

## What if the bullying continues?

If you have tried these suggestions but your child is still being bullied or harassed then you may contact your local district education office and talk to the Student Inclusion and Wellbeing Coordinator or the Improvement Coordinator or the District Director. The telephone number for your district office is available from the general switchboard for the Department of Education and Children's Services on 8226 1000.

They will work with you and the school and try to solve the problem.

## Need more information?

The following telephone numbers and internet websites can provide support and useful information about bullying and harassment.

- DECS Parent Helpline: 1800 222 696
- Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800
- Child and Youth Health Parent Helpline: 1300 364 100

Further information can be accessed from the DECS website: [www.schools.sa.gov.au/](http://www.schools.sa.gov.au/)  
Go to Parents & Community, go to Bullying & Harassment.

Information for students can be accessed on the website by going to Students, Bullying & Harassment and for teachers by going to Staff, Bullying & Harassment.

All states and territories support the Bullying No Way website at [www.bullyingnoway.com.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au). This website provides information supported by each state and territory.

## Your District Education Office is located at:

Department of Education  
and Children's Services

31 Flinders Street  
Adelaide 5000  
South Australia

GPO Box 1152  
Adelaide SA 5001

[www.schools.sa.gov.au/](http://www.schools.sa.gov.au/)

# Bullying and harassment at school

## Advice for parents and caregivers

All parents and caregivers want their children to feel safe and happy while they are at school.

This pamphlet provides advice about what to do if your child is feeling unsafe because he or she is being bullied or harassed.



Government  
of South Australia



Department of Education  
and Children's Services



## What is bullying?

Bullying and harassment are deliberate and repeated actions towards others which involve the misuse of power.

Bullying and harassment can take many forms. They are serious issues. Name-calling, teasing, making sexist or racist remarks or making negative comments about people are all forms of bullying and harassment.

Other types of bullying and harassment include spreading rumours, repeatedly taking someone else's lunch away from them, excluding them from games and groups or threatening them.

Although most bullying and harassment does not involve physical violence, it can still harm children and stop them getting the most out of school.

## How can I tell if my child is being bullied?

Children who are being bullied or harassed may not talk about it with their teachers or with the school's counsellors. They may be afraid that it will only make things worse or they may feel that it is wrong to tell tales.

This is why, as a parent or caregiver, you have an important part to play in helping the school, and your child, deal with bullying.

Some signs that a child is being bullied may be:

- unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches
- damaged or ripped clothing
- vague headaches or stomach aches
- refusal to go to school
- asking for extra pocket money or food
- tearfulness or depression.

## What should I do if my child is being bullied?

If your child is being bullied or harassed you may feel anxious or sad. However, it is important that you try to stay calm and take the following steps:

- Listen calmly to your child.
- Let your child know that telling you about the bullying or harassment was the right thing to do.
- Find out:
  - what happened
  - who was involved
  - where it happened
  - if anyone else saw it.
- Talk with your child about what should be done.

Make a note of what your child tells you to help you talk to the school.

These steps are also useful if you find out that your child has been involved in bullying or harassing others.

## Tell the school

Your child may not want to tell the school about the bullying or harassment. However, it is very important that you let the school know. Talking about the problem with your child's teachers is an important step in solving it.

If you believe that your child is being bullied or harassed or is bullying or harassing others, tell the school immediately so that you and the school, and your child, can work the problem out together.

Make a time to talk to your child's teacher or other school staff such as the school counsellor, the deputy principal or the principal.

Be as clear as possible about what happened.

Ask what else you can do to help your child and the school to stop the bullying or harassment from happening again.

Keep in touch with the school and let the staff know if problems continue.

## What will the school do?

All DECS schools work within the guidelines of the DECS School Discipline Policy.

Your child's school will also have its own behaviour management policy or behaviour code which sets out the rules for student behaviour and the consequences and strategies to be used when students behave inappropriately (which includes bullying or harassing others). You may ask your child's teacher or the school principal for a copy of the school's behaviour policy or code.

A range of consequences may be used for those who bully and harass others, including time spent out of the classroom or the playground or suspension from school.

Staff at your child's school may also:

- talk with the students involved and help them to solve the problem
- organise safe play spaces for students who have been bullied or harassed
- teach students about dealing with conflict and anger
- teach students about care and respect for themselves and others.