

GET INVOLVED!

No Bullying in Upper Secondary Education



Utdanningsdirektoratet

Directorate for Primary and Secondary Education



WHAT IS BULLYING?

Each year many pupils are bullied – both in upper secondary schools and in training establishments. Bullying is a destructive element in a good social environment. But the worst thing about it is that in many cases bullying ruins the lives of the victims.

In this leaflet you can read more about what we mean by bullying, and what you can do to help combat bullying in upper secondary school.

Bullying means:

- Negative actions directed towards a particular person
- That these negative actions are repeated over a period of time
- That bully (bullies) and victim do not possess equal strength or power

The common factor for the negative actions is that the victims find them disagreeable. The actions can cause physical pain or a mental reaction such as anger, fear or feeling hurt or sad. Therefore they are often termed offensive words or actions.

TYPES OF BULLYING

There are several types of bullying:

- **Psychological bullying**
 - verbal (ridicule, use of nicknames, offensive expressions, unpleasant messages or threats via mobile phones or the Internet)
 - Non-verbal (deliberate use of body language, such as looks, facial expressions, turning your back on someone)
- **Social bullying**
 - for example deliberately excluding somebody from social relations (exclusion)
- **Physical bullying**
 - physical contact (hitting, kicking, pulling hair)
 - material (damage to clothes or property)

HOW MANY PUPILS ARE BEING BULLIED?

We have no exact figures to show how many pupils are being bullied in upper secondary school. But we have reason

to believe that between 3 and 5 per cent of all pupils at this level are bullied as often as once a week or more often.

“Between 3 and 5 per cent isn’t that many,” you may think. But when you consider that what we are talking about is a systematic abuse over time of another person’s self-esteem and integrity, you will realise that these are really serious actions. They may not occur very often, but on the other hand they do a lot of damage to the victims.

SPECTATORS

Are you an unwitting participant in bullying? It is possible that you are. Many people know that something is going on that could perhaps be termed bullying. But very few people do anything about it! So bullying often has spectators – the people who know something is going on and watch it, do not take sides with either party and stay passive. It is easiest to turn your back on bullying and hope it will stop. But bullying does not stop on its own. So it is important that you tell someone about the bullying, either the bullies themselves or one of the staff at school. If you find it difficult to talk about it alone, find someone to do it with you!

According to Section 9a – 3 in the Education Act, all school employees are now obliged to investigate, to tell class teachers or the school management, and if necessary intervene themselves if they receive information or suspicion that a pupil is being bullied.

As a pupil you have a moral responsibility to do exactly what the school staff are obliged to do. If you see bullying going on, or get to hear that somebody is being bullied, then you should get involved! Tell the class teacher about what is going on, or consider intervening yourself directly in order to stop it.





THINK ABOUT IT...

Friendly teasing and joking is not the same as bullying... or is it?

What some people consider innocent fun can easily be experienced completely differently by the victim. The threshold varies when it comes to what each of us experiences as disagreeable.

Besides, offensive words and actions can hurt or frighten, even when they happen on only one occasion.

So therefore think about how the things YOU say or do can be experienced by other people!



The Package of Material – GET INVOLVED!

The package of material called “GET INVOLVED!“ No Bullying in Upper Secondary Education” is part of the current national efforts against bullying in schools, and is closely linked to the Manifesto against Bullying. You can find more information about this on <http://mobbing.utdanningsdirektoratet.no>

The packet contains

- a guide for the school’s administration and staff
- a brochure for the student council with ideas and hints on how to create a good social environment and prevent bullying
- posters, information leaflets and stickers

It will be helpful to use this material in a goal-oriented and systematic long-term effort to combat bullying. Experiences from preventive efforts show that it is this sort of effort that gives positive and lasting results.

All the material in the package can be ordered from the order department bestilling@ls.no ¹

Electronic versions of the guide, the brochure of ideas and this information folder are also to be found on the website <http://lom.ls.no> ¹

¹ The electronic version and the package are available in norwegian only.



All pupils have the right to a school environment that is free from bullying, violence, sexual harassment, racism and other offensive behaviour.

Briefly, this is what Section 9a – 3 in the Education Act is all about:

- Schools must actively and systematically strive to promote a good psychosocial environment, where the individual pupil can feel secure and socially included.
- If a member of the school's staff suspects that a pupil is subjected to bullying, discrimination, violence or racism, he/she must immediately alert the school administration, or if necessary intervene him/herself.
- If a pupil or a parent/guardian asks for efforts to be implemented against bullying or other offensive behaviour, the school must immediately treat it as an individual case. This will allow the pupil or parent/guardian the right to complain if the school does not deal with the case within a reasonable period of time.

If the rights determined by Section 9a – 3 are deliberately or negligently unfulfilled, there may be penalties of fines or prison sentences of up to 3 months.

If you, as a pupil, experience bullying, it is important that you talk about it with someone you trust. This could for example be a member of your family, a friend, a teacher or a school counsellor, an environmental therapist, the school nurse or a counsellor from the Educational and Psychological Service.

If you, as a pupil, become aware of or see that someone is being bullied, then tell a member of the school's staff, or consider intervening yourself in order to stop the bullying.



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