

# How to stand up against bullying

You can do something to stop bullying if you know someone who is being harassed. This factsheet gives you info on what a bystander is, as well as the power you have as a bystander to do something about bullying. If you're really worried or not sure what to do you can get help, check out some of the useful online resources.

## What's a bystander?

A bystander is someone who sees or knows about bullying or other forms of violence that is happening to someone else. Bystanders can be either part of the bullying problem or an important part of the solution to stop bullying.

Bystanders can act in different ways when they see or know about bullying:

- > Some bystanders take the side of the bully by laughing at the victim, encouraging the bully or forwarding on text messages or messages on social media like Facebook and YouTube.
- > Some bystanders will give silent approval or encourage the bully by looking on.
- > Some bystanders may watch or know about the bullying but don't do anything. They may not know what to do or are scared. This group of bystanders knows that bullying is not ok.
- > Some bystanders will be supportive and take safe action to stop the bully, find help or support the victim

## Supportive bystanders

Just as we have human rights we also have responsibilities to respect and protect the rights of others. A supportive bystander will take action to protect the rights of others and use words and/or actions to help someone who is being bullied. If bystanders are confident to take safe and effective action to support victims then there is a greater possibility that they can stop bullying and the person who is bullied can recover.

People respect those that stand up for others who are bullied but being a supportive bystander can be tough. Sometimes it's not easy to work out how to help safely because bullying happens in different ways and places such as online, at work or school.

Some tips for being a supportive bystander include:

### You should read this if...

- > You see people getting bullied
- > You see people being harassed online
- > You want to help a friend who's being bullied

### Take action...

- > Talk to someone who can help like a parent, teacher or counsellor
- > Find out more about your legal rights when it comes to bullying
- > Learn more about what to do when someone doesn't want to seek help on ReachOut.com

- › *Make it clear to your friends that you won't be involved in bullying behaviour.*
- › *Never stand by and watch or encourage bullying.*
- › *Do not harass, tease or spread gossip about others, this includes on social networks like Facebook.*
- › *Never forward on or respond to messages or photos that may be offensive or upsetting.*
- › *Support the person who is being bullied to ask for help e.g. go with them to a place they can get help or provide them with information about where to go for help.*
- › *Report it to someone in authority or someone you trust e.g. at school to a teacher, or a school counsellor; at work to a manager; if the bullying is serious, report it to the police; if the bullying occurs on Facebook, report it to Facebook.*

## Get help

If you have been bullied or witnessed others been bullied and need help, you can chat to a bunch of the services on the help page on ReachOut.com, to work through what you can do.

The Australian Human Rights Commission (1300 656 419) has a complaint handling service that may investigate complaints of discrimination, harassment and bullying.

## Other useful resources

If people are being bullied on line, find out about the privacy, abuse and reporting features of the main social networks at the Easy Guide to Socialising Online.

Download the Cybersafety Help Button, a free Australian Government app designed to help people stay safe online.

To find out about cyberbullying and how to get help you can also go to the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) Cybersmart Program

The Australian Human Rights Commission has information on cyber racism and actions that can be taken to report cyber racism.

Bullying No Way provides information for schools.