



YOUTH MENTORING NETWORK

# Factsheets for Mentors

## Dealing with Bullying

This fact sheet will define bullying in its various forms, including cyber-bullying. It will also assist mentors in supporting students and provide information about further resources.



## Introduction to Bullying

Bullying can be defined as conscious, wilful, deliberate, hostile and repeated behaviour by one or more people that is intended to harm others ([www.bullying.org](http://www.bullying.org)).

Bullying can include:

- physical violence and attacks
- verbal taunts
- name calling and put downs
- threats and intimidation
- extortion

- stealing of money or possessions
- exclusion from the peer group

There is an indisputable link between bullying in childhood and adolescent anxiety, low self-esteem, loss of confidence and depression and self-harm.

In Australia, one in six students are bullied every week, with those children three times more likely to develop a depressive illness (Rigby, 1997 in *Kids Help Line - Bullying*, 2009).

[youthmentoring.org.au](http://youthmentoring.org.au)

Factsheet compiled by Louise Manka on behalf of the Youth Mentoring Network 2009.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this document the Youth Mentoring Network accepts no liability of any loss or damage associated with its use. Mentors should always refer back to their program's policies and procedures for further clarification.



# What is Cyber-Bullying?

Cyber-bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, mobile phones, instant messaging, chat rooms, and web-sites to harm others.

Like other forms of bullying it is about power and control in relationships where the victim is perceived as weaker. Gender differences are reflected in Cyber-bullying in a report recently in the *Australian Herald Sun* (2009) stating that boys were more likely to use aggressive language and 'flood' victims or exclude them from interacting online and girls tending to 'masquerade' by bullying under another identity.

Cyber-bullying is even more difficult to detect than other forms of bullying and is a particularly cowardly form of bullying as the identity of the bully can easily be hidden. They often escape the consequences of their actions and can inflict intense distress on their victims. It is

difficult for schools to monitor cyber-bullying as it frequently occurs outside school hours for the 'always on' generation.

*Boys report more physical forms of bullying, and girls tend to bully in indirect ways, such as gossiping and excluding.*

There is no reprieve from attack and the possibility of having social networking taken away if bullying is reported, is often unthinkable, and prevents action (Bullying.org Incorporated, 2004).

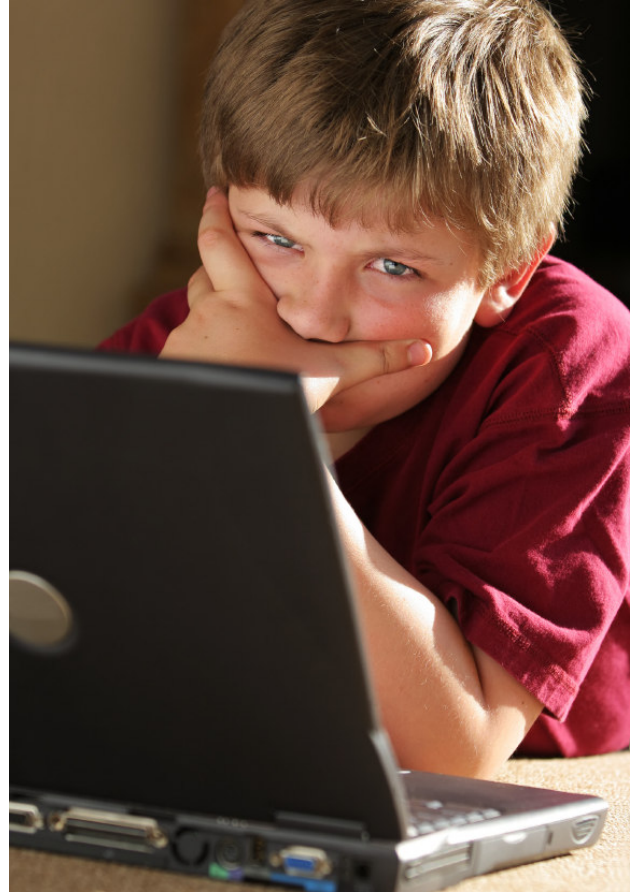
**Useful Website:**  
**Kids Help Line—[www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)**



# What can be done about bullying?

Young people who are being bullied can be supported by others in the following ways:

