is right for you and your situation.



- **TELL SOMEONE**

This can seem a frightening task. Telling someone personal details about something that is upsetting you can be a difficult thing to do but it can be the first and most important step to bringing an end to the problem.

- Remember **you are not alone**. You are not the first person and sadly won't be the last person who is or has ever been bullied. There are **many people who can and want to help** you and talking about your experience might stop it happening to someone else.
- Whether you think the problem is **small or big**, **people will want to help you**.
- Tell **someone you trust** and who you know will take it seriously. This can be anyone - a friend, a teacher, a parent, guardian or other relative.
- If you choose a **young person** as the first person to tell about the bullying, you should think about then telling an **adult** who you like and trust and might be in a better position to give you advice and **take positive action**. If it makes it easier, you could take your friend with you to help you. They could tell the adult while you sit and listen.
- If you find it **difficult** to tell someone for the first time **face to face**, you could write it down in a **diary or letter** and give it to the person to read. You could also try phoning them or **phoning a helpline** such as ChildLine (0800 1111) who will talk to you about your problem and help you feel comfortable about telling someone you know. The ipoweri contact sheet has a list of other useful telephone numbers and people to contact.
- When you do tell someone, remember it is important that you tell them the truth and exact details. If you exaggerate, or the facts are not accurate, the bully can then accuse you of lying and the person you tell will not know which bits of your story you really need help with.
- Some people keep a diary of things that happen to them so they can remember the exact details when they do speak about it

PLEASE TURN OVER

- **STAY CALM**

Being bullied can be very frightening. It is seeing peoples fear that the bully often enjoys and can make them feel more powerful than they really are. Try not to show them how frightened and upset you are by **keeping a relaxed body posture**. Taking **deep silent breaths** can help relax your body and mind in stressful situations.



- **KEEP EYE CONTACT WITHOUT STARING**

If you keep eye contact with the bully **you will look confident**, even if you don't feel it inside.

- **CALL FOR HELP**

If you are in **danger**, or have just **had enough**, call someone over to help you.

- **DISTRACT THE BULLY**

This can be a difficult thing to do, but if you can think of an obscure comment, gesture or joke it can **confuse the bully**. The 'and' method can be a really good distracter. Every time the bully says something you don't like try just saying 'and' back to them.

- **REASON WITH THE BULLY**

Try using I statements to explain what you don't like them doing, how it makes you feel, and that you think it is wrong. Let them know that you won't stay quiet about it if it continues.

- **DON'T BLAME YOURSELF**

You have done nothing wrong. Bullying is a violation of your human rights and is not acceptable whatever form it takes - physical, verbal, written, electronic, or other.

' I was 13 years old and being badly bullied at school. I remember this one time, I left school and the bullies followed after me. There was a gang of about four of them. They were two years above me at school. They were walking quite close behind me and muttering threats under their breath about how they were going to beat me up. The quicker I walked, the quicker they followed. I started running, they ran after. It ended up with them chasing me down the road. They were taller than me so could run much quicker so I was getting really scared. I knew I wasn't going to make it home so I just pegged it up some path and pressed the bell outside the front door of a stranger's house. The bullies didn't come up the path. I just stood on the doorstep and looked one of them in the eye and said "They'll be out in a minute". The gang walked off. No-one answered the door - don't even think anyone was in. But it didn't matter coz the bullies had gone and if someone had been in they'd have been able to help me. Once the gang had gone, I phoned my mate who came and met me so we could walk home together.'

By Andy Hickson, Conference Director