

Sylvania Heights

Public School

Bullyproof your child

Parent workshop





Bullying Handout 1

Myths about bullying

MYTH 1: You can spot a bully by their looks. They are usually bigger than the rest of the kids and often dress shabbily.

FACT: *Bullies have no particular looks. They come in all shapes and sizes. Both girls and boys can be bullies – bullies are found in all economic, social and racial groups.*

MYTH 2: Some children ask to be bullied. They are born victims.

FACT: *Some children are more prone to being bullied. It is often due to things they cannot change about themselves eg, appearance, ethnicity, disabilities. This difference is just an excuse for the bully to justify what they do. No-one chooses to be hurt by others.*

MYTH 3: Bullies usually feel inadequate and have a low self esteem. Most bullies are unpopular or are poor students.

FACT: *A high percentage of bullies are relatively popular, have a high estimation of themselves and often have good verbal skills and achieve average grades. Studies show that bullying builds self esteem, children who bully are not loners.*

MYTH 4: I was bullied at school and it did not do me any harm.

FACT: *This is often said aggressively as if the person is still ashamed. They may have forgotten the pain they suffered.*

MYTH 5: Children just have to learn to stand up for themselves.

FACT: *Children who tell about bullying have usually reached the end of their tether. If they could have dealt with the bullying they would have. Asking for support is not weakness but a recognition that they cannot cope with the situation on their own.*

MYTH 6: The best approach is to tell the child to hit back – harder.

FACT: *Bullies are often bigger than their victims so the victim could get seriously hurt by hitting back. Hitting back reinforces the idea that violence and aggression are acceptable.*

MYTH 7: Bullying is character-building.

FACT: *The sort of character it builds is not the sort of character most parents want for their children. Bullying can damage victim's self esteem and can make them reserved and distrustful.*



Bullying Handout 1a

MYTH 8: Sticks and stones may break your bones but words can never hurt you.

FACT: *Bruises left by blows fade and heal but the scars left by name-calling can last for ever. An 84 year old man wrote: "I can remember every word those fiends said. I have been hearing their bullying jeers all my life".*

MYTH 9: That's not bullying! It is just fun.

FACT: *Teasing is one thing but when it gets out of hand it can turn into vicious taunting. Once teasing begins to hurt the victim it is no longer "just a bit of fun" and should be stopped.*

MYTH 10: Once a bully, always a bully.

FACT: *Bullying is a learned behaviour that can be unlearned.*

Extract from Griffiths, C. 1997. *What can you do about Bullying?*
Meerlinga Young Children's Foundation Perth WA



What is bullying?

Bullying is repeated incidents involving a bigger, stronger or more powerful child on a smaller or weaker child, or a group of children on a single child.

These might be:

- *verbal*: the child is called names, put down, threatened
- *physical*: the child is hit, tripped, poked, kicked or belongings are stolen or damaged
- *social*: the child is left out, ignored or rumours are spread
- *psychological*: the child is stalked or given dirty looks.

Bullying is different from ordinary teasing, rough-and-tumble or quarrels. What makes it different is that the incidents are ongoing, and there is usually an imbalance of size, strength and power between the children involved.

The bully might have power not only because he or she is bigger and stronger, but because other children side with the bully often to protect themselves.

What are the signs?

Bullying may be very hard to see. Victims may already be having trouble getting on with other children or with teachers. They are often picked on by bullies for this reason. Bullying usually happens out of sight, away from teachers or other adults. The people who are most likely to know what is going on are other children.

Children who are being bullied often don't like to tell anyone because they feel weak or ashamed, or are frightened that it will only make things worse. They also feel it is wrong to do in or tell tales on other children. If they tell anyone, it is most likely they will tell their parents or their friends before they will tell a teacher.

Some tell-tale signs are:

- bruises, scratches or cuts that your child can't really explain
- torn or damaged clothing
- damaged or missing belongings
- headaches, stomach aches and other pains that the child can't put a finger on
- unexplained tears or depression
- unusual outbursts of temper
- not wanting to go to school
- not wanting to play with friends
- wanting changes in the way he or she travels to and from school
- school work falls off in quality
- wanting extra money without giving a reason.



What can you do?

By the time children tell their parents they are being bullied, they may have tried everything they can to deal with it on their own. Telling parents is often a very hard step to take.

Children need to:

- feel believed and listened to
- develop trust in how parents will handle it
- talk more openly about what has happened
- gain some control over what is happening
- learn things they can do to protect themselves
- regain self-confidence.

It helps if parents:

- involve the children in making decisions about what to do
- listen to what children say
- tell them they understand.

It does not help if parents:

- get angry or upset
- feel guilty or ashamed
- make the children think it is not important
- blame the children
- accuse people without knowing the facts
- look for scapegoats
- demand to know all the details at once
- look for easy solutions.

As a first step, it is usually best to encourage the child to talk through it as far as he or she wants to, so you get the basic facts straight. Try to keep an open mind, remembering you are hearing only one side of the story. Ask questions gently, help the child reflect on what has been done so far and help the child work out what might be done.

It is important to find out what happened, who was involved, when and where the incident took place. Ask if anybody else saw what happened and, if so, who? It is a good idea to write down what you find out.



Bullying Handout 2b

There are some important next steps to consider.

- Never try to sort out the bullies yourself. This rarely works and often makes matters worse.
- Once you have a clear picture of the situation, and some idea about how you and the child would prefer to handle it, contact the school.
- Make an appointment to see the principal or the class teacher or whoever you think would be best to see. Don't barge in. Sometimes, the school counsellor might be a good person to start with.
- Present the information you have as calmly as possible.
- Do it in a way that makes it clear to the school that you see yourself and the school as partners in trying to fix this problem. Tell the school what you and your child would like to do, and ask them for ideas as well.
- Ask about the school's policy on bullying. Most, if not all, schools have a policy on responding to bullying. Your school will be as concerned as you to deal with the problem.
- The school will need time to investigate the matter and to talk to teachers, other students and even other parents if that's the best thing to do. Remember the school staff may not have seen the incidents and it is not always easy to judge if it is bullying or just a bit of harmless fun which has gone too far.
- Make a note of what the school says it will do, and arrange to make a follow-up call to see what has been done.

Helping your child cope

Invite school friends home to strengthen the relationships begun at school.

Talk to your child about some of the things that have happened and discuss some ways of dealing with them, such as:

- pretending not to hear hurtful comments
- using silent self-talk such as, *That's their problem, not mine*, or, *I'm OK*, to reinforce self-confidence
- developing greater self-assertiveness, so as to be able to face the bully without becoming scared, upset, abusive or violent; and
- believing that it is OK to tell someone when bullying happens – that it is not *dobbing*.

