

# Bullying

Winter 2008

## What is Bullying?

Bullying happens when someone hurts or scares another person on purpose, and the person being bullied has a hard time defending himself or herself. Usually, bullying happens over and over. Examples of bullying:

- Punching, shoving and other acts that hurt people physically
- Spreading bad rumors about people
- Keeping certain people out of a “group”
- Teasing people in a mean way
- Getting certain people to “gang up” on others

Bullying can happen online and is called cyber bullying. Here are some examples:

- Sending mean text, email or instant messages
- Posting pictures or messages about others on blogs and websites
- Using someone else’s user name to spread rumors or lies about someone

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## DO YOU BULLY OTHERS?

Put a check in the boxes if you’ve done these things before:

- There’s a boy or girl (or maybe more than one) whom you’ve repeatedly shoved, punched or physically pushed around in a mean way just because you felt like it.
- You had someone else hurt someone you don’t like.
- You’ve spread a mean rumor about someone in a note, in conversation, or through email or instant messaging.
- You and your friends have regularly kept one or more kids from hanging out or playing with you.
- You’ve teased people in a mean way, calling them names, making fun of their appearance, or the way they talk, dress, or act.
- You’ve been part of a group that did any of these things, even if you only wanted to be part of the crowd.

If you checked any of these boxes, you’re not alone. All over the country, in all types of neighborhoods and schools, there are young people who bully others. Bullying hurts people, but it doesn’t have to be this way. Think about what you are doing and how it affects others. Making someone else feel bad shouldn’t make you feel good.

### Need Someone to Talk to About Bullying?

Here are some ideas:  
Mr. K  
Your teacher  
Or  
Any adult you feel comfortable with.

**Remember, if you’re being bullied, its not your fault. Nobody deserves to be bullied!**

## Milton's Story: Putting an End to Being Bullied

On Wednesday, when I got on the bus after school, a boy named Justin tuck out his foot when I was walking by him, and I fell flat on my face. He and his friends—Doug and John—laughed. When Mr. Jones, my bus driver, looked up in the mirror to see what had happened, Justin hopped out of his seat to “help” me pick up my stuff and said, “Man, Milton, you gotta be more careful!”

Mr. Jones asked me if I was OK. I was so embarrassed. So I said, “I’m fine.” I found a seat as far away from Justin and his friends as I could. I thought that maybe Justin and his friends would leave me alone if I just kept away from them.

On Thursday, when I got on the bus in the morning, I had to walk by Justin to find a seat. This time, he grabbed my lunch bag away from me and threw it to Doug on the other side of the bus. Doug squashed it with his foot and then handed it back to me, saying, “Milton, I think you dropped your lunch. Better be more careful, buddy.”

This all happened so fast that Mr. Jones didn’t see a thing. When I finally found a seat, my face was bright red. I was really embarrassed, and also mad. My lunch bag was totally flattened, and all of the kids on the bus were looking at me. I sat there thinking, “Who do these guys think they are, anyway?” I thought about just letting it go and hoping that they’d get tired of picking on me. But then, I noticed that Doug and Justin had started picking on a couple of other kids who looked scared to death.

I thought to myself, “Justin and his friends are never going to get tired of picking on kids on the bus. If they get bored picking on me, they’ll just find someone else to torture.”

So, when the bus pulled up at school to let us off, I made sure that I was the last one off the bus. I stopped at the front of the bus, and Mr. Jones looked at me and said, “Hey, Milton. How’s it going?” I took a deep breath and said, “Not so good, Mr. Jones.”

He frowned and asked me what was up. I told him what had happened during the last couple of days on the bus. He asked me some questions and said he was sorry that he hadn’t seen what Justin and his friends had been up to. Mr. Jones said he’d talk with Ms. Fife, the Assistant Principal, about the bullying. Then, he said, “We’ll do everything we can to make sure they stop, Milton. Thanks for telling me. I’ll bet that was kind of hard to do.”

As I was walking to my homeroom, I saw that Mr. Jones had gotten off the bus and was talking with Ms. Fife, who was on bus duty. I felt a little sick to my stomach, wondering what they’d do and whether things would get better...or worse. That afternoon, before our bus pulled away from school, Ms. Fife boarded the bus and stood at the front. She asked everyone to be quiet and then said that she and Mr. Jones had a few announcements to make.

Ms. Fife said that they knew that some kids had been bullying others on the bus, and that she had already talked with those kids. Everyone turned to look at Justin, Doug, and John, who kind of stared at their feet and looked embarrassed.

She said that bullying on the bus was not going to be allowed. Mr. Jones said that he was going to be watching closely and he also asked us to report any bullying that we saw.

Well, believe it or not, Justin didn’t stop. The very next day, he sat in the seat behind mine and said, “You’re going to pay for squealing on me, Milton.” I guess Mr. Jones was watching pretty closely, because just then he yelled, “Justin! I want you to move to this seat right behind me, now!”

That was the last that I ever saw Justin on the bus. When I asked a few of my friends what had happened, they said that Justin had been kicked off the bus. His parents now had to drive him to school every day, and he was in big trouble with them.

Now, things are back to normal on the bus. Doug and John still ride the bus, but they don’t cause any more trouble. Mr. Jones keeps a pretty close eye on them, though, just in case.

### Are You Being Bullied? If so, here are some things you can do to stop it:

- Tell an adult
- Stay in a group
- If it feels safe, stand up to the person bullying you
- If you’re being bullied on-line, don’t reply
- Join clubs or take part in activities where you’ll meet other kids.

Source: [www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)