

Understanding Bullying

Why is understanding bullying so important from a community perspective?

The patterns of behaviour a person develops today are likely to be the patterns that are repeated throughout their life, unless a conscious choice is made to truly heal and change. Thus if we learn today to:

1. **Present as a victim** – *it's likely you will also present as a victim as an adult.*
2. **Present as a bully** – *its likely you also present as a bully as an adult.*
3. **Take responsibility for your behaviours today** – *its likely you will learn to take responsibility for all aspects of your life in the future and therefore positively influencing your future roles in life. This could be your work, your future relationships, partners, parenting, community involvement, how you feel about yourself ... the examples of infinite!*

If, as a society today we promote a blame/victim approach to life, our adults of the future will continue to portray this same approach to their life and teach it to future generations.

whereas...

If we promote a community of people who take responsibility for their own behaviours and ways of managing their own challenges in life, our adults of the future will continue to portray this approach to their life and continued generations!

Bullying equals:

- 2 people who perceive they are not equipped to respond to life and the challenges that life may be offering.
- 2 people who would benefit from support that offers them a means to redevelop skills allowing them to feel equipped to respond to the demands of life.
- 2 people who at the core are awesome, amazing, loveable beings. They have forgotten that, as have many or most around them.
- 2 people who simply need to be met the beauty-full souls they innately are, allowing them to connect to that in their own timing.

Why are some people more likely to be targets to bullying?

- The bully seeks out people they see as weaker than them or they see as a threat to them in some way.
- Weaker does not mean physically ... *it is how you feel about yourself that counts.*
- If you feel and present to others as:
 1. Self-confident, self-assured, humble, connected to and content with self, enjoy being you, someone who takes responsibility = less likely target.
 2. Weak, helpless, easily controllable by another, hesitant, bigheaded, vain, don't like self... VICTIM LIKE = likely target.

What do I look for in a bully?

- **A person who bullies does not look different to any other person.** They can be small or big, tall or short, quiet or loud – *the only common factor is they are ALL trying to get a reaction from another person.*
- **A person who uses bullying behaviour is trying to control the emotions, reactions and behaviours of another person in many different ways.** This is mostly by trying to hurt them in some way – *this can be physical or emotional hurt!*
- **A person who bullies will do things on purpose to make you go closer to red.** If someone is doing things on purpose to try and make you angry, sad, frustrated, it is likely they are trying to bully you.

Why do some people bully?

- **The person bullying often feels as though they are not completely equipped to respond to aspects of their life.** For example, some who bully may feel:
 - Unstable in their home life and/or often unmet by key people in their life.
 - Like they are struggling with their academics and feel like a failure with their school work.
 - Like they want to have friends but keep getting rejected. They then develop a pattern of behaviour leading to guaranteed rejection ... *this way rejection is within their control as they have ensured it WILL happen by their behaviour choice!*
 - Like the target is a threat or competition to them in some way. For example:
 - *you might take my friend away from me.*
 - *you're better at school work than me.*
 - *you always beat me in the running races.*
 - *you challenge me in some way!*



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- **The bully only bullies in an attempt to regain control over SOMETHING, ANYTHING in their life.** If they can control your emotions, feelings or behaviours, they feel like they have got some control back!
- **This is not an excuse for their bullying behaviour, rather an understanding of WHY they are bullying.** They are still responsible for their behaviours and the outcomes – *they just need the opportunity to learn how to manage their own challenges in life more responsibly.*

How do I know if someone I care about is involved in bullying in some way?

- Open, honest and non-judgmental communication between adult and child creates an environment where the child feels comfortable to talk to you about what's happening in their life. **NON-JUDGMENTAL is CRUCIAL!**
Without this environment, a person is more likely to withhold information that helps us understand what is happening in their life.
- Look for changes in people's behaviour. Behaviour signs indicating that 'something in life' is challenging for them ... bullying might be one of their challenges. Signs of this may include:
 - Any behaviour that is not this person's norm
 - Feeling sick before going to a place where bullying behaviour might occur
 - Withdrawn and held back
 - Intense emotional responses to things that don't seem a 'big deal'
- When changes in behaviour occur, we need to foster a supportive environment to help understand, from the child's or adult's perspective, what is going on in their life.

What can I do to stop the bullying?

	DO 👍	DO NOT 👎
1	Offer zero response to the bullying behaviour.	React to the bullying behaviour in any way. This gives them what they want – a reaction from you.
2	Always go away from the bullying behaviour – it's easier not to respond when you are not around it.	Stay with the bullying behaviour.
3	Always go to another person – one of your peers or a trusted adult. This way you are not alone with what is happening.	Go to an isolated place (toilet block, oval, bushland).
4	Keep telling an adult until you get the right help.	Keep your bullying experience a secret.
5	Act 'self assured' and 'confident' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tall body • Shoulders relaxed • Direct eye contact • Solid voice tone 	Act 'cocky' or 'unsure' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big noting self. • Threats to harm or retaliate. • Shrugged shoulders and head down. • Weak voice tone.
6	Remember: I am an awesome, amazing, lovable being. No one can ever change that.	Subscribe to and believe the message that the person is sending via their bullying stance. <i>This is only a reflection of them and how they feel about themselves.</i>

Tips to remember:

1. We are **all** responsible for our own behaviour choices and all our own outcomes in life. We are unable to change the behaviour of any other person (i.e. the person bullying) but we can change our own response and the behaviours we choose to use.
2. Reacting to another person by attacking them back is allowing them to see:
 - a. They are successful influencing you as you changed your behaviours away from code blue ... you now present as a victim.
 - b. They have got the outcome they wanted ... a reaction from you (bullying behaviour wins and target loses this round).
3. **You are an awesome, amazing lovable being – no words or actions from any other person can EVER change that.** Stay connected to this knowing and you will feel no one can influence you and how you feel about yourself.

For further information and support with bullying, please visit
www.fabic.com.au or contact us on 07 5530 5099.