It is important that children understand the difference between *dobbing in* and reporting something that is serious. Bullying is serious. People get hurt, and some are harmed for a long time. Children have said that being bullied is almost the worst thing that can happen to them.



Factors that may contribute towards a child becoming a bully

- Too little supervision of children and adolescents. Without supervision, children do not get the message that aggressive behaviour is wrong.
- Bullying pays off. Many children learn at a very young age that when they bully their brother, sister or parents they get what they want. Often parents are too busy or too tired to fight with the child so they just give in. Each time parents give in when the child is aggressive they give the child the message that bullying pays off.
- Do as I say, not as I do. When parents fight and one parent intimidates the other and wins, the child gets the message that intimidation gets you what you want.
- Harsh, physical punishment. Although spanking a child may stop the child's behaviour, spanking that is too harsh, too frequent or too physical teaches a child that it is OK to hit other people. In particular, this teaches a child that it is OK for bigger people (parents) to hit little people (children). Bullies usually pick on younger, smaller or weaker children. They model, in their physical attacks, what may have happened to them personally in the home. The worst thing that can be done is to physically punish a bully for bullying behaviour.
- Peer group that supports bullying behaviour. Many parents do not know what their children are doing with the peer group. Their child may be playing with other children who bully. In order for the child to fit in, the child must bully like the peers.
- Getting more negative than positive messages. Children who develop bullying behaviour feel that the world around them (home, school, neighbourhood) is more negative than positive. These children are criticised more than they are praised. They expect the world to be negative with them so they attack first. By picking on others, they feel more important and powerful.
- Poor self-concept. Children who get more criticism than praise may develop a poor self-concept. These children believe that the only way to be accepted is to pick on others.
- Expecting hostility. Because of the criticism and the poor self-concept, bullies expect their parents, teachers and peers to pick on them, blame them or otherwise humiliate them. Therefore, they attack before they are attacked, even when in reality they were not about to be attacked. They assume hostility when none exists. In many ways, the bully's philosophy is, the best defence is offence.

Extract from Batsche, G. & Moore, B. 1992, *Helping children grow up in the 90's: a resource book for parents and teachers*. National Association School Psychologists, New York.



Trouble-shooting tips for dealing with friendship problems

Peer problems strike most children from time to time. When this happens, you need to listen to your child's feelings and then, when tears subside, offer small bits of advice. Accepting and understanding their emotions will provide your child with the strength to face those same children tomorrow.

Do not dismiss the sadness your child feels when their best friend moves away. For them it is a major loss. Step in and be their best friend until they find a new one. If your child laments that they will never be popular, let them complain without lecturing. Then help them find new ways to fit in that conform with your values.

All parents dread the notion of peer pressure. Your job is to help your child during the school years to get involved with positive groups whether it is sports, a hobby, an interest or an activity group.

Even the best of friends have ups and downs and many parents wonder how and when to intervene. Your child and their best friend are fighting in the back yard. What do you do: Go out there and coach them to a solution? Send the friend home and your child to their room? Launch into a speech about how friends do not treat each other this way? Or do you do nothing and hope they work it out?

Depending on the children and the situation, any one of those options might be appropriate. But generally speaking, the less you get involved, the more your child will learn about friendships. Sometimes the solutions children come up with are not the ones mature adults would pick. But they eventually figure out what is fair and how to get along.

One friend can make the difference. Many parents worry that their children do not have enough friends, but the only time to really be concerned is when they have no friends. If you notice that your child spends lots of time alone, is frequently sick or chooses to spend time with much younger children or adults, talk to the teacher or the school counsellor. Perhaps they can identify the problem.

Some children have an unusually difficult time getting along with others. In these cases it often helps for a teacher or parent to coach the child in the social skills they do not come by naturally. These skills include:

- participation (how to get started and the importance of paying attention)
- co-operation (the importance of taking turns and sharing materials)
- communication (the importance of talking with others and listening)
- being friendly and nice (the importance of smiling, helping and encouraging others).

Extract from <http://family.com>



Supporting victims of bullying

Bullying has been compared to a form of brainwashing with the victims ending up believing that somehow they deserve to be bullied. Victims feel vulnerable and powerless. Their self-esteem may have been considerably damaged especially if the bullying has been going on for some time. You need to build up their self-confidence with plenty of praise and affection.

- Keep telling your child that you love them very much and that you are 100% behind them.
- Reassure them that bullying is not their fault.
- Explain that reacting to bullies by crying or becoming upset only encourages them. Victims should try not to react to the bully's taunts. If bullies cannot goad the victim into a response, they will get bored.
- With your child practise saying no very firmly and walking away from a bully. It is hard for the bully to go on bullying, if the victim doesn't get upset and just walks away.
- Help your child think up simple responses to the bully's most frequent taunts. Responses do not have to be brilliantly witty or funny but victims say that it helps to have a reply prepared.
- Try and minimise opportunities for bullying eg, do not take valuable possessions to school.
- If the bully threatens your child to get money or possessions tell them that they should give up whatever it is the bully wants. After the incident tell the teacher. Keeping safe is more important than keeping possessions.
- Make time to sit down and talk to your child, encourage them to tell you how they feel, discuss their ideas and feelings.
- Praise your child whenever they accomplish something or whenever they behave well.
- Make opportunities for your child to do well eg, let them help with tasks around the house. Praise them when they carry them out.
- Give your child responsibilities as this helps to make them feel valued and important.
- Help your child make a feel good poster. Find a happy photograph of your child and stick it in the centre of a piece of paper. Around it write down some of the pleasant things which different people have said about your child, together with reminders of the success they have had. Put it somewhere they can see it every day.
- Sometimes victims become withdrawn, so help your child develop social skills eg, invite other children round. Do not invite more than one child at a time at first otherwise they might gang up on a meek, quiet child. Arrange outings.
- Try not to let your child sit around moping. They need diversions. Encourage them to develop a hobby or a sport.
- Encourage them to do something they are particularly good at as this will help their self-confidence.

Extract from Batsche, G. & Moore B. 1992, *Helping children grow up in the 90's: a resource book for parents and teachers*. National Association School Psychologists, New York.



Easing the teasing: how parents can help their children

Why children tease

1. Attention

Teasing is a good way of receiving attention and unfortunately for many children, negative attention is better than no attention.

