

# Parent Guides by Project uP!



**Curated for you to have even  
better days with your children!**

# DISCLAIMER:

This parent guide has been curated for a parent to understand the basics of Bullying, and a few points that could help while dealing with it.

The prevalence of the suggestions made might differ from case-to-case. Please consider a child psychologist before taking any concrete actions.

Project uP

RK Plaza, 94, Sector 21, Rohini, New  
Delhi, Delhi 110086

+91 70426 84492

projectup11@gmail.com



**If you can relate to  
any of these, we  
have you covered!**

They keep teasing my  
daughter... but I don't  
know what to do about it!



I wish my parents were  
comfortable helping me  
with all the bullying!



**Just by scrolling through this guide,  
you can learn the basics of**  
**Bullying**  
**and how you can deal with it!**

# **This Parent Guide covers the following:**

- What is Bullying?
- What are its types?
- How does it impact the victim?
- How to help a child who is being bullied?
- How to help a child who is the one bullying?
- Resources.
- Frequently Asked Questions.

# What is Bullying?

Even though it does not really have a legal or a standard definition, bullying can be understood as the behaviour when one puts themselves in power, and then uses this power to harm or hurt somebody else, by abusing physically through actions or emotionally through words. The one getting hurt is the one being BULLIED, while the one with an intent to hurt is a BULLY (it is suggested to avoid using the label 'bully', keep reading to know why). Bullying does not have an age bracket; it can happen among children in a school, among colleagues at a workplace, and even in a household. In this guide, we're majorly going to discuss behaviours of bullying among children.

Almost one in three students (32%) has been bullied by their peers at school at least once in the last month (January, 2019).

Up to 28% of respondents who used the internet for more than four hours a day faced cyberbullying. (as of 2020)

More than one in three students (36%) has been involved in a physical fight with another student (as of 2018)

Almost one in three (32.4%) has been physically attacked at least once in the past year. (as of 2018)

In order to understand bullying or to help those who are being bullied, it is very critical to understand why a child chooses to bully in the first place. According to the American Psychological Association (APA), “bullying behavior is not just the result of individual characteristics, but is influenced by multiple relationships with peers, families, teachers, neighbors, and interactions with societal influences (e.g., media, technology).” So, the reason behind bullying can be rooted back to multiple traits, like, anxiety, depression, power dynamics (coming from a higher social status), peer/family influences.

## How does bullying impact the victim?

- Feel disconnected from school and not want to attend
- Have lower academic outcomes, including lower attendance
- Lack quality friendships at school
- Display high levels of emotion that indicate vulnerability and low levels of resilience
- Avoid conflict and be socially withdrawn
- Have low self-esteem
- Become depressed, anxious and lonely
- Have nightmares
- Feel wary or suspicious of others

It's not necessary for the bullied to show all/most of these simultaneously or even immediately after being bullied. These effects can come up later in life as well.

# Children who are frequently bullied:

are nearly **three times more likely** to feel like an outsider at school.

have **worse educational outcomes** especially in mathematics and reading tests

are also **more likely to expect to leave formal education** after finishing secondary school

are **twice as likely to feel lonely,** to be unable to sleep at night and to have contemplated suicide

**as compared to those who aren't bullied.**



Hi! I'm Chutki. Throughout this guide, I will show you examples of bullying in different spaces.

Bullying can occur in a lot of different situations. These are a few examples of Bullying in a cyber-space!

- Adolescents mock one of their teachers for being overweight in a video posted on the web, which is transferred, forwarded and shared by countless Web users. The man endures outcomes that influence him in his expert and individual life.
- A university student routinely gets messages or emails calling him a “loser”. He starts to avoid the social event and starts being intimidated by different students and skips his classes increasingly more frequently.
- Somebody posts a private photograph of a lady on the internet. She feels embarrassed and wronged. She makes a futile attempt to stifle the photograph.
- Repeating unfair remarks about First Nations and Inuit are distributed in response to articles on the web.

