

# Bullying at school

When bullying happens at school, it's hard to know how to help your child. Let's explore what bullying is and what you can do as a parent.



**No one deserves to be bullied.  
Being bullied is not your child's  
fault or responsibility.**

Bullying can be a complex problem and there is sometimes no simple solution.

Here's a breakdown of some of the principles that underlie bullying behaviour:

Bullying is a deliberate intention to harm somebody else

The 'bully' may act alone or when others are around and cannot witness it

Bullying creates a power imbalance between the 'bully' and the 'bullied'

Bullying happens through repeated acts and it's not usually a single event

Bullies may not have obvious 'behavioural' issues and they may have good social skills

Typically boys engage in more physical types of bullying

Typically girls engage in more verbal, emotional or social types of bullying

'Bystanders' might take sides with either the 'bully' or the 'bullied'

'Bystanders' may cheer or laugh or actively join in the bullying

Bullying when 'bystanders' are around usually impacts the 'bullied' more

**You might start to notice changes with your child if they're being bullied. There are signs you can look out for as a parent.**

**If your child is being bullied you might notice:**

Cuts, bruises, marks on their skin

Ripped or stained school clothes

'Losing' things at school

Withdrawing from others

Avoiding school or social situations

Friendship breakups

Feeling stressed, anxious, depressed

Loss or increase in appetite

Trouble sleeping, headaches, stomach aches

You are not alone. If your child is being bullied, they can talk to a Kids Helpline counsellor at anytime, for any reason.

**It can be tough knowing how to broach the topic of bullying.**

**Try to be open to hearing their point of view and listening rather than jumping straight to solutions.**

- Talk regularly about school, their friendships and anything that might be troubling them
- Ask them directly if they're being bullied and let them know you want to work together to help stop it
- Discuss your own experiences of being bullied and how you got through it
- Encourage them to call Kids Helpline and talk to a counsellor

For parenting support, call [Parentline](#) in your local State or Territory and they can advise you on what the next steps might be.