2. Imitation

Some children model or mimic what is happening to them at home by acting the same way to others at school or in the neighbourhood. These teasers are children who may be teased by siblings or who experience aggressive or harsh parenting.

3. Feelings of superiority or power

Many teasers feel superior when they put others down or they may feel powerful when teasing upsets others (Olweus, 1993).

4. Peer acceptance

It is not uncommon to see children engage in teasing behaviour because they may perceive it as being the cool thing to do. It may help them feel part of a group. The need to belong may be so strong that a child may tease others to be accepted by the popular children.

5. Misunderstanding differences

A lack of understanding of differences may be the underlying factor in some teasing. Many children are not familiar with, or do not understand cultural or ethnic differences. In some instances a child with a physical or a learning disability may be the target of teasing because of being different.

6. Media Influence

One cannot discuss the reasons children tease without acknowledging the powerful influence of the media. Our children are frequently exposed to teasing, put-downs, sarcasm and a lack of respect in many of the television programs geared toward children.

Extract from http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed431555.html



Strategies parents can teach children to deal with teasing

Teasing cannot be prevented and children cannot control what others say. However, they can learn to control their own reactions. Parents can teach their children the simple strategies listed below to empower them and reduce feelings of helplessness. When children realize that there are effective strategies that they can use in teasing situations, their coping skills are strengthened.

Self-talk

Encourage children to think about what they can say to themselves when they are in a teasing situation

- A child could think, even though I don't like this teasing, I can handle it.
- A child should ask themselves if the tease is true? Often it is not.
- Another important question is, Whose opinion is more important, the teaser's or mine?
- It is also helpful for the teased child to think about their own positive qualities to counteract the negative remarks.

Ignore

- Displays of anger or tears often invite more teasing, therefore it is often effective for children to ignore the teaser. The child who is being teased should not look at or respond to the teaser. Children should try to pretend that the teaser is invisible and act as if nothing has happened.
- If possible, walking away from the teaser is encouraged. Parents can role play ignoring with their children and praise children for their excellent acting.
- It should be noted that ignoring may not be effective in prolonged teasing situations.

Visualisation

Many young children respond well to visualizing words bouncing off them. It provides them with the image of not having to accept or believe what is said.

- This image can be created by showing how nerf balls bounce off a person.
- Another effective visualization is for a child to pretend they have a shield around them which makes the teasing or bad words bounce off. This technique gives children the message that they can refuse these put-downs.

Your child bullying others

When it comes to bullying behaviour, your child might be the one affected. Or – shocking as this might be – your child might be the one doing the bullying. Stepping in early is the key to helping your child learn how to get along with others.

If your child's behaviour includes pushing other children who can't defend themselves, saying nasty things about them, or generally making them feel bad, it might be time to talk to him about bullying.

Bullying: the basics

- Bullying can involve physical violence or it can be psychological. It might involve teasing somebody, or leaving that person out of a group or activity. It can be face-to-face, or might happen by SMS or instant messaging via computer.
- Both boys and girls use name-calling when bullying. This is common because it's harder for other people to notice than physical aggression.
- Boys are more likely to take part in bullying behaviour. Boys are also more likely to be bullied.
- Some children might not begin a bullying episode, but might join in later or encourage the bullying. This is also bullying.

Signs that a child is bullying

If your child is bullying, **someone will probably tell you** – a teacher, another child's parents, or one of your child's siblings.

If you suspect your child is bullying, you could **look out for the following signs**:

- your child talks about the other kids at school in an aggressive or negative way
- your child has money, toys or other things that don't belong to her.

Neither of these signs means your child is definitely bullying, but you might want to talk to your child's teacher to find out if there have been any problems at school.

What to do about your child bullying

It's important to **tell your child you think his behaviour is unacceptable** and that you want it to end.

- Explain to your child what bullying is. Try to be calm about it. Talk with your child about what he's doing and why he might be doing it.
- Monitor your child's use of the internet and mobile phones.
- Talk to the school (or organisation where the bullying is happening) about its approach to bullying. Ask what you can do from home to support the approach. Call back regularly to check how your child is behaving.
- Some children bully because they themselves have been bullied. Listen to your child for clues that she might be a victim of bullying.
- Sometimes children join in a group that uses bullying behaviour to avoid being bullied themselves. If your child is bullying so he can fit in, talk to the school or organisation about strategies he can learn to resist joining in.

It's best to do something about bullying sooner rather than later. You can have the most influence on your child's bullying behaviour while she's still young – the younger she is, the more likely she is to change the way she acts.

You might be tempted to congratulate your child on 'standing up for himself', but making positive comments about bullying will encourage him to keep doing it.

What to do if your child continues to bully



did you know?

According to research, children who bully:

are at risk of developing long-term problems with antisocial behaviour

might also be victims of bullying

have a higher risk of engaging in workplace harassment, child abuse, sexual harassment and substance abuse in later life

are more likely to have children who bully.

If it's not the first time your child has bullied, and you've already tried the suggestions above, you might need to take further steps. If the bullying is happening at school or a sports club, working with the organisation will give you the best chance of changing your child's behaviour.

- The school or club will probably have a policy on bullying, and they'll use that to decide the consequences for your child. The most effective thing you can do is **support the organisation's decision**.
- You can also set up a **'behaviour contract'** for your child. The contract is made with you, the school and your child, so she knows you're all working together. The contract can include things like what will happen if she bullies and what will happen if she stops bullying. You could also include things she could do instead of bullying.
- Talk to the school about whether your child needs **counselling** to help him stop bullying, and whether the school can either offer it or refer you to someone else. Counselling is particularly useful if your child is having trouble with self-esteem, dealing with anger or controlling his impulses.

How to stop bullying

- Preventing bullying is about teaching children how to get on well with others, helping them learn [empathy](#), respect and how to support their friends. With these skills, children are much less likely to bully. Our article on [connecting with your school-age child](#) has tips for helping your child develop social skills.
- Building your child's [self-esteem](#) can help. You could let her try lots of different activities, and encourage and support her in anything she likes. It might be sports, art, music, drama or something entirely different.
- Research has found that children whose parents give them [positive attention](#) are less likely to bully. Children who feel unloved or who experience violence in their family are more likely to bully others.
- Using authoritative [discipline](#) can help too – this means setting limits and using non-physical discipline if your child doesn't stick to them. If you want your child to learn how to resolve conflicts without bullying, it's important you also learn to [manage your own conflicts constructively](#).

