



What is bullying?

Bullying has three key features. It:

- involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- is ongoing and repeated, and
- involves behaviours that can cause harm.

Bullying can also occur online. This is known as cyberbullying, which is using technology such as the internet or mobile devices to bully someone. It can include sending abusive texts and emails, posting hurtful messages and putting inappropriate comments on pictures of others.

Bullying of any kind is not acceptable in NSW schools, whatever the reason. Schools are committed to working with parents, staff and students to prevent bullying and respond quickly and effectively if it does occur.

What can you do if your child has been bullied?

Listen calmly and get the full story

Your child needs to know that they are being heard. Their feelings matter and their concerns should be taken seriously. Encourage your child to talk about what happened. Explain to your child that reporting the bullying is okay.

After listening to their concerns, ask questions to get more details if needed: who, what, where, when.

Reassure your child that they are not to blame

Children may blame themselves and this can make them feel even worse. Say supportive things like, 'That sounds really hard to deal with', or 'I'm so glad you told me. You should feel safe at school'.

Ask your child what they want to do – and what they want you to do

It is important to help your child to find their own solution as this will help them feel that they have some control over the situation.

If your child is not in any immediate danger and they feel confident, they could try these strategies:

- Ignore the bullying.
- Turn their back and walk away.
- Act unimpressed or pretend they don't care.
- Say "No" or "Just stop!" firmly.

If the bullying happened at school, support your child to tell a teacher. If your child wants to talk to someone other than the school or you think added support would help, you could tell them to go to the Kids Helpline website. They can also call for free on 1800 55 1800.

When do I contact the school?

Your child may be reluctant for you to speak to school staff. Discuss the idea and reassure them that the school would want to know and is able to help.

If needed, make an appointment to meet with your child's teacher. You could also ask to talk with the principal.

Contact the school immediately if you have a concern about your child's safety.

Support for parents and carers

Kids Helpline also has a parent line with trained teams who provide support, information and counselling for parents of children aged 0-18 years. You can call them for the cost of a local call from 9am to 9pm Monday to Friday and 4pm to 9pm on weekends on 1300 1300 52.

Telephone interpreter service

If you would like to contact the school or Parent Line NSW and need assistance with English please call the telephone interpreter service on 131 450, tell them what language you need and ask the operator to make the call. The operator will get an interpreter on the line to assist you with your conversation. You will not be charged for this service.