# Types of Bullying

A lot of people picture bullying as just showing aggression or insulting/devaluing the victim, however, there is much more to it than that. There are different types of bullying. The following are the most common ones:

## Physical Bullying

This involves aggressive physical actions, including physical intimidation, repeated hitting, kicking, tripping, blocking, pushing, and touching in unwanted and inappropriate ways.

## Verbal Bullying

This involves using words that will belittle the victim, calling names, shaming another's attitudes, giving threats, insulting, making statements personal to the victim's life, and even spreading rumours.

## Cyber-Bullying

This means using the internet, mobile phones, computers, or other technology to target or harass someone.

## Relational Bullying

This can be seen as manipulation. This form of bullying includes indirect ways like excluding the victim from a group of people or destructing their image among peers.

# How to help a child who is being bullied?

We understand that it might be hard for parents to tell if their child is being bullied. You can try looking out for the following signs:

- If your child is coming home with a bad mood (affected emotionally) or with bruises or marks (affected physically) on a regular basis
- If your child is losing interest in academics, or something they liked at school, or just making excuses to not attend school in general
- If your child is being apprehensive towards something specific regularly, with being able to give any explanations
- If your child is having a hard time making any friends at school

While you're still unsure if your child has been bullied, **avoid asking them directly if they have been bullied**, as it might leave a feeling of shame or might make them question their own behaviour.

Instead, try to ask them in a friendly way if they're okay. You can say something like- 'How are things at school? Do you feel excluded/disturbed by any kids?'

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Tell them- "I believe in you. I am glad you shared this with me. It is not your fault and I will do all that I can to help you."- and mean it!

Instead of taking over completely and fixing it for the child, ask them how they want it to be solved, and then further guide and support them.

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Talk to the concerned person at their school. Let them know you need their help in building a safer environment for your child and their peers.

Make sure they know they can talk to you at any time, and reassure them that things will be better.

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In the end, don't forget to tell them that being bullied does not mean they have to bully back. Try brainstorming possible future scenarios to inculcate non-harmful responses.

Here are a few examples of bullying in a family space...



- A child who is more inclined towards studies and academics might be teased using labels like 'nerd', 'uncool' and 'teacher's pet'. The child might be left out of collective activities or outings. The child might feel isolated.
- Children who don't score as well as their siblings might be made fun of. These children might be made to feel unworthy of their parents' attention, and might develop self-esteem issues later in life.
- Children who are more inclined towards subjects or issues that don't conform to what the society approves of, might be verbally or physically abused.
- A parent with anger or control issues might verbally or physically abuse their child for doing something they didn't approve of. For example, passing of rude comments when a chubby girl eats junk food.

# How to help a child who is the one bullying?

Using the word 'bully' puts the child and their parents on the defensive. It is a loaded term. Negative labels indicate to an individual that they are different from others; it shames them as people. We must remember that behaviour and identity are not one and the same. A child's behaviour can change over time.

Research has shown that despite their differences, children who bully may have one or more of the following traits:

- Be quick to blame others and unwilling to accept responsibility for their actions
- Lack empathy, compassion, and understanding for others' feelings
- Be bullied themselves
- Have undeveloped social skills
- Want to be in control
- Be frustrated, anxious, or depressed
- Not recognise their behaviour as bullying, and believe they are just joking or teasing

If your child is highly aggressive and shows any of the aforementioned traits, please take it seriously. **Parents may think that this is 'just a phase', and that it's common for children to engage in such behaviours. However, it can have a life-long impact on children.** To help your child, you can consider the following points:

- Often, children bully because they feel lonely, sad, or insecure. Talk to them about their mental health more often than you do.
- If you get to know from someone else that your child has been bullying someone, talk to them about it. Always remember, **communication is key!** Simply ask them why they find the need to do it.
- Even if you're not sure if they have been bullying someone or not, teach them values like empathy and helpfulness. Make sure they're not being bullied themselves at home.
- Try talking to their teacher at school, gain more insights on how they're doing in class, if they're able to concentrate properly in studies or not, and learn about their peer circle.