Why children bully: the research

Most children tease others at some stage. As they get older, children learn how their behaviour affects other people's feelings, so the behaviour tends to stop. Children who haven't developed empathy might continue the behaviour and become bullies. Some children have a [temperament](#) that makes them more likely to bully, while others come from families where violence and 'put-downs' are common.

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More to explore

Bullying: how to spot it
School Age Behaviour Toolkit
A guide for talking to school-age children
Preschoolers Behaviour Toolkit
A guide for talking to preschoolers
Problem-solving strategies for parents and teachers

Web links

Kidscape - Children who bully (PDF doc: 40kb)
Australian Government Department of Education
– State and territory anti-bullying policies
Dealing with bullying - Bully blocking
Bullying. No Way!

GLOSSARY

temperament

An individual's unique manner of thinking, feeling and behaving (often thought to be genetically determined).

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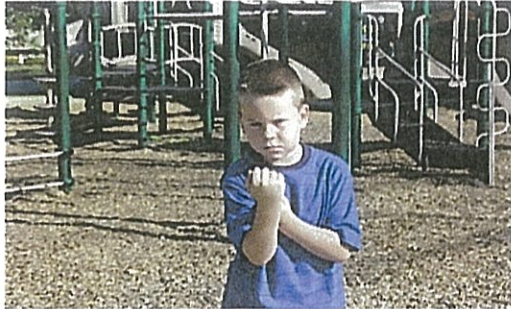
References

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When your child is the bully, here's what to do

By [Fiona Baker](#) |



If it's your child who's the bully, chances are you'll find out through a teacher or fellow parent. It can be shattering as a parent to hear something like this about your child, but it's vital that you act rationally and immediately because while the victims of bullying can grow up to have lifelong issues, so can the perpetrators.

Here's a step-by-step guide to trying to stop your child bullying others.

Ask your child if they can explain what has happened and why, without you becoming too judgemental at this stage.

Talking with your child find out if there are ways you can work together to stop this behaviour.

Explain that the bullying behaviour is completely unacceptable and that this situation will worsen if the bullying continues.

See if you can get your child to understand how frightened and upset the victim feels.

Criticise the behaviour but don't reject your child.

Praise your child's good behaviour.

Tell your child that you're confident that he or she can change their behaviour because you know that that you child is not really a bully, and you know is capable of kindness and empathy.

If your child is bullying in a 'gang' help them to develop new interests and encourage friendships away from that group.

Observe your child's social skills and ability to get along with others and help them improve these.

Spend more time with your child, listening to them, and giving more attention.

Support the measures that the organizations (like the school) take to stop the bullying.

Reinforce measures at home, explaining that there will be consequences (such as loss of privileges) if the bullying does not stop.

According to research, children who are bullies are at risk of developing long-term problems with antisocial behaviour and have a higher risk of engaging in workplace harassment, child abuse, sexual harassment and substance abuse in later life. Some statistics suggest that even half of kids who bully have been bullied themselves.

Find more bullying solutions and information

[15 solutions to bullying and cyber bullying](#)

[Helping when your child is bullied](#)

[How bullies pick their victim](#)

[My child is a bully](#)

[What makes a bully](#)

[What is bullying](#)

[Bullying definitions](#)

[Is your child being bullied](#)

[How to deal with bullying](#)

[What parents can do about bullying](#)

[When your child is a bully, here's what to do](#)

[How to talk about bullying and cyber bullying](#)

[Cyber bullying: here's what it is and how to tackle it](#)

[How parents can prevent bullying](#)

[School policies on bullying](#)

[10 signs your child is being bullied](#)

This article was written by Fiona Baker, former editor in chief of Mother & Baby, Pregnancy & Birth and Wondertime magazines, for Kidspot, Australia's leading parenting and pregnancy resource. Sources include [Bullying No Way](#), [National Centre Against Bullying](#), [Raising Children Network](#), and [Bullying Hurts](#).

We Recommend



[The marriage whisperer: 5 sex mistakes women make](#)
(Kidspot Family Health)

Reprogram your child's attitude

One young woman I met had been told to leave an exclusive private school when she was in junior secondary because she was different. She had been through some very difficult times: her father, a respected psychiatrist, had passed away while she was very young. As she didn't fit in, she became rebellious. Her mother, a very creative woman, told her that she was thrilled that she was unique. As a result, she went on to follow her dreams and begin a business. This young lady created a multi-million dollar business manufacturing and selling lipsticks and cosmetics. Her name is Poppy!

I am always intrigued by changes in the meaning of words that take place over time. One of the more recent ones is 'attitude'. We might say now that **the bully has an attitude problem and that the victim needs to change their attitude**. Traditionally, we would have questioned the **victim's belief system** because their thoughts and values were making it easy for bullies to find a target. Whatever the terminology, it is essential that the victim change their faulty mindset, otherwise the bully will continue to play games with them.

While growing up, children absorb values, beliefs and ideas about how life is meant to be. Many of these have been copied from those of their parents, their school or from society in general. Victims of bullying need to change some of their beliefs before they can make a shift in their behaviour.

Children need to accept that bullying happens, and that something constructive needs to be done to combat it. They need to change the way they view themselves and other people. Following that, their behaviour will change. At that point, they will become more assertive and confident.

Ten faulty beliefs or attitudes

From years of working with victims of bullying, I have come across a number of attitudes or beliefs that are commonly faulty in these children. After reading this chapter, make sure that your child has dealt with their negative beliefs before moving on to the ideas that follow. Listen to their story, help them release their painful feelings as described in Secret 1 (Chapter 7), and help them convert their faulty beliefs into attitudes that are sensible,

assertive, constructive and self-protective. Assist them to understand and utilise their survival instinct, which involves learning how to identify feedback and avoid nasty games by getting out of the bully's way. Once your child's faulty beliefs have been changed into constructive ones, they can learn how to develop positive beliefs about themselves. The way a child behaves, carries their schoolbag or wears their clothes informs the bully how easy or difficult a target they will be. **When they change their state of mind, they will change their behaviour.**

Do you have faulty beliefs?

Did you realise that many bullies depend upon children who have faulty beliefs about themselves and others? These faulty beliefs make them easier to bully. If you hold any of these beliefs, you will most likely make at least one bully very happy. You, your parents, your teachers and your friends don't want this to happen.

The quiz below and the section that follows on the 'Ten faulty beliefs or attitudes' will help you to find out if you hold any of these beliefs. There are four possible answers to each. Write down the one that best applies to you. Cheating, or getting your parents to help, is allowed!

