Bullying response

What is bullying?

Bullying can happen at school, at home or online.

It is never okay, and it is not a normal part of growing up. There is a new nationally agreed definition of bullying which all Australian schools now use:

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Bullying

MISUSE OF POWER

ONGOING AND REPEATED

BEHAVIOURS THAT CAN CAUSE HARM
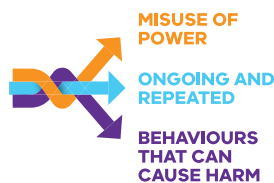
The 3 main features of bullying are:

- the misuse of power in a relationship
- it is ongoing and repeated
- it involves behaviours that can cause harm.

What is not bullying?

There are also some behaviours, which, although they might be unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying:

- **mutual conflict** - which involves a disagreement, but not an imbalance of power. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation
- **single-episode acts** of nastiness or physical aggression, or aggression directed towards many different people, is not bullying
- **social rejection or dislike** is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Participant roles

Everyone has the potential to bully others or be bullied. Individuals can take on various roles in bullying and play different roles in different contexts. Participant roles can include someone who:

- engages in bullying behaviour (could be an individual or group)
- is the target of the bullying behaviour
- assists the bullying and actively joins in
- is a bystander:
  - encourages and gives approval to the bullying by being; they reinforce it through verbal and non-verbal cues such as smiling, laughing or making comments and signal it is acceptable
  - sees or knows about someone being bullied but for a range of reasons is passive and does participate in the bullying or support the target
- is an upstander:
  - an upstander supports the student who is being bullied by getting help from a teacher, distracting the students engaged in bullying behaviour, supporting the student who is being bullied or directly intervening. These students play an important protective role for peers who are experiencing bullying, have greater empathetic skills and are often perceived by peers to be positive role models.

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Bullying Response

Thank you for completing this survey. Your responses will help us to better understand how our school currently responds to bullying and identify areas of opportunity for review.

1. Does our school have a policy to address and prevent bullying? (eg a Bullying Prevention Policy or a section in your school's Student Engagement Policy)

☐ Yes and I have read it (go to question 2)

☐ Yes but I have not read it (go to question 3)

☐ I don't know (go to question 3)

2. Are you satisfied with the content of our school's current Bullying Prevention Policy?

☐ Satisfied

☐ Unsatisfied

☐ Neutral

If you answered 'unsatisfied' or 'neutral', briefly suggest what could be done to improve your school's Bullying Prevention Policy.

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3. Who do you talk to about bullying at school? (tick all that apply)

☐ Other teachers

☐ Principal/Assistant Principal

☐ Members of the wellbeing team (eg Wellbeing leader, mental health practitioner, chaplain)

☐ Year level coordinator

☐ No one – I try to manage it by myself

☐ Other:

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4. How often do you think incidents of bullying are followed up by our school?

☐ Never

☐ Sometimes

☐ Unsure

☐ Often

☐ Always

5. When you became aware of bullying, what do you do?

☐ Report it to the year level coordinator, wellbeing leader, assistant Principal or Principal

☐ Have a conversation with the student/s engaging in bullying behaviours/s about school values and appropriate behaviour

☐ Supported the target to focus on their strengths and/or be more assertive

☐ Provide the target with strategies to manage the bullying

☐ Talk to the students who witnessed the bullying

☐ Supported the target to make new friends

☐ Referred the target and/or student/s engaging in bullying behaviours to school wellbeing team

☐ Change seating arrangement

☐ Spoke to parents/carers of student/s engaging in bullying behaviour

☐ Spoke to parents/carers of the target

☐ Set a consequence for the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour

☐ Made myself more visible in areas where bullying is more likely to occur

☐ Employed one of the six methods of intervention: traditional discipline, strengthening the target, mediation, support group method, restorative practice, method of shared concern (please provide more details below)

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☐ None of the above

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☐ Other classroom-based strategies to promote positive climate (such as information nights for parents and students, programs or curriculum-based activities....please provide more details below)

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☐ My response depends on context and frequency (please explain)

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6. **How effective was each of the following in helping to stop the bullying from continuing? (If a specific method was NEVER used, please leave the item BLANK)**

	Very effective	Effective	Unsure	Partially effective	Not effective
Facilitated a discussion between the student(s) engaging in the bullying behaviour and a teacher	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Facilitated a discussion amongst the parent(s) of students engaging in bullying behaviour and the school leadership	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Provided support for the target(s)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Provided support for the parents of the target(s)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Facilitated a discussion/ serious talk between the bystander(s) and the school leadership	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Used disciplinary measures (loss of privileges, detention, suspension, expulsion)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Helped the target to cope better (e.g., teach assertiveness, refusing to be intimidated or upset by bullying)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Very effective	Effective	Unsure	Partially effective	Not effective
Applied a mediation process (trained peer or staff member adopted a neutral stance to resolve differences between students who voluntarily sought help)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employed a restorative practice meeting with the student(s) engaging in bullying behaviour and the target	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employed a restorative practice meeting that included the student(s) engaging in bullying behaviour and a group of students (eg the class)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employed a restorative practice meeting that included the student(s) engaging in bullying behaviour, target(s) and other relevant people (eg parents and friends)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Used the Support Group Method for group bullying (a meeting was convened with the target alone first)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Used the Method of Shared Concern for group bullying (meetings were held with perpetrator(s) individually)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. Where bullying cases were followed up, how would you describe the state of the bullying behaviour after the intervention?

- ☐ Bullying stopped
- ☐ No change
- ☐ Bullying got worse
- ☐ Don't know

8. Overall, how successful was our school in addressing cases of bullying? (Select one)

- ☐ Not successful or hardly ever successful
- ☐ Only occasionally successful
- ☐ Successful about half the time
- ☐ Mostly successful
- ☐ Always or nearly always successful

9. What are our school's major challenges to preventing and responding to bullying?

10. What actions would improve our response to and management of bullying?

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