



BULLYING AT SCHOOL

What is bullying?

Bullying is something done deliberately and repeatedly against a person or group of people to upset or hurt them, or to damage their property, reputation or acceptance by others.

Bullying can happen in person or online, through different digital platforms and devices. Bullying behaviour can be obvious, but it can also be hidden. Bullying can happen anywhere and anyone can be a bully, including a teacher, friend or family member.

Is bullying illegal?

Some bullying behaviours may be against the law. This can include bullying that happens over the internet, social media or mobile phones.

Bullying may be a crime if someone:

- causes you physical or mental harm and means to do it
- threatens to hurt or kill you
- stalks you
- damages your stuff on purpose or steals from you



It can be a crime to use a mobile phone or the internet to threaten or harass someone, or to send out (or threaten to send out) sexually explicit images or films of someone without their consent.



What do schools have to do?

Schools must try their best to make you feel safe and stop bullying from happening. All public schools are required to have anti-bullying plans in place to deal with bullying.

If you are being bullied at school or outside school, tell someone about what is happening. You can make a complaint to your school by meeting with the principal. Ask someone you trust to come with you, especially if you are scared or worried about it.

Your school should work with you to try and figure out a plan to stop the bullying. Your school should still be able to help you even if the bullying is happening after school or online.

If you have spoken to the principal and you are not happy with their response, you can make a complaint.

You can call the Legal Help Line on 1300 366 424 for more information.



Where can I get help?

Telling someone that you are being bullied is important. Your friends, a trusted adult, your teachers or your principal might be good people to talk to.

If you don't want to speak to someone you know, there are services that can help:

- call the Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
You can also chat online:
www.kidshelp.com.au
- call Headspace on 1800 650 890

The Office of the eSafety Commissioner has a complaint scheme for children and young people experiencing serious bullying online. They can help remove cyber bullying content from somebody's social media page or from an online service.

The Office of the eSafety Commissioner has the power to remove serious cyber bullying content from somebody's social media page or from an online service.

The eSafety Commissioner can also issue fines and penalties to online services and platforms that do not remove content. To report harmful content online or find out more information, visit: esafety.gov.au



Can I call the police?

If someone has threatened to harm you or has actually harmed you this is a crime and can be reported to police. If the police believe that it is appropriate, the bully could be charged with a criminal offence, or the bully may be cautioned against continuing with any further bullying. If a bully has damaged or stolen your things, this can be reported to the police.

Keep any evidence you have of the bullying like texts, voicemails or screenshots of webpages carefully saved and backed up. The correct contact details of the person who is bullying you will also be helpful if you decide to make a police report.

Contact us!

Would you like more information, resources, or a free visit to your school, organisation or group?

Email: cle@lsc.sa.gov.au

To apply for legal aid online, visit: www.lsc.sa.gov.au

Acknowledgments:

The Legal Services Commission gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Victoria Legal Aid and the National Children's and Youth Legal Centre in allowing the Legal Services Commission of South Australia to use and adapt existing content.

Call our free Legal Help Line:

1300 366 424



Disclaimer: The material in this factsheet is a general guide only. It is not legal advice. For legal advice about your own particular situation we encourage you to call the Free Legal Helpline on 1300 366 424. The legal information was correct at the time of publishing, however may change without notice.

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