If you have any of these faulty beliefs, make sure that you replace them with positive thoughts about yourself. Practise these positive thoughts regularly until the bullying has stopped. You may even find some faulty ideas that I haven't included. If so, please write them down and send them to me.

- 1 (a) It is dreadful that I am different and it's not my fault.
(b) Nobody likes people who are different in any way.
(c) I will never be like other people. How will I ever have friends?
(d) I am glad that I am different; however I am still normal.
- 2 (a) Something is really wrong with me; I don't blame them for picking on me.
(b) I deserve to be bullied because I'm fat, stupid or a nerd.
(c) I understand why I have been bullied and now I am ready to change.
(d) I should have been born to other parents and then I wouldn't have been the wrong sex, short, Muslim, Asian, Arab, Black American, Jewish or whatever.
- 3 (a) I am very sensitive. I have to protect myself carefully. I can't show the bully my feelings.
(b) Everybody must realise that because I am sensitive they have to be nice to me.
(c) If I am scared or upset, then I am going to let everyone know.



Quiz for
older children

granted, and discussed them with his family. They helped him change his attitude and lose his fear. Within two sessions he had developed a more normal relationship with his brother. They actually fight less, and the teasing has stopped at school.

It is important to realise that children are not born victims. Rather, events occur over a period of time that increase the likelihood of their becoming a victim. Remember, however, that **the negative impact of such events can be changed**. To succeed in doing this, it is important to understand why your child has become a victim so that you won't waste precious time and energy blaming each other and feeling angry, guilty, ashamed and powerless. The moment we blame someone, they become defensive and angry. Understanding why your child is being bullied is the better alternative as it gives you the courage to focus on what needs to be done to stop the bullying.

Look at your attitudes

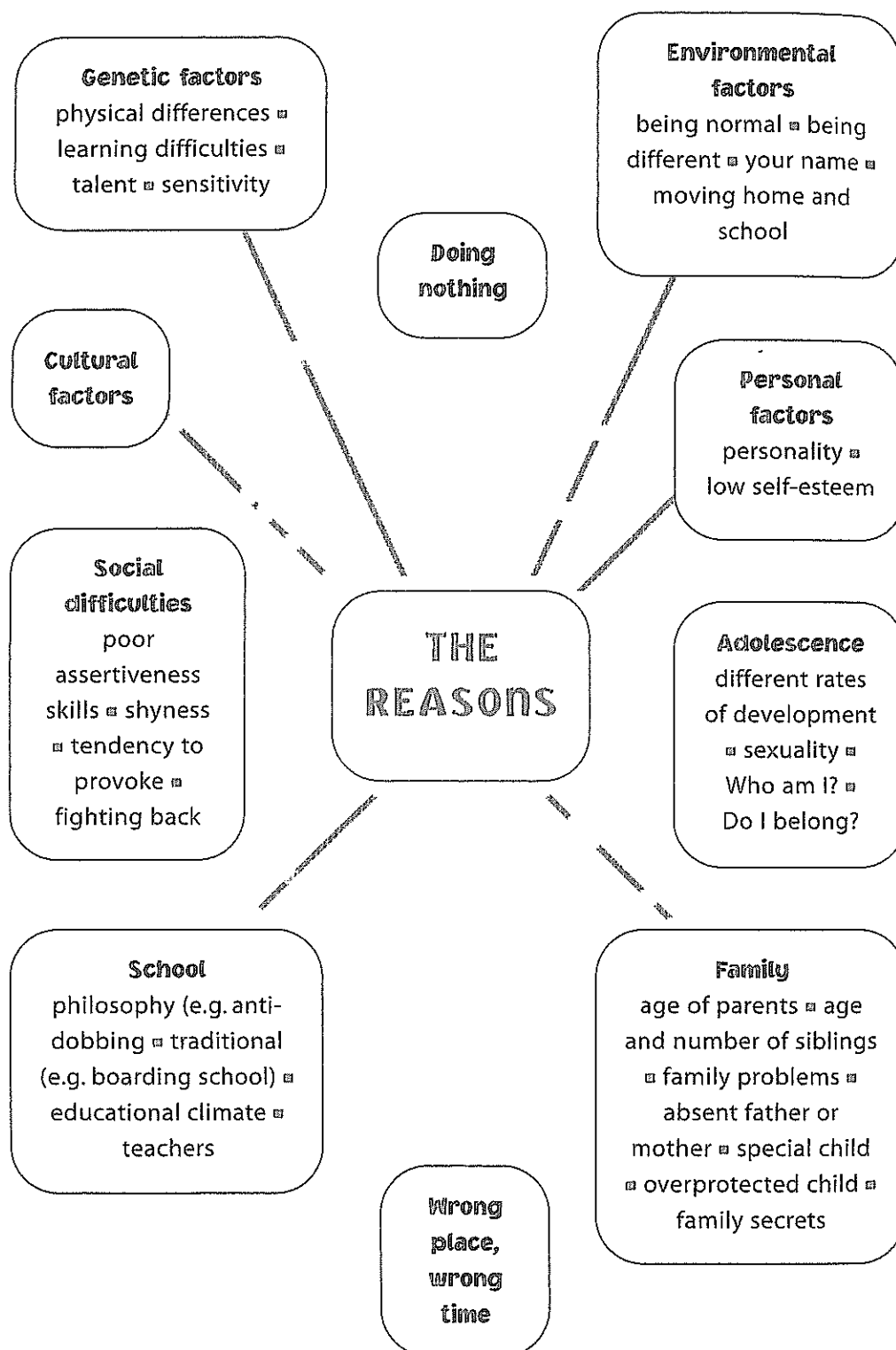
Consider the three suggestions for each question and circle the most appropriate response:

- 1 If another student criticises your child, should they:
 - (a) criticise them back?
 - (b) ask for some helpful suggestions?
 - (c) make lots of excuses?
- 2 If the school blames your child, should they:
 - (a) feel ashamed and walk away?
 - (b) defend their responses?
 - (c) look for any truth in what the school is saying?
- 3 If your child has a problem, do you:
 - (a) feel guilty and cover it up?
 - (b) get angry and tell them off?
 - (c) discuss it and look for solutions?
- 4 If the school contacts you and tells you that your child is behaving inappropriately, do you:
 - (a) ask what you can do to help?
 - (b) attack and blame the school?
 - (c) complain to your neighbours, family and friends?
- 5 If you protect your child and defend their actions, do you:
 - (a) look for solutions to their problems?
 - (b) become hurt and upset?
 - (c) feel powerless to do anything?