- Coaching young people to develop responses to bullies that clearly communicate that bullying is not acceptable e.g. look the bully in the eye and say “I don’t like that and I want you to stop” and walk away (*Kids Help Line, Bullying Info sheet, 2004*).
- Teaching communication skills such as assertiveness, confident body language and self talk (*Kids Help Line, Bullying Info sheet, 2004* and [www.kidpower.org](http://www.kidpower.org)).
- Supporting them in the action they take e.g. approaching a teacher or other adult with them. Intervention orders are also possible and are made by the Children’s court against another child or children (*Herald Sun, 2007*).
- Listening to them talk about their experience and how it makes them feel and let them know that they are not alone, it is not their fault and something can be done ([www.bullying.org](http://www.bullying.org)).
- Talking to them about why bullies do what they do, the harm that it causes and how we all must take a stand against it if we are going to make it stop.
- Get the school involved in a bullying reduction program such as Friendly Schools and Families [www.friendlyschools.com.au](http://www.friendlyschools.com.au) and stay aware of the latest research around bullying prevention ([www.bullying.org](http://www.bullying.org)) such as bystander intervention ([www.kenrigby.net](http://www.kenrigby.net)) where those witnessing the bullying can discourage it and have a good chance of actually stopping it.



Cyber-bullying is a huge concern and The Cyber Safety Symposium Report (2007) identified a strong perception that the lack of supervision of young people using technology is exposing them to a range of significant risks including cyber-bullying, sexual predation, and anti-social and harmful behaviours.

The report recommends a national strategic approach but also has suggestions for parents, students, schools, Federal and State Government and industry. The report can be accessed by emailing [info@amf.org.au](mailto:info@amf.org.au).

Specific information about reducing mobile phone bullying and other forms of cyber-bullying, (including steps for tracking emails), can be found at [www.amta.org.au](http://www.amta.org.au) and [www.cyberbullying.org](http://www.cyberbullying.org).

More information for MENTORS can be found on the  
**YOUTH MENTORING NETWORK** Website under the Information for Mentors page  
[youthmentoring.org.au/mentors.php](http://youthmentoring.org.au/mentors.php)



*... we all must all take  
a stand against  
[bullying] if we are  
going to make it stop.*



## Further Information

- **Bullying.org** – [www.bullying.org](http://www.bullying.org) – International, multiple award winning site to help people around the world deal with bullying issues. There are online support groups and information.
- **Kids Help Line** – [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au) – Information and further resources on a wide range of issues relating to young people.
- **Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association** – [www.str8tlk.amta.org.au](http://www.str8tlk.amta.org.au) - provides tips for managing mobile phone bullying.
- **Bullying! No Way** – [www.bullyingnoway.com.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au)- Launched in 2002, this site includes Federal, State and Territory government and private education sector resources.
- [www.education.unisa.edu.au/bullying](http://www.education.unisa.edu.au/bullying) - Dr Ken Rigby, Specialist in issues relating to bullying.
- **National Child Protection Clearinghouse** – [www.aifs.gov.au/nch](http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch) – Provides a comprehensive bibliography of bullying resources.
- **Kidpower** - [www.kidpower.org](http://www.kidpower.org) - Articles, bullying prevention strategies, personal safety and cyberbullying.
- **Cybermentors** – [cybermentors.org.au](http://cybermentors.org.au) –useful website

## References

- [www.bullying.org](http://www.bullying.org) - **Where you are not alone** [accessed 26/01/09] Created by Bill Belsey.
- Kids Help Line (2009) **Bullying Infosheet**. [www.kidshelp.com.au accessed 10/02/2009]
- **Cyber-safety Symposium Report 2007** - National Coalition Against Bullying – An initiative of the Alannah and Madeline Foundation and the Centre for Strategic Education.
- **Mobile Phones and Bullying**. Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association [accessed 10/02/2009. [www.amta.org.au](http://www.amta.org.au)]
- Maher, Dr. D. (2009) '**Gender Bias in Online Bullying**' *Herald Sun*, 30 January 2009. [accessed 10/02/2009. [www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story](http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story)]
- O'Brien, S. (2007) '**Kids Turn to Court for Protection**' *Herald Sun*, 19 May 2007. [accessed 12/02/2009. [www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story](http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story)]



YOUTH MENTORING NETWORK

youthmentoring.org.au