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Information Sheet on Bullies

10 Things You Need to Know About Bullies

by Jessica Stevenson for About.com

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1. Bullies come in all ages, sizes, races, religions, and in both genders.
2. Bullies use many tactics to threaten and harass people including, but not limited to, words and physical violence.
3. People who behave in openly hostile behavior, who threaten others to make themselves feel powerful, or who build themselves up by tearing others down are bullies.
4. Girls are more likely to bully with words while boys most often resort to physical attacks. For this reason bullying by girls is often ignored or not taken as seriously as bullying by boys. The reality is that both types of bullying are very serious.
5. Words can be just as harmful as physical violence and can cause lasting psychological damage to victims. The old adage, "*Sticks and stones can break your bones but words will never hurt you!*" is simply not true.
5. Never try to handle a bully alone. Always go to a person with authority over the bully such as; a teacher, a principal, a school liaison officer or a parent.
7. No matter what a bully threatens to do, you must tell somebody in a position of authority and your parents. **Never suffer in silence.** No matter how popular a bully seems you do not have to handle him/her alone. Responsible adults will help you if you tell them what is happening. Studies have shown that bullying stops when adults step in and telling an adult rarely makes the situation worse.
8. Bullies often model what they see at home. Sometimes a bully is really crying out for help. Bullies often act out because they feel they have no control over their own lives; they bully in an attempt to take control. Telling an adult about a bully may end up helping BOTH of you.
9. Ignoring bullies does not make them stop. Only adult intervention and awareness can end the harassment. Bullies thrive on the reactions of their victims and ignoring them can make them step up their efforts. However, if you tell an adult and then start ignoring the bullying behavior the bully will tend to back off. Only start ignoring the behavior **after** you have made as many adults as possible aware of the problem.
10. As children grow in to teens bullying behaviors often escalate. Death threats, taunts urging suicide, group attacks, and violence with weapons can occur. This sort of behavior is **criminal** and should always be reported to the police as well as to school officials and parents.

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