

Bullying at school



Young people and the law

What is bullying?

Bullying is repeated conduct intended to cause **physical** or **emotional harm**.

Bullying can be face-to-face, online or via personal devices. Bullying may be obvious or it may be hidden.

Bullying can happen anywhere. Anyone can be a bully, including a teacher, friend or family member.

What can schools do?

Schools must try to stop bullying and make you feel safe. Public schools must have an **anti-bullying plan** in place to deal with bullying.

If you are being bullied at school or outside school, tell someone what is happening. You can complain 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.

Is bullying illegal?

Bullying is never okay. Some types of bullying are illegal. This can include bullying via the internet, social media or a device.

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 or harasses 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 you, or to share (or threaten to share) sexually explicit images or films of you without your consent.

Your school should work with you to make a plan to stop the bullying. Your school should still be able to help you even if the bullying happens after school or online. If you have spoken to the principal and you are not happy with their response, you can complain. Call the Legal Helpline for more.

Where can I get help?

Telling someone you trust that you are being bullied is important. You may wish to speak with a friend, family member, teacher, or another trusted adult.

If you want to speak to someone else, these services can help:

- call the **Kids Helpline** on **1800 55 1800** or chat online at kidshelpline.com.au
- call **HeadSpace** on **1800 650 890** or visit headspace.org.au.

The **eSafety Commissioner** has a complaint scheme for children and young people experiencing serious bullying online. They can help remove cyber bullying content from social media or a website.

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, visit esafety.gov.au.



Can I call the police?

You can call the police if someone hurts you, threatens to hurt you, or damages or steals your things. The police may charge the bully with a criminal offence or may caution them by warning them not to bully again.

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

Legal help for all South Australians

1300 366 424 Legal Helpline



Prefer to text?

Use our Legal Chat at lsc.sa.gov.au