

# A PARENT'S

# GUIDE TO

# ANTI-BULLYING



FROM THE DIANA AWARD

**Finding out your child is experiencing bullying behaviour can be upsetting. In this guide, we will explore bullying behaviour and definitions, as well as some of the most common signs to look out for if you know or suspect that your child is experiencing bullying behaviour.**

## TYPES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR\_

We use the acronym V.I.P to describe the 3 types of bullying behaviour

### VERBAL\_

The repeated, negative use of speech or verbal gestures, to intentionally hurt others.

Examples include hurtful words, offensive language, swearing and discriminatory language.

### INDIRECT\_

The repeated, negative use of actions which are neither verbal nor physical to intentionally hurt others. Examples include isolating someone, rumours, sharing secrets, damaging/taking someone's property and intimidation.

### PHYSICAL\_

The repeated, negative use of body contact to intentionally hurt others. Examples include kicking, punching, pinching, slapping and tripping someone over.

## BULLYING FACTS IN THE UK\_

- The national centre for social research found that 47% of young people reported that they had experienced bullying behaviour by the age of 14. (Brown, Clery & Ferguson, 2011)
- The number of children and young people who have experienced cyber-bullying behaviour has increased by 88% in five years, according to the NSPCC Report. (2015/16)
- 16,493 young people aged 11-15 are absent from school due to bullying behaviour. (Clery, 2011).

## Signs and symptoms to look out for if you believe your child is experiencing bullying behaviour:

- Isolation from social groups or gatherings
- Changes in personality (quieter or acting out for attention)
- Fall in school grades
- Defensive body language
- Stopped doing activities they enjoy
- Regularly truanting from school
- Does not want to go to school
- Being upset before or after school
- Being secretive and hiding their phone or other devices

## CYBERBULLYING TIPS\_

Tips to give your child on how to deal with cyber-bullying behaviour:

- Tell someone you trust what has happened
- Report the post/video or photos on the app/online platform
- Block the person posting the content
- Save the evidence by screenshotting
- Don't reply or answer back, however tempting it may be
- If you are ever in immediate danger, ring 999

# HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD IF THEY ARE EXPERIENCING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

It can be hard as a parent/guardian to find out your child is experiencing bullying behaviour. If your child tells you that this is happening, listen to them carefully, praise them for confiding in you and remain calm.

## STEP 1: Speaking to your child\_

- Unhelpful responses include: 'just ignore it', 'man up', 'stop telling tales' or 'it is just a normal part of growing up'. Instead, try helpful responses like 'Thank you for telling me', 'We will get through this together' or 'I will support you through this'.
- Focus on acknowledging how they feel rather than dismissing it. Young people have the right to feel safe and happy at school and bullying behaviour should never be a barrier to learning. Try to remain calm and positive.

## STEP 2: Get all the facts\_

- Use active listening, approach conversations with no expectations/hidden agenda and don't ask leading questions. Instead, encourage your child to tell you what has been happening in their own words. Avoid blaming language such as 'I told you not to wear that to school'; remember that experiencing bullying behaviour is never the young person's fault.

## STEP 3: Work with others who can help you\_

- Work with the school: There are a lot of school staff who can support your child to take positive next steps. This sometimes includes the school's pastoral lead or SENCO (Special Education Needs Coordinator). All schools are legally required to have an Anti-Bullying Policy and a procedure to follow when bullying incidents takes place. Check the school website or ask to see a copy of these documents so you can work with the school to resolve this together.
- Other parents: You may be tempted to speak to other parents or even post something on social media. This can be detrimental, as it could exacerbate the situation.

## FURTHER LINKS/SUPPORT\_

For FAQs and further support, take a look at our support centre here:

[www.antibullyingpro.com/support-centre](http://www.antibullyingpro.com/support-centre)

Keep up with the latest technology and social media here:

[www.net-aware.org.uk](http://www.net-aware.org.uk)

For a more detailed look at bullying behaviour and the psychology behind this behaviour, visit the Anti-Bullying Alliance's website and complete the e-learning modules

[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information)

### References

Brown, Clery & Ferguson (2011). Estimating the prevalence of young people absent from school due to bullying. National centre for social research. Found here- <http://natcen.ac.uk/media/22457/estimating-prevalence-young-people.pdf>

NSPCC (2015/16) What children are telling us about bullying. Childline bullying report 2015/16. Found here- <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1204/what-children-are-telling-us-about-bullying-childline-bullying-report-2015-16.pdf>

Clery (2011). Estimating the prevalence of young people absent from school due to bullying. Nat Cen Social Research that works for society. Found here- <http://natcen.ac.uk/our-research/research/estimating-the-prevalence-of-young-people-absent-from-school-due-to-bullying/>

We're proud to be the only charity set up in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales and her belief that young people have the power to change the world. It's a big mission but there are two things within it that we focus our charity's efforts on – young people and change.

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Throughout all of our programmes and initiatives 'change' for and by young people is central, including our anti-bullying work which encourages change in attitudes and behaviours.

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We hope you found this resource useful and wish you all the best in your anti-bullying journey. If you would like to help us create more resources and train even more Anti-Bullying Ambassadors you can make a £5 donation by texting CHANGE 5 to 70470 or visit [diana-award.org.uk/donate](https://diana-award.org.uk/donate)

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