Parents activity

In my experience, there are usually at least three reasons why a child becomes a victim of bullying, and it is helpful if your child understands those relevant to them. Below is a mind map showing the main reasons.



BEING A GOOD LOSER

1 Why Learn This Skill?

Most students have a fairly good idea about why it's important to be a good loser. Stress the fact that people stop playing with bad losers because of the unpleasantness and discomfort involved. Point out that most people prefer to win, and that losing makes most people feel bad, but that controlling those bad feelings is a way of ensuring that others will want to play again, thereby increasing the chances of friendship.

Make the connection between losing in games and losing in life, e.g. being told "no", not getting the part in the play you wanted, getting a low mark, not being invited somewhere.

2 How Do You Do It?

Discuss the Do's and Don'ts on the poster. Go over each one several times.

Display the poster in a highly visible spot and have students practise the memory jogger.

3 Having A Go!

Set up a role-play involving three or four students in which one person wins and the other three lose. (This can be done in conjunction with the previous chapter, "Being a Good Winner".)

Set the scene for the last few minutes of a game such as *Spit*, *Tennis-Elbow-Foot*, *Yes/No*, *Fish*, *Snap*, or *Tennis*, and nominate which students are to role-play "losing well".

After the role-play, ask the rest of the group two questions to elicit positive feedback about each student's performance:

- what did they do well?
- what could they have done to make it even better?

4 Practice Makes Perfect!

- Set aside an hour a week for a few weeks during which students can play games which they have brought from home. Use a Games Sheet (see page 36).
- Specify a particular game, e.g. *Spit* or *Bat Tennis*, and ask students to set up a tournament to be played at recess and lunchtime. Ask them to fill in the Games Sheet for each game. For *Bat Tennis* competitions, make the rule that players have to referee the game prior to their own.
- Set aside half an hour once a week for students to play specific *quick* games in which there is a lot of winning and losing, e.g. *Spit*, *Snap*, *Creepy Critters*, *Concentration*. Ask each pair or group to record each time they see or hear a good losing behaviour (see Counting Social Skills, page 31).

Go around the groups and make positive comments when *you* see or hear a good losing behaviour.

With a small group you can hand out a games counter (token) for each good losing behaviour (page 118).

- Whenever you are using curriculum games, e.g. fraction bingo, tables races, remind students beforehand of the Do's and Don'ts and the Good Losers memory jogger, and comment positively when you note good losing behaviour.
- Set up "Being a good loser" as the Skill of the Month (page 26).
- Use another grade of students to practise this with (page 32).

BEING A GOOD LOSER

Losing can make you feel bad,
but staying friends
is more important than giving in
to your grumpy feelings.

Do's

Accept that you have lost, or are losing,
and put on a "good face".

Congratulate the winner and smile.

Comment on what the winner did well.

Say you enjoyed the game and would like
to play again another time.

Help pack up and put away materials.

Remember all the times you have won
before.

Say to yourself "Someone has to lose
this time".

Don'ts

If you're not doing well, don't give up or
stop trying.

Don't use a whingeing grumpy tone.

Don't suggest that the winner cheated or
had an unfair advantage.

Don't say you never want to play with
that person again.

Don't stamp off in a bad mood.

Don't devalue the game.

Don't leave the winner to do all the
packing up.

Don't think of yourself as a "loser".

Don't think "I'll never win again". You
will win again.



DEALING WITH FIGHTS AND ARGUMENTS

1 Why Learn This Skill?

We all have arguments every now and then. Students will usually be able to give lots of examples of situations where arguments have occurred. Stress that arguments happen to everyone, and that having an argument doesn't necessarily mean the end of a friendship, or being enemies. Point out that in all arguments *both* people think they're right. Sometimes an argument can be resolved when it occurs. At other times people need to avoid hurting the other person's feelings too much at the time by going away to calm down, and then trying to resolve it later. Dealing well with arguments protects friendships and reduces bad feelings.

2 How Do You Do It?

Discuss the Do's and Don'ts on the poster. Go over each one several times.

Display the poster in a highly visible spot and have students practise the memory jogger.

You might also want to put a poster on your classroom door which says: "Peacemakers Welcome Here".

3 Having A Go!

Set up a role-play about fighting that involves two students. Ask students to come up with ideas about the kinds of fights and arguments that could be used in the role-play. The role-play will have to be done in two parts:

- When the fight occurs (when the students will stay but walk away if things become heated)
- later that day or the next day (when one attempts to make peace).

After each role-play elicit positive feedback for both performers by asking:

- What did they do well?
- What could they have done to make it better?

4 Practice Makes Perfect!

- Set up "Dealing with fights" as the Skill of the month (see page 26). Ask students to report to you any successful resolution of a fight or potential fight.

Note: Students may ask "What if the other person doesn't want to make peace?".

The response could be, "Well, at least you've tried and you can congratulate yourself for trying to be a peacemaker (*positive tracking*). You can keep trying. Above all, if they don't want to make peace, make sure you don't turn them into enemies by doing or saying more unkind things. Leave things alone for a while."



DEALING WITH FIGHTS AND ARGUMENTS

Don't let fights create enemies.

Do's

Try to stay calm and talk through the problem using a respectful voice.

If you or the other person are getting angry or out of control say: "We're getting too angry. Let's talk about it later", and walk away.

Make sure you do talk about it later. When you've calmed down, recognise that allowing the bad feelings to continue is not a good thing. You are responsible for dealing with them.

When you feel calm, go and talk to the other person.

Put your point of view and tell about your feelings (e.g. "I felt bad when you didn't include me in the game you organised").

Let them put their point of view. Listen without interrupting until they're finished.

Try to find a way to be friends again.

