



Step Up, Speak Out! Anti-Bullying Resource

 www.cara-friend.org.uk

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Cara-Friend works closely with schools and youth centres to develop an atmosphere of inclusivity. Through Cara-Friend's 'All Out' anti-bullying workshops, we discuss the importance of respecting diversity and difference, so that all young people including those from the LGBTQ+ community feel safe and welcomed within their youth environment.

Who is this resource for?

This resource is for you, young people who find themselves the victim of bullying within a school and or youth environment. It aims to help you recognise bullying behaviour in peers, what you can do about it and how you can stop it.



68%

of LGBTQ+ young people are bullied at secondary school due to their sexual orientation and or gender identity.

STILL SHOUTING REPORT

Cara-Friend & Youth Action - Neill and Meehan, 2017.

Why is this resource needed?

This resource is needed as unfortunately bullying, in different forms, can be found in every school and youth setting across Northern Ireland. Young people can bully others for a variety of reasons including race, sex, religion, nationality, sexual orientation and/or gender identity. By reading this resource you will be more aware of different types of bullying and what steps you and your friends can take to help stamp it out.

Why do LGBTQ+ young people get targeted by bullies?

LGBTQ+ young people are bullied because they are a minority group within a school environment or youth setting. Often people attack what they do not understand. They are targeted because they are viewed as being different and because peers have not been educated to understand that LGBTQ+ young people should be respected and valued for who they are. Social factors such as culture and religion can be used to discriminate against LGBTQ+ young people as peers learn and hold onto prejudicial beliefs. Only through education and knowledge can all young people separate themselves from prejudice and discrimination.

What is bullying?



Bullying is the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others. Often young people are targeted due to their race, religion, sex, culture, disability, age, sexual orientation and/or gender identity:

- **Verbal bullying:** Mean and hurtful words or statements, often relentless insults which belittle and demean an individual – for example: name calling, using homophobic or racist language.
- **Physical bullying:** When actions are used to physically hurt, gain control or make others look and feel weak – for example: kicking, shoving and punching.
- **Cyberbullying:** When social media or any form of technology is used to threaten and embarrass another person – for example: making online threats, posting images, sending hurtful texts or emails.
- **Relational bullying:** Also known as social bullying, this is when a bully will deliberately manipulate others - for example spreading rumours, leaving people out of conversations and manipulating situations.

In addition to verbal, physical, cyber and relational bullying two other ways of bullying are worthy of note:

- **Non-verbal bullying:** Actions and behaviours that are intimidating, condescending, threatening or harassing – for example: pretending that you are going to hit a peer or turning you back to someone.
- **Prejudicial bullying:** When religion, race, sexual orientation and/or gender identity are used to inflict emotional injury – for example: not being included in a group because you are LGBTQ+, being looked down upon because you are a person of colour.

Is Cyberbullying a problem?



The vast majority of young people have access to the internet and mobile technology. Unfortunately, this also means that cyberbullying is on the increase, as young people discover more and more ways to bully others online.

Cyberbullying can include:

- **Sending threatening or abusive text messages**
- **Creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos**
- **Sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games, also known as trolling**
- **Excluding peers from online games, activities or friendship groups**
- **Online shaming**
- **Setting up hate sites or groups about a particular young person**
- **Sexting – taking, sending or sharing explicit images of yourself and/or others**
- **Creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name**
- **Encouraging young people to self-harm**
- **Voting for or against someone in an abusive poll**

Why do young people bully their peers?

Young people bully peers for a variety of reasons such as wanting to feel powerful by dominating others. They might think it will make them appear more popular, elevating them to a higher social status, while others bully because they hold certain prejudices.

There are many different types of bullies, they have different styles, personalities, behaviours and goals. Their motivations and methods they use can be very different. Bullies thrive on feeling powerful by controlling situations, groups of people and/or individuals for their own personal gain. No two bullies are the same, yet all bullies are harmful to others. You have probably witnessed bullying and its effects, whether you were aware of it or not. The next section will help you to recognise bullying behaviour in others.

How might a bully behave?

- They may be hurting someone else
- They may be using inappropriate language
- They may be enjoying seeing others suffer
- They may be talking behind people's backs
- They may be spreading malicious rumours
- They may be manipulating how other young people view peers
- They may be physically violent
- They may use social media to embarrass and hurt others
- They may isolate and belittle peers
- They may use inappropriate physical contact
- They may lie about what they do in order to get away with it

What are the signs of bullying?

