

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour which causes harm and is done deliberately and repeatedly – more than once. It is characterised by inequality and an abuse of power.

Bullying can be:

- physical – such as hitting, shoving, tripping or kicking.
- verbal – such as insults, threats, or nasty teasing.
- social – such as spreading ugly rumours or telling people not to be friends with someone.
- cyber – such as spreading nasty gossip about someone online or posting embarrassing pics without their permission.

Bullying affects many children and young people.

- Around one in five young Australians aged 15-19 say they were bullied in the past year.
- Almost half of young Australians ages 15-19 say they witnessed someone else being bullied in the past year.
- Australian children are at higher risk than the global average of being involved in cyber bullying.
- Half of young Australians aged 12-25 have been the targets of hurtful behaviour online at some point, such as nasty comments, rumours, threats or impersonation.

Cyber bullying attracts particular concern because it can go on 24/7 and can involve large numbers of people – some of them anonymous.

School communities are still central to most students' experience of bullying.

- School is the most common place where bullying occurs.
- Most students who are bullied online have also been bullied face to face.
- Around four out of 5 students who have been cyber bullied say they have also recently been bullied at school.

Most young Australians are aware of bullying, oppose it in principle, and will act in response if they are bullied. They also show strengths in their willingness to act and ask for help.

- Almost 87 per cent of young Australians aged 15-19 who have been bullied say they did things which helped them to deal with it. These included ignoring the bullying, removing themselves from the situation, talking to friends or family, or distracting themselves with other activities.
- Recent years have seen a rise in students' willingness to ask for help in relation to cyber bullying.

For more information or support:

Dolly's Dream Support Line

Dolly's Dream in partnership with Kids Helpline provides a free bullying and mental health 24/7 support service. Call 0488 881 033 to connect with a qualified counsellor.

Beacon App

Dolly's Dream has partnered with the Telethon Kids Institute on *Beacon*, the free cyber safety app which provides families with trustworthy, practical resources to help them confidently navigate their children's technology use and reduce associated harms.

Download Beacon now, for free, by scanning this QR code on your phone.

