



Bullying Hurts...

**inside
and
out!**



**Information for
Parents and Carers**

One of the most difficult times in a child's life can be if they are bullied. Bullying can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying can include the following:

- Name calling and teasing
- Threats
- Physical violence
- Damage to belongings
- Deliberate and frequent exclusion from social activities and groups
- Spreading of malicious rumours
- Bullying by mobile phone, text messages
- Cyber-bullying – by email and through websites e.g. My Space, Bebo and Facebook



How will I know if my child is being bullied?

Bullying is often secretive and hidden and young people are sometimes reluctant to report bullying. Parents and families are often the first to detect symptoms of bullying, though sometimes school nurses, teachers or doctors may first suspect that a child has been bullied.

Important signs to look out for are:

- Reluctance to go to school
- A sudden headache or tummy ache, particularly on a Monday morning
- Anxiety and irritability
- An unexplained drop in marks or grades at school
- Depressed and withdrawn
- Unexplained bruises, scratches, torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Spends a lot of time in their room
- Loss of appetite
- Insomnia
- Fearful or angry with unexplained outbursts
- Worries more than usual about their appearance and what clothing to wear
- Suddenly does not want to carry their mobile phone

Children may also:

- Have their money, mobile phone or possessions go 'missing'
- Ask for money or begin stealing money (to pay the bully)
- Refuse to say what's wrong
- Become distressed or angry with other family members

If you think that your child is being bullied, but you're not sure, you could ask a few simple questions

For a younger child:

- What did they do at school today?
- Did they do anything they liked or didn't like?
- Who did they play with?
- Are they looking forward to going to school tomorrow?
- How are their friends?



For an older child:

- What did they do at lunchtime today?
- Is there anyone they'd like to invite home?
- Is there anyone in school they don't like and why?
- Is there any lesson at school that they don't like and why?

What I can I do about this?

There are a number of things that you can do as a parent. It is important to try to find out what is going on and use discretion. Try to stay calm, reassuring and be practical.

Suggestions for Parents / Carers:

- Calmly talk with your child about his/her experience
- Make a note of what your child says – particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened. Kidscape have a 'bully log', which can be used as a template to help you keep a diary of incidents. This can be found on their website www.kidscape.org.uk
- Reassure your child that he or she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying
- Explain to your child that should any further incidents occur he/she should report them to a teacher immediately
- If it is school bullying, make an appointment to see your child's teacher or form tutor
- Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing

When talking to teachers about bullying:

- Try to stay calm and bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened, give dates, places and names of other children involved
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child in school
- Stay in touch with the school and let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue

What can I do if I do not feel that my concerns are being addressed in school?

Families who feel that their concerns are not being addressed appropriately by the school might like to consider the following points:

- Ask to see the school's Anti-Bullying Policy to see if agreed procedures are being followed. Every school must have an Anti-Bullying Policy by law.
- Make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Headteacher and keep a record of the meeting.
- If the above step does not help, write to the Chair of governors explaining your concerns and what you would like to see happening.
- Discuss your concerns with a parent governor.
- Contact the Local Authority to share your concerns.



If you need further support and information at any stage, ring any of the help lines or support organisations listed within this pack.

Coventry Anti-Bullying Strategy for Children & Young People

An "Anti-bullying strategy" has been produced in Coventry which seeks to address bullying in its broadest sense. The Strategy recognises that bullying is not just a school-based issue but also takes place in the community. Bullying is better understood these days and is taken very seriously, as it can have long-term harmful effects and can interfere with a child or young person's right to be safe to learn and play.

There are many legal requirements related to bullying, including the Human Rights Act, Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act as well as other non-statutory guidance. The Anti-Bullying Strategy links with other initiatives such as reducing Hate Crime Strategy and work undertaken with particular vulnerable groups such as Asylum Seekers, Refugees, Looked After Children and children with disabilities.

The Anti-Bullying Strategy has a key focus on partnership working and wants to engage with a broad range of partners, including parents and carers, to build consensus that 'we are all in the fight against bullying together' ensuring that Anti-Bullying work is delivered in a coherent and co-ordinated way.



Coventry's Anti-Bullying Strategy can be downloaded by following the Education & Learning/Schools link on Coventry City Council's website www.coventry.gov.uk

Bullying Involving Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

The Government has made tackling bullying in schools a key priority.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) offers guidance and support for schools in designing and implementing their anti-bullying strategies by providing practical guidance documents. New guidance "Safe to Learn: Embedding Anti-Bullying Work in Schools" was launched in September 2007 and is a package of information materials for both mainstream and special schools. This package of advice includes specific guidance on identifying and dealing with bullying involving children with Special Educational Needs and disabilities. This guidance can be found at www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=12626

FURTHER CONTACTS

Although great care has been taken to provide accurate information Parent Partnership Service cannot take responsibility for any errors or omissions – all details were accurate at the time of printing.

ACE (Advisory Centre for Education)

Department A, Unit 1C
Aberdeen Studios
22 Highbury Grove
London
N5 2DQ
Tel: 0808 800 5793
Web: www.ace-ed.org.uk

Anti-Bullying Campaign

185 Tower Bridge Road
London
SE1 2UF
Tel: 020 7378 1446
Web: www.allaboutweybridge.co.uk/aaw/antibullyingcampaign.htm

Childline

42 Curtain Road
London
EC2A 3NH
Tel: 0800 1111
Web: www.childline.org.uk

Children's Legal Centre

University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park
Colchester
CO4 3SQ
Tel: 01206 877 910 or Tel: 0845 345 4345
Web: www.childrenslegalcentre.com

Commission for Racial Equality

3 More London
Riverside Tooley Street
London
SE1 2RG
Tel: 020 3117 0235 (non helpline calls only)
Helpline: 0845 604 6610
Web: www.equalityhumanrights.com/

Kidscape

2 Grosvenor Gardens
London
SW1W 0DH
Tel: 020 7730 3300
Helpline: 08451 205 204
Web: www.kidscape.org.uk

Parentline Plus

520 Highgate Studios
53-79 Highgate Road
Kentish Town
London
NW5 1TL
Tel: 020 7284 5500
Helpline: 0808 800 2222
Web: www.parentlineplus.org.uk

BullyBusters

Tel: 0800 169 6928
Web: www.bullybusters.org.uk

Bullying UK

www.bullying.co.uk

Anti-Bullying Network

www.antibullying.net

Department For Education (DCE)

www.dcsf.gov.uk/bullying

FURTHER READING

Bullying, don't suffer in silence -Anti Bullying pack

(Ref DfES 0064 2000)
Department for Education (DFE)
Tel: 0845 602 2260

The following publications are available to borrow from the Parent Partnership Service Resource Centre Tel: 024 7669 4307 for more information.

Be Smart, Stay Safe – True stories

Author: Michele Elliott

Beat the Bullies

Author: Michele Elliott

How to Stop Bulling – Kidscape Training Guide

Author: Michele Elliott and Jane Kilpatrick

Tackling Bullying

Published by ACE (The Advisory Centre for Education)

101 Ways to Deal with Bullying – A guide for parents

Author: Michele Elliott

Words will really hurt me (for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder)

Author: Martin Ives (National Autistic Society)

If you feel that you would like to know more or would like extra copies of this booklet, please ask at your child's school or contact:

Coventry Parent Partnership Service

Limbrick Wood Centre
Thomas Naul Croft
Tile Hill
Coventry
CV4 9QX

Tel: 024 7669 4307

Fax: 024 7669 5627

Email: parental.partnerships@coventry.gov.uk

Website: www.coventry.gov.uk/parentpartnership/

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**If you need this information in another format
or language please contact us.**

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