Don'ts

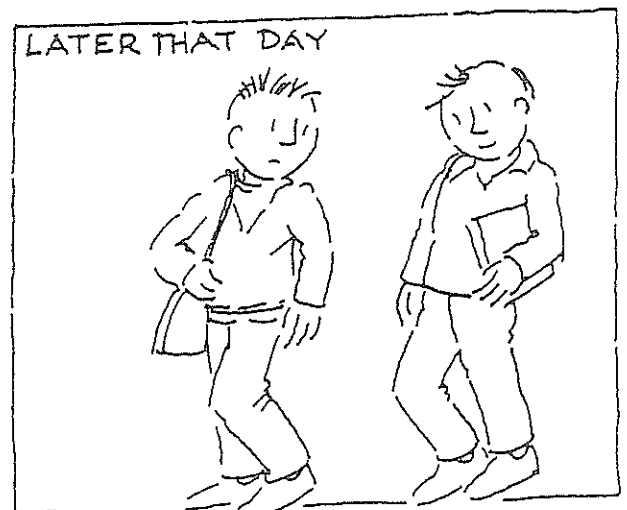
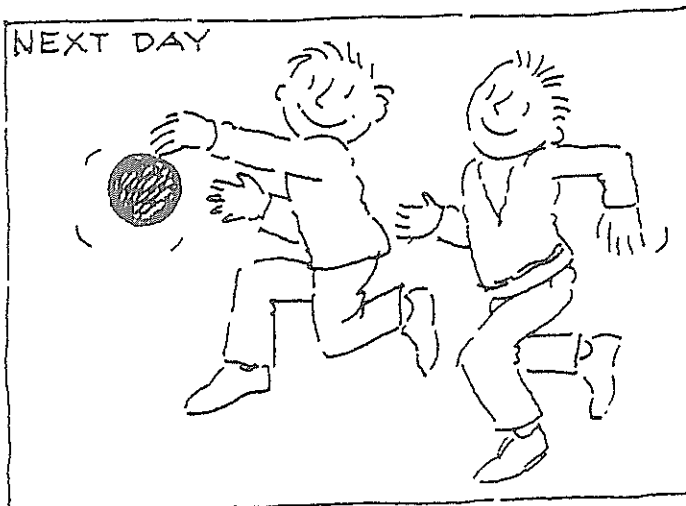
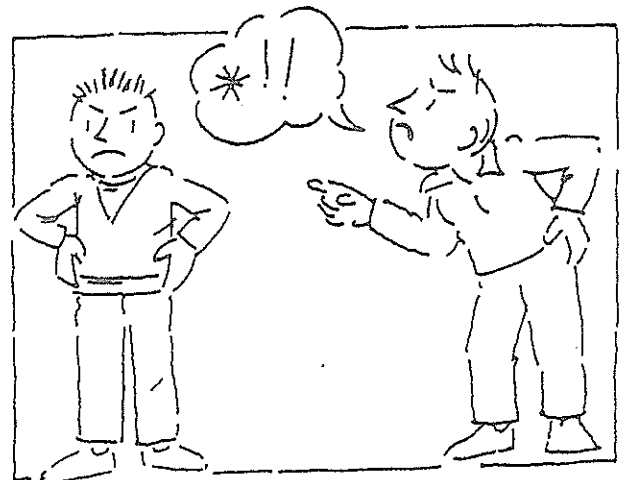
Don't call the other person insulting names.

Don't say blaming things.

Don't try to shame the other person.

Don't hit or kick or use any kind of violence.

Don't be big-headed and assume that you are the only one who is right.



Standing Up for Yourself

INTRODUCTION: RESPONDING TO PROVOCATION

- Telling someone to stop annoying you
- Ignoring someone who is giving you a hard time
- Saying "No"
- Asking an adult for support

Students will encounter many situations where they will need to stand up for themselves. There are three basic ways to respond to a situation where you are being provoked.

1 An Aggressive Response

An aggressive response involves reacting with any or all of the following behaviours:

- hitting, punching, tripping and so on;
- using insults and put-downs;
- shouting and yelling;
- damaging property.

Many students believe that unless they respond *aggressively* to provocation, they will lose face and be called wimps. However an *aggressive* response tends to escalate the conflict and often results in injury, or property damage, and loss of self-esteem. Students often don't realise that they can maintain face and stand up for themselves by using an *assertive* response instead of an aggressive one.

2 An Assertive Response

An assertive response to provocation usually involves making a firm request for the provocation to stop OR ignoring and walking away from the provocation. If neither of these strategies work, the next step in an assertive response is to seek assistance from a person with the resources and power to provide support.

3 A Passive Response

Some students lack confidence in their ability to deal with provocation. They become fearful and let others give them a hard time or agree to things they really don't want to do. Passive responses result in a loss of self-respect and respect from others, and usually the provocation continues.

Lindy Petersen and Anne Ganoni, in their *Manual for Social Skills Training in Young People* (1988, Kitchener Press) recommend using the following terms to teach these concepts to students:

- Aggro (Aggressive)
- Cool (Assertive)
- Weak (Passive)

The poster on the next page gives students general guidelines for identifying and selecting each kind of response. It is helpful to put the poster up and introduce these concepts in a class discussion. When difficult situations do arise, help students to identify which kind of response they used.

In this section we've given guidelines for teaching three different assertive responses to being given a hard time:

- telling someone to stop
- ignoring them
- asking for adult support.

Discuss which of the three responses best suits which provocative situation by using the Social Problem Solving Technique (page 89) with your students. You will need to point out that sometimes they will need to use a combination of two or more of these skills. Asking for adult support is *always* the last response to try. The order in which the other two should be used will depend on the situation.

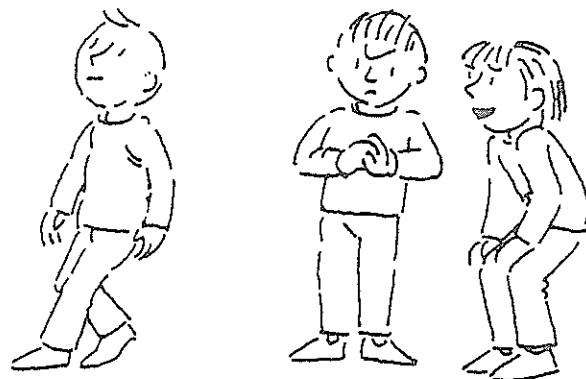
Bullies and victims

On the following two pages are two posters on bullying. Have a class discussion about bullies and victims and put up the poster if it seems appropriate, and use the School Policy poster in conjunction with staff and/or parent meetings.

STANDING UP FOR YOURSELF

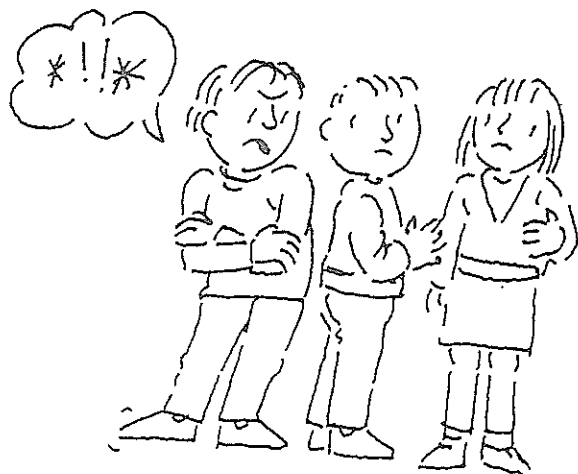
The cool way is to:

- Tell them to stop annoying you or firmly ignore their behaviour and walk away from them.
- Speak in a firm, not angry voice.
- Stand tall.
- Look in their eyes firmly (but not in a threatening way).
- Stay in control of yourself.



