



## Secondary: But I didn't do it

If you see online bullying, it is important to do what you can to stop it.

### What's the issue?

Sometimes it's tempting to think that if you aren't the person doing something wrong, you don't have a role to play in setting things right. If you know someone is deliberately causing problems for somebody else, you should do what you can to stop it—sometimes just a small action can prevent things getting worse. Passing on information isn't as innocent as it seems—you are being drawn in to becoming an active player in a nasty game.

### Why does it matter?

- Bullies thrive on other people's silence. According to research by the Edith Cowan University (2009) frequent school bullying is highest among Year 5 (32%) and Year 8 (29%) students. The same research found that peers are present as onlookers in 87% of bullying incidents. By knowing about it and not saying anything you are allowing it to happen.
- You would want someone else to speak up for you if you were being bullied.
- Most people who bully online also bully offline: what might seem harmless ('it's just a website!') can have a negative impact on people's emotional and physical wellbeing, friendships and other relationships.

- When more people take positive action it creates a culture where bullying (online or offline) is not acceptable and encourages people to look for attention in more positive ways.

### Advice

#### Be an active bystander

- If you know someone is causing problems, tell them why they should stop. If you don't feel safe to say something yourself, tell someone who can take action.
- Even if the person being treated badly isn't your friend, they don't deserve to be the victim of things like gossip and homophobia.

#### Create the world you want to live in—online and offline

- You have the power to short-circuit behaviour that you think is unfair—refuse to be part of the harassment, and tell people why.

#### Don't become an 'accessory' to bullying

- You may not be the one who has initiated some sort of campaign about another person, but even forwarding information you receive to others makes you complicit.