**Teach empathy, respect, and compassion.**  
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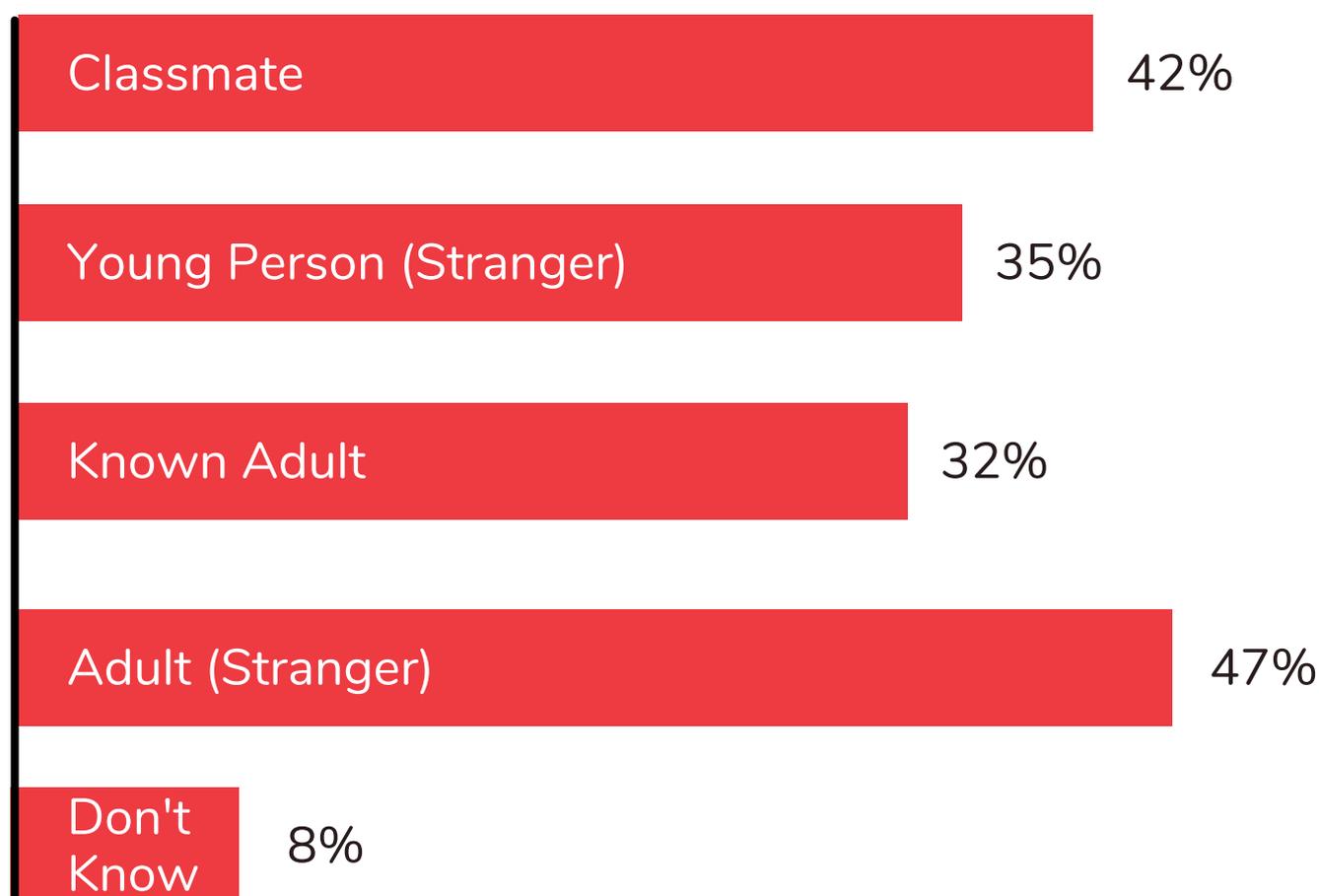
- A young man who does not coordinate or identify with the sexual stereotypes is routinely called a “fag” by certain students in the cafeteria and the rec center. Different students begin to overlook him and he experiences alienation and seclusion. He searches for each conceivable method to maintain a strategic distance from these spots
- A young lady with a mental inability much of the time has her tuque, umbrella or boots stolen on the school transport. She frequently cries during the trek and has assaults before going to class.
- A child with autism spectrum disorder is regularly trailed by a gathering of students who impersonate and fake him. The understudy being referred to ends up anguished.
- A trio of students consistently coerces another student in the school to give them his lunch. The understudy being referred to does not report the circumstance, dreading retaliations.