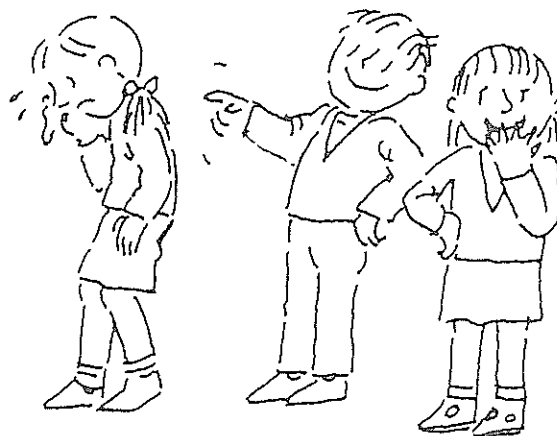
The aggro way is to:

- Push, punch, trip or kick another person.
- Speak discourteously.
- Use insults and put-downs.
- Call people names, make blaming comments, or try to make people feel ashamed.
- Have a really angry expression on your face.
- Shout and yell.
- Swear.
- Stand close to the person and act in a threatening manner.
- Lose control of yourself.



The weak way is to:

- Give in to others when you don't want to.
- Let other people continue to do bad things to you.
- Talk quietly, mumble or speak hesitantly.
- Cry or sulk or sob without trying to deal with the problem yourself first.
- Look down at the ground when you are speaking.
- Stand small, as if you are trying to hide.



TELLING SOMEONE TO STOP ANNOYING YOU

Stay cool.
Stand tall and tell them to stop.

Do's

Stay cool.

Stand tall.

Say their name (if you know it).

Look in their eyes.

Say firmly, and in a slightly louder voice, something like "Cut it out" or "No more".

If they do it again, tell them more firmly to cut it out.

If they keep doing it you can:

- ignore them
- walk away
- ask an adult for support if you feel you are in danger. Do this only as a last resort.

Don'ts

Don't get aggro.

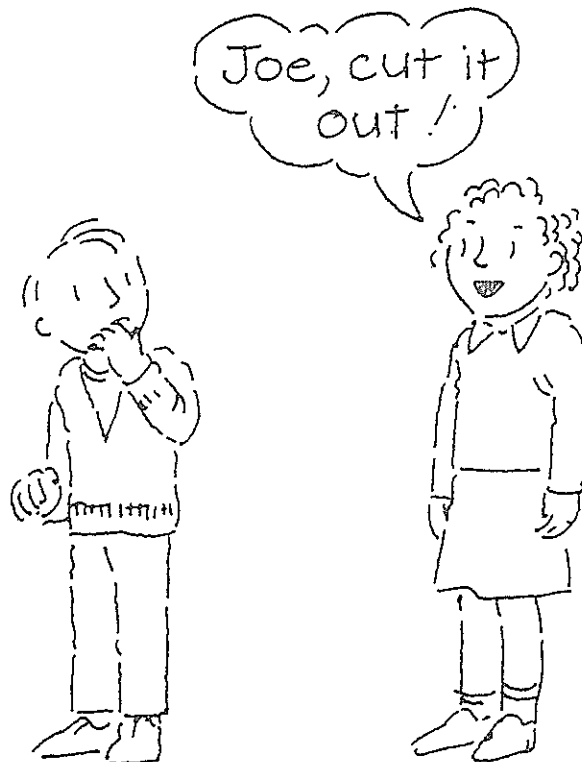
Don't argue with them.

Don't annoy them back.

Don't smile.

Don't use a whingeing tone of voice.

Don't try to get them into trouble.



IGNORING SOMEONE WHO IS GIVING YOU A HARD TIME

Stay cool.
Smart people know when
to walk away.

Do's

Stop looking at them.

Try to keep all the expression off your face. Look normal.

Turn your body away.

Do something else or talk to others near you.

If the other person keeps annoying you,
STAY COOL AND WALK CALMLY AWAY.

If they follow you and keep giving you a hard time you may consider asking an adult for support, but remember they may try to get revenge if you do, so do this only as a last resort.

Don'ts

Don't look at them.

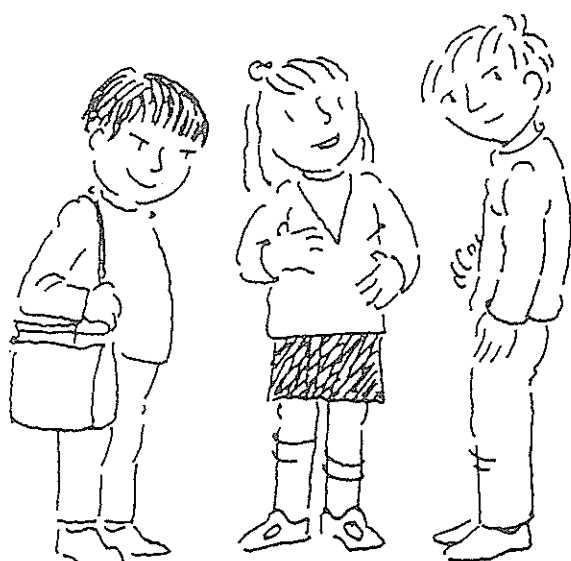
Don't smile.

Don't argue.

Don't insult back.

Don't get AGGRO.

Don't try to get them into trouble.



ASKING AN ADULT FOR SUPPORT

Stay cool.
When all else fails
you can ask for help.

Do's

Make sure you have tried other ways to deal with being given a hard time, *before* you ask an adult for support.

Make sure you really want to stop the annoying behaviour, not just get them into trouble.

Say "If you don't stop, I'll go and ask Mr Brown for support".

Approach a teacher, look in their eyes and stand tall.

In a firm voice, tell them what the problem is and what you have already tried to do to deal with it.

Don'ts

Don't ask for adult support until *after* you've tried to deal with it yourself.

Don't just try to get the other person into trouble.

Don't choose an inconvenient time to talk to the teacher (unless it's an emergency).

Don't look up in the air or down at the ground.

Don't use a whingeing or complaining tone of voice.

Don't keep threatening to ask for support. Just say it once and then do it.

