

Online Bullying: Help and advice for children and young people

People are telling me
that they want me to die,
I think I want to die too.

#BedtimeStories

 **PAPYRUS**
prevention of young suicide

What is bullying?

Bullying can take many forms and can happen anywhere.

It doesn't end at the school gates. Bullying is repeated behaviour by a person or a group that is directed at someone, and is intended to cause them harm, distress or fear. Bullying could include making threats to someone, spreading rumours about them, attacking them physically or verbally, or deliberately leaving them out of a group.

“My friends are humiliating me on Facebook. Suicide for me would mean that this all stops.”

What can I do if I am being bullied online?

Experiencing bullying of any kind is a very difficult and upsetting thing to have go through. When this bullying is taking place online, it may feel as though you cannot escape from the people who are making your life difficult. Even when you are at home, you don't feel safe from these nasty comments and insults – it may even be a picture being shared that you don't want others to see. You want it to stop, but what can you do?

Here is a step-by-step guide to help you:

1. It's not you, it's them

It is so important to know that being bullied is not your fault. Sometimes, people who bully can be manipulative and want you to believe that you deserve this. You don't. No-one does. No-one has the right to make you feel this way.

2. Don't react

Reaction and retaliation are two things people who bully strive for. Don't give it to them. Responding to bullying can empower them – silence cannot. Instead, surround yourself with people who make you feel good about yourself, or do something you enjoy. Think about switching off social media and spend more time with people you trust.

3. Save. Block. Report.

If someone is saying hurtful things to you, make sure that you screenshot it or take a picture if you cannot do so. Many social media sites have the option to report offensive comments and pictures. Make sure you report that comment, or the person themselves, and then block them. Similarly, if someone is sending nasty messages to you via text, make sure that you block their number. It's important that you protect your accounts by not sharing any passwords with your peers.

What can I do if I am being bullied online?

4. Tell someone

It is not always easy to open up about things that hurt or upset us, yet talking to someone we trust can make such a difference. Speaking to a trusted adult or a friend will allow that person to support and advise you about what you are going through.

5. Take action

Every individual's experience of bullying may differ depending on the situation. It is important that you are comfortable with the next step – whether it is telling the people who are bullying you to stop, or learning strategies to help you cope with the bullying you are experiencing. It may even be more beneficial to allow your parents or the school to address the situation.



What can I do if I see someone being bullied online?

If you see a friend being bullied, the best thing you can do is listen to that friend about how they feel, and reassure them that they are not to blame. It may be useful to report the bullying by using the social media report button or telling an adult, however, it is important that the person who is experiencing the bullying is happy for you to do this. If the person you see being bullied is an acquaintance who you know, offer them a kind word and let them know you are there for them if they need you.



Getting support with suicidal thoughts

Getting support with online bullying

If you find that bullying is leading to thoughts or feelings of suicide, or you have concerns that a friend or family member is having thoughts of suicide, contact HOPELineUK by phone, text or email and talk to our suicide prevention advisors in confidence. Our advisors can provide short-term advice and support around staying safe from suicide, help you to work on a plan to keep safe for now, and look at ways to manage and cope with suicidal thoughts.

HOPELineUK

Call: **0800 068 41 41**

Text: **07786 209697**

Email: **pat@papyrus-uk.org**

Opening times:

Mon-Fri: **10am-10pm**

Weekends: **2pm-10pm**

Bank holidays: **2pm-5pm**

Bullying UK has a confidential helpline, online chat and email support service that you can contact for more information: **<http://www.bullying.co.uk>**

Kidscape works with families affected by bullying and cyber bullying to provide advice, information and support. **www.kidscape.org.uk**

