

Do you know what to do if you see or experience bullying? Read this article to understand more about bullying and find out what you can do to stop it.

## Before reading

Do the preparation task first. Then read the article and do the exercises.

### Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

#### Vocabulary

1. .... depression
2. .... anxiety
3. .... to raise awareness
4. .... to stand up against something
5. .... physical
6. .... social
7. .... to treat
8. .... evidence

#### Definition

- a. to behave towards someone in a particular way
- b. relating to the body
- c. relating to activities when you spend time with other people
- d. the state of feeling very unhappy and without hope for the future
- e. to say that you think something isn't OK and fight against it
- f. to make people know that a situation exists and help them understand it
- g. anything that helps to prove that something is true or not true
- h. an uncomfortable feeling of worry or nervousness

## Anti-Bullying Day

### Why do we need Anti-Bullying Day?

Unfortunately, bullying is really common. It affects millions of people's lives. It can happen anywhere, any time, to anyone. People who are bullied are more likely to suffer from depression and anxiety. They might lose interest in the activities they enjoy, avoid spending time with other people and not go to classes or school, which has a negative effect on their learning. Anti-Bullying Day aims to raise awareness about bullying, to support people who are experiencing it and to try to stop it from happening.

### What is Anti-Bullying Day?

The United Nations Anti-Bullying Day takes place on 4 May. In Canada and some other parts of the world, 22 February is Pink Shirt Day, and people wear a pink-coloured shirt to stand up against bullying. Anti-Bullying Week takes place in England and Wales every November. The message is that bullying is never OK.

### What is bullying?

Bullying can be physical, like hitting or kicking someone or stealing their things. It can also be with words – saying or writing mean things. Another type of bullying is social – choosing not to include someone, embarrassing someone or telling other people not to be friends with them. Bullying can happen at school, on public transport, when you're walking home, online ... in fact, it can happen anywhere. Bullying involves one person (or a group of people) who is more powerful than another. Their power could come from private information they have about someone, or their popularity, or maybe they are physically stronger.

### Who's involved in bullying?

Bullying usually involves more people than you think. There are the people who bully and those who are bullied. Then there are 'bystanders'. A bystander is someone who joins in with the bullying and makes it worse, or encourages the bullying by watching and laughing. People who see bullying but do nothing to stop it are also bystanders.

### What should you do if you see bullying happening?

An 'upstander', on the other hand, sees bullying and helps the person who is being bullied. Never join in with, laugh at or encourage bullying. You can support the person who is being bullied by walking away from the situation with them. Tell them that they don't deserve to be treated in that way and encourage them to reach out for help. If you feel confident and safe, you can tell the person who is bullying, calmly and directly, that their behaviour is not OK. Otherwise, you may decide to report the bullying to a trusted adult.

### What can you do if you're being bullied?

If you're being bullied, you may feel helpless and that there's nothing you can do to make it stop. But there *are* things that you can do, and the bullying *can* be stopped. If you're being bullied in person, you could try walking away, ignoring it or telling the person to stop. If that doesn't work, it's really important to reach out to a friend or classmate and ask them for help. Or speak to a parent, a teacher or another adult you trust. Nobody should have to deal with bullying alone.

If you're being bullied online, leave the conversation and do *not* reply to mean messages. Save any evidence, for example by taking a screenshot or keeping a copy of the messages you've received, and speak to a trusted adult as soon as possible.

### What can you do to avoid bullying someone?

There are lots of reasons why people bully others. They might just think it's funny or cool. Or perhaps they don't feel good about themselves, and they want to make themselves feel better. If you think that your actions could be hurting another person, it's important to realise this and to see that they don't deserve to be treated in that way. Try to find other, positive ways to interact with people and help them feel good about themselves. It's OK to admit that you've made a mistake. If you feel as if you can't handle the situation, talk to an adult you trust. Why not become someone who stands up against bullying instead?

### We can all make a difference

Bullying is never acceptable, and we all have a part to play in standing up against it. So, whether it's offering support to a friend, telling someone that their behaviour is not OK or talking to an adult you trust – your actions can make a difference and help stop bullying.

## Tasks

### Task 1

Are the sentences true or false?

- |   |      |       |
|---|------|-------|
| 1. Bullying doesn't happen very often.  | True | False |
| 2. Bullying can affect people's mental health, social life and progress at school.        | True | False |
| 3. Bullying is just when someone is hurt physically.                                      | True | False |
| 4. Bullying usually happens between two people who feel equally powerful.                 | True | False |
| 5. If you laugh at a bullying situation, it makes it better.                              | True | False |
| 6. People who see bullying happening, but do nothing to stop it, are called 'bystanders'. | True | False |
| 7. People who help and support the person who is being bullied are called 'upstanders'.   | True | False |
| 8. If you're being bullied, it's best not to tell anyone else about it.                   | True | False |

**Task 2**

Circle the best answer.

1. Bullying can cause \_\_\_\_ and anxiety.  
a. depressed                      b. depressing                      c. depression
2. Anti-Bullying Day aims to raise \_\_\_\_ about bullying.  
a. awareness                      b. social                      c. society
3. Not including someone, or telling people not to be friends with them, is \_\_\_\_ bullying.  
a. popular                      b. social                      c. society
4. If you're being bullied online, you could save the \_\_\_\_ by taking a screenshot.  
a. accident                      b. evidence                      c. incident
5. We all have a part to play in standing \_\_\_\_\_ against bullying.  
a. up                      b. down                      c. out
6. Bullying is never \_\_\_\_.  
a. accept                      b. accepting                      c. acceptable

**Discussion**

Did you learn anything new from reading this? What's the most important thing to remember about bullying?

## Answers

### Preparation task

1. d
2. h
3. f
4. e
5. b
6. c
7. a
8. g

### Task 1

1. False
2. True
3. False
4. False
5. False
6. True
7. True
8. False

### Task 2

1. c
2. a
3. b
4. b
5. a
6. c