***Here are a few examples of bullying in a school...***



# Did you know that Indian children are the most cyber-bullied across the globe?

Cyber bullying among Indian children between March and April 2018, by type of bully:



Nearly 8 out of 10 individuals are subject to the different types of cyberbullying in India. Out of these around 63% faced online abuses and insults, and 59% were subject to false rumours and gossips for degrading their image.

# Support and Helpline Numbers

Police: Dial 112

(Police has Cyber Crime Cell that handles cases of cybersecurity)

Complaint: [cp.ncpcr@nic.in](mailto:cp.ncpcr@nic.in)

(National Commission for Protection of Child Rights)

Childline Number: 1098

Complaint: [www.childlineindia.org](http://www.childlineindia.org)

Complaint: [cybercrime.gov.in](http://cybercrime.gov.in)

(National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal)

Helpline number: 155260

Twitter Handlr: @CYBERDOST

Complaint: [complaint-mwcd@gov.in](mailto:complaint-mwcd@gov.in)

(The Ministry of Women and Child Development)

# Answering some common questions for you!

## How to healthily communicate with your child regarding bullying?

The foundations of any healthy communication are kindness and compassion. Parents must keep in mind that children are young and learning, and need to be assured that their feelings are validated.

Talk to your child in a manner that makes them comfortable and not feel they are being accused.

## Should you ask your child to ignore their bully?

**No!** That is an easier-said-than-done situation.

Ignoring the people who display bullying behaviour is in most cases the first natural response of the victim, and **to ignore them further provokes the bully to press on further.**

**Should you avoid the topic of bullying as long as your child is not affected by it?**

**NO!** Parents should tell their children about bullying, even if they are not involved in it or affected directly by it.

Establishing a friendly relationship right from the beginning helps in allowing your child to feel like they can approach you if they ever fall in a bullying situation.

**How to differentiate between bullying and normal fights between friends and classmates?**

With bullying, it must be kept in mind that it is a repeated behaviour.

It is not a one-time thing. Additionally, bullying involves a power imbalance.

It usually means someone with more physical strength or 'popularity' trying to bully the one who isn't 'strong' or 'popular' in comparison.

## **How to act if your child displays bullying behaviour?**

It is important that parents accept that their child can be the one showing signs of bullying behaviour. In such situations, a calm conversation is a way to go.

Ask your child what makes them want to do the things they do and tell them the implications of it. If they have prejudices, try to address them in a calm and educational manner. More often than not, bullying behaviour stems from households because children adopt what they see.

Creating a healthy and inclusive household environment is vital. Keep checking in with your child to see if there is any change in behaviour.

## **What are the most common signs to look out for?**

Lack of willingness to attend school, constant excuses such as stomach ache, fever, that have no source, fluctuation in academic performance, unknown scars and bruises, or any behavioural change of concern.

## **How can parents talk about cyberbullying?**

In the current digital age, it **falls on the shoulders of parents to tell their children** what sort of things are good and bad to put on the internet.

**Parents should also try to acquaint themselves** with the social media applications used by their children so that they are aware of the environment.

## **What are some subtle questions to ask your child?**

Ask your children **how their day was, and how their friends are, who they are friends with, etc.**

Taking interest in your child's life will help you notice signs and signals, but also will help **build a friendly relationship** with your child which would make your child comfortable in confiding in you.

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**In case of any  
doubts or  
feedback,**

**feel free to reach out to us at**

**hello@projectup.in.**

Project uP

RK Plaza, 94, Sector 21, Rohini, New  
Delhi, Delhi 110086

+91 70426 84492

projectup11@gmail.com

