

Bullying: a guide for young people

I freely admit this is 'nicked' from the National Autism Society's website and can be found at: <http://www.autism.org.uk/living-with-autism/education/bullying-guide-for-young-people.aspx>

So all credit goes to them for this useful article!

This page talks about some ways you can keep safe or deal with bullies.

Try to stay away from bullies or stay with a group of other pupils or friends when you don't feel safe. Ask your friends or someone you can trust to look out for you. Try not to fight back. Fighting back could get you into trouble or you could get hurt.

The UK organisation, Kidscape, suggests the following ways to deal with one bully or more than one bully, if you can't get away from them immediately. For example:

- With a friend or someone in your family practise 'fogging'. This means having an answer to a taunt or something nasty a bully may say to you. For example:

Bully: 'Your shoes are horrible.'

You: 'That's your opinion.' or 'They are comfortable.'

- Practise having answers to things that a bully may say to you, and perhaps write these answers down. The bully may say things about how your look, your family or things you like to do. For example:
...this is what I will say when the bully says something about how I look.
...this is what I will say when the bully says something about my family.
- Having to deal with a bully or bullies is scary for everyone. It's OK to feel scared. It is important to recognise that you are scared and to get away from the bullying. You may find it difficult to recognise emotions like fear, so you could ask an adult or a friend to spend some time teaching you more about different feelings and what to do when you experience them.
- You could also ask an adult or friend to help you understand body language and eye contact - your own body language and that of the bully.
- Kidscape also suggest that you practice saying 'No!' to the bully, firmly and loudly.

Go to safe places

Try and stay in a group, rather than being on your own. When you are not at school, your local public library, community centre or leisure centre are places you could try because they are usually places with lots of other people in them.

The places you go to don't have to be places you know or places where the adults in them know you. The important thing to remember is that by going into places such as your local library, you are no longer alone and can ask an adult for help.

Stay safe on the internet

You may get unwanted and nasty emails, texts or have something written about you on a website. This is called cyberbullying. When you are on the internet, you need to follow some rules to make your time on the internet or in a chatroom as safe as possible.

What you can do if you are being bullied

Bullying will not go away by itself. The bullying may get worse if you ignore it. Remember, if you are being bullied, it is not your fault. No one deserves to be bullied.

Tell someone

It can be very hard to talk about bad things that have happened to us. It can also be very hard to talk about how these bad things are making us feel, however, it is very important that you tell someone if you are being bullied. The bullying won't stop unless you tell someone about the bullying.

If you don't feel you can talk to someone, you could try writing a note about the bullying to your parents or someone who takes care of you. You could write about the bullying in a worry book or you may prefer to send a text or email explaining that you are being bullied.

What you write or talk about should include how the bullying has made you feel. It might be easier to write or to talk to someone outside of your immediate family like a grandparent, cousin, aunt or uncle and ask for their help. If this isn't possible, you can tell a teacher or a doctor, or perhaps a school nurse.

Put your thoughts in a bully box

Some schools have bully boxes. A bully box is to help you tell an adult that you are being bullied, without having to talk to them face-to-face and without worrying about other people hearing. You can write about the bullying or draw pictures about the bullying and put this information in the box. Someone will empty the bully box, take out your information about bullying and get help for you.