

Bullying. Speak up.

Advice for young people

If you've been affected by bullying – you're not alone. Bullying is never OK and you don't have to put up with it. Speak up – you can do something to stop it.

If you're being bullied or know someone who is being bullied, tell someone you trust. If you don't speak up, the bullying will probably continue and may get worse.

What is bullying?

Bullying is when someone keeps picking on you. Bullying can be physical (like hitting or kicking you), verbal (like putting you down or spreading rumours) emotional (excluding you from groups, taking your stuff or forcing you to do things you don't want to), or online (posting nasty things about you, sending embarrassing pictures or videos of you to others).

Bullying can happen face-to-face, online or on mobile phones. It can happen in front of everyone or when no one else is watching.

Sometimes you might fight or argue with someone. If this happens only once, it's not bullying even though you might feel upset.

Why do some people bully?

- They think it's fun.
- To look tough or make people afraid of them.
- To feel popular or fit in with a group.
- Because they're jealous or the person they are bullying makes them uncomfortable.
- They are copying what they have seen others do before, or what has been done to them.

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What can I do if I see someone being bullied?

Someone who sees or knows that bullying is happening is a 'bystander'. Bystanders can encourage bullying by doing nothing. Help stop bullying by:

- stepping in if you feel you can safely – eg saying "*leave them alone – that's mean*"
- talking about the bullying with another bystander so you have support
- talking to the person being bullied – ask if they are ok or how you can help
- telling an adult you trust about the bullying.

What can I do if I'm being bullied?

Bullying feels awful and it's important to remember it's not your fault.

- Tell the person who is bullying you to stop (if you feel that you can). Or just walk away.
- Tell someone you trust like a parent, teacher, aunt, school counsellor. Keep telling adults until someone does something to stop it.
- Spend time with friends who help you feel good about yourself.
- Don't reply to any messages that make you feel sad, threatened or embarrassed. Often people who bully others are just looking for a reaction.
- Keep all messages and take photos of uncomfortable posts. Make a note of the time, date and content. This is evidence you might need if the problem gets worse.
- Use privacy functions on Apps to block or prevent receiving nasty messages – contact NetSafe if you'd like help on 0508 NETSAFE or queries@netsafe.org.nz

But won't telling someone just make it worse?

You might feel like you don't want to tell anyone else in case it makes you more of a target, but doing nothing means it will probably continue and it might be happening to others.

If you don't feel you can trust anyone, ring one of the confidential numbers below.

Are you bullying someone?

It's a big thing to admit you've been bullying someone else. Here's what you can do to make it right.

- Tell an adult you trust, like a parent or teacher.
- Think about what you've done and why. Ask for help to change things (from family, teachers or friends).
- Say sorry to the person who has been hurt and ask how you can make it up to them (or write a letter if they don't want to talk to you).
- Delete all hurtful or harmful online posts, messages, pictures or comments.

Where to get help:

Lifeline: 0800 543 354

Depression Helpline: 0800 111 757

Samaritans: 0800 726 666

Suicide Crisis Helpline: 0508 828 865
(0508 TAUTOKO)

Youthline: 0800 376 633 / Free Text 234
or email talk@youthline.co.nz

Mental Health Foundation: 09 623 4812

NetSafe: 0508 638 723 (0508 NETSAFE)
or queries@netsafe.org.nz