

Bullying

At Australind Senior High School students and staff have the right to pursue learning in a safe, respectful environment. Behaviour management practices are built on a foundation of teaching and learning programs that allow all students to participate and succeed. As a school community we believe that home and school must share the responsibility for students to learn and demonstrate appropriate behaviour. By working together, we can provide more meaningful opportunities for students to behave responsibly and to respect themselves and others.

What is bullying?

The National Safe Schools Framework defines bullying as repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies, e.g. the internet or mobile devices. Conflicts or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

In short, bullying is a repeated pattern of harmful verbal, physical or social behaviour which involves the misuse of power. Cyber bullying is bullying through the internet or mobile devices.

Is every conflict between students bullying?

Not all aggressive or harmful behaviour between people is bullying. While conflicts and aggressive behaviour need to be addressed, it is important to be clear when these behaviours are not actually bullying. The definition of bullying has three critical aspects - a repeated pattern, the misuse of power within relationships, and behaviour which causes harm; all three aspects need to be present in order for behaviour to be called bullying.

What can parents do if their child tells them they are being bullied at school?

There are five key steps for parents if their child tells them they have been bullied:

1. Listen carefully to what your child wants to say
2. Reassure your child and ask open and empathetic questions to find out more details
3. Ask your child what they want to do and what they want you to do
4. Discuss with your child some sensible strategies to handle the bullying - *starting a fight is not sensible*
5. Contact Student Services on 9797 4400 and make the school staff aware of the problem.

What strategies can parents suggest to their child who is being bullied at school?

The Bullying. No Way! website provides information about various strategies. These can be tried if the child feels safe:

1. Walk away
2. Try to act unaffected or unimpressed
3. Try to deflect the bullying behaviour (e.g. pretending to agree in an offhand way 'okay, yeah, maybe')
4. Say 'No!' or 'Stop it!' firmly
5. Talk to a trusted adult at the school or at home. If parents are concerned, they need to contact Student Services for support on 9797 4400.

What should parents avoid telling their children to do?

Strategies not recommended for dealing with bullying include:

- fighting back
- bullying the person who has bullied them
- remaining silent about the problem.

What can parents do if they are told or suspect that their child is bullying others?

The Bullying. No Way! website provides information about things to do. If a parent suspects their child has been bullying others, they can talk to their child about:

- why they have been behaving this way
- taking responsibility for their behaviour
- how to sort out differences and resolve conflicts
- how to treat others with respect
- the effect of bullying behaviour on others
- the need to repair harm they have caused to others
- the need to restore relationships.

Who can parents or students talk to for help?

To talk to someone, go to:

- Kids' Helpline 1800 55 1800 or www.kidshelp.com.au
- Ngala Parenting Line
Phone: (08) 9368 9368 or 1800 111 546
<https://www.ngala.com.au/service/ngala-parenting-line-2/>

To report cyber bullying go to:

- Cyber safety help <https://www.education.wa.edu.au/cyber-safety>

To report bullying that may constitute a crime go to:

- Australian Federal Police www.afp.gov.au

For more information and support go to:

- ReachOut.com <https://au.reachout.com/>
- Beyondblue www.beyondblue.org.au
- Headspace www.headspace.org.au
- Australian Psychological Society
www.psychology.org.au
- Australian Counselling Association
www.theaca.net.au

For more information, related to bullying go to:

- Bullying. No Way! www.bullyingnoway.gov.au
(Sourced from <http://news.bullyingnoway.gov.au>)