It is important to know the signs of bullying. By recognising the signs, you may be able to help yourself and others:

- Skipping school
- Pretending to be ill
- Loss or damage of personal belongings
- Poor school performance
- New or unexplained injuries
- Asking for or stealing money
- Irregular sleep patterns
- Lack of appetite
- Self-harm
- Low self esteem
- Lack of confidence
- Mood swings
- Bullying others

What are the effects of bullying?

Bullying can affect anyone and the effects of bullying can be severe. Some who have been bullied may suffer from depression, anxiety and stress brought about by never knowing when the bully will strike and what will happen when they do. People who have been bullied may become withdrawn as they pull away from friends and peers, which could leave them feeling isolated and perhaps more exposed. Peers may also withdraw, as they fear becoming a target themselves. Those exposed to bullying may be more suspicious of others and even push genuine peers away.

Bullying can really affect your mental health. It can leave you feeling really low and vulnerable. It can make you feel scared, angry and confused. It may even make you think about hurting yourself. If you are reading this and you feel this way - please talk to someone you trust immediately! **NEVER STAY SILENT**

Additional Questions:



What can schools do about bullying?

All schools detest bullying behaviour and actively try to stop it from occurring. Many schools highlight the need to tackle bullying during Anti-Bullying week in mid-November. They will have teachers and senior pupils who watch out for bullying behaviour and try to stop it in its tracks. Unfortunately, they are not always successful. Often bullies can find a way to hurt, intimidate and embarrass others. Schools have a duty of care over every student and so must do all they can to protect you. They must also record incidents of bullying, the motive behind it and what the school did about the bullying behaviour. If you are being bullied at school, talk to the pastoral care team so they can help to resolve the situation. They want and need to know.

Can the police be contacted?

Serious episodes of bullying may be viewed as hate incidents or crimes. The police treat bullying incidents with respect and work with the young person, their family and school to resolve bullying behaviour. If another young person is repeatedly acting in an inappropriate way, inside or outside of school, through their use of social media, their behaviour or language, the police can be contacted. You can contact the Advocacy Officer at The Rainbow Project, who can report hate incidents or crimes on your behalf.

What should you do if you see bullying happening?

If you witness bullying be that person who tries to help the victim.

- **Step up and report - don't ignore what is happening to others.**
Tell someone in a position of authority what is happening. The person who is being bullied may be vulnerable and perhaps too frightened to report the bullying. Say what you have witnessed and heard. Step up, do the right thing and report bullying behaviour.
- **Speak out for the victim – don't accept poor behaviour from others.**
Be a powerful bystander, speak up for a victim, if you feel comfortable to do so. This may be during or after you witness bullying behaviour. Let the bully know that you and others feel their behaviour is inappropriate and unpopular.
- **Be an ally – don't leave vulnerable peers unsupported.**
Befriend a victim of bullying. Never allow peers to be singled out. Try to include and incorporate people who may be targeted by bullies into your peer network. Bullies usually attack individuals when they are alone but will be less inclined to attack someone within a peer group.

Can bullying get worse?

Often bullying goes unreported out of fear that it may get worse. In some cases bullying can increase as bullies grow in confidence by continuing to manipulate and gain control of situations and individuals. If another person's behaviour does not feel right, if it is threatening or hurtful it must be reported. Don't be silenced due to another person's cruelty. Don't allow a bully to harass or victimise you. By stepping up and speaking out about what is happening, you can regain control and help to stop the bully.

What else can be done to prevent bullying?

There are a variety of things you can do to help prevent bullying from happening. By far the best way to stop bullying in its tracks is to report any and all incidents of undesirable behaviour from other young people. It doesn't matter if it happens inside or outside of school, reporting bullying behaviour to a trusted adult will help to prevent such behaviour reoccurring.

Other helpful tips:

- Keep friends close in a genuine peer group
- Try to remain calm and unreactive
- Walk away from a bully if you can
- Prepare short non aggressive responses
- Always report bullying, never stay silent.

What additional help is available?

It is important to seek help and advice if you are being bullied or if you recognise a friend is being subjected to bullying behaviour. Get in touch, you are not alone.

Cara-Friend

Email: admin@cara-friend.org.uk
Telephone: 028 9089 0202

The Rainbow Project

Email: info@rainbow-project.org
Telephone: 028 9031 9030

Transgender NI

Email: info@transgenderni.org.uk
Telephone: 028 9031 9030

PIPS – Mental health and counselling service

Email: info@pipscharity.com
Telephone: 0800 088 6042

Childline

Telephone: 0800 1111

Lifeline

Telephone: 0808 808 8000

Children's Law Centre

Telephone: 0808 800 5678

Northern Ireland Anti- Bullying Forum

www.endbullying.org.uk

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