

Bullying Advice to Students, Teachers and Parents

At the beginning of the new school year it is a timely reminder about bullying, its effects and consequences. Bullying can be using physical force on someone, taking something away from someone, breaking something that belongs to someone else, or hiding something that belongs to someone else. Bullying can also include:

- Calling someone names
- Swearing at someone
- Telling lies about someone
- Starting a false rumour
- Getting someone else to hit someone
- Asking someone else to steal something
- Making someone else say mean things
- Using a mobile phone to send bullying SMS messages
- Leaving nasty messages on voice mail
- Using a chat room to send nasty messages
- Using a chat room to say mean things about someone
- Posting pictures of someone on the web if they haven't said it's OK

These behaviours can be against the law depending on the situation. If a person is caught bullying and breaking the law, parents and / or guardians will be contacted about the incident(s). A bullying investigation may result in a criminal record, affecting future employment. Police will investigate these offences and have a number of resources available to them. Police have technology that can easily trace messages left on the internet and phones.

The effects of bullying can be depression / anxiety, drug and alcohol abuse, physical impairment and even suicide. These effects can be long lasting or permanent.

For parents, teachers and students the following tips:

- Report Bullying straight away to a parent, teacher or other responsible adult.
- Contact Police
- Seek help if you are upset or depressed
- Call Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800

In regards to Cyber Bullying remember:

- Keep safe – be careful with your personal details or mobile number.
- Remember- the person you meet in a chat room may not be who they say they are.
- Say NO! Don't accept any offers that seem too good to be true.
- Watch out! Stay aware of what's going on around you and guard your privacy.
- Be considerate - only send the kinds of messages and pictures you would be happy to receive.
- Tell an adult if someone sends you nasty or bullying messages, or asks you to do something that makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Make a note of the number it came from, and the date and time of the call or message and tell an adult you trust.

Remember, the vast majority of kids at school are good kids, and it is usually only one or two who are the bullies. Stop bullying by standing up as a group and saying no to bullying. Always report bullying, especially if you are not on the receiving end of it and are a witness. If you believe you are 'dogging' on someone and dobbing them in, then report it to a teacher or Police officer anonymously, for example by leaving a note on the teacher's desk.

Regards

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