

Bullying: top tips for drivers

Kidscape is here to help. We are here to help children and families going through a bullying situation, and we are here to work with adults to help keep children safe. **We can only stop bullying by working together.**

What is bullying?

Bullying is any behaviour that is intended to **hurt**, is **repeated** and where it's hard for the person or people on the receiving end to defend themselves (in other words - the **person doing the bullying has the power**).

What does bullying look like?

Children tell us that the most frequent form of bullying is name calling (don't believe the old sticks and stones rhyme - words can hurt as much or more). Bullying can also be physical and emotional, and can take place face to face and online (cyberbullying).

Targeting 'difference'

Children that bully often target any kind of 'difference'. We are all unique but for some of us there may be something which means we stand out. Be particularly alert to any behaviour that targets someone for their race or faith, gender, sexuality or disability. This may constitute a hate crime.

Difference between bullying and banter

'Banter', or teasing is very often fun between friends and family but it can slip into bullying behaviour if the person on the receiving end stops finding it funny.

What to do if you see a child being bullied

- 1) **Let everyone know you're there, you're watching and you're listening.** Greet the children on their way on and off the bus. If you feel safe to do so, tell them you care about their safety and will be looking out for any behaviour that causes concern.
- 2) **Share concerns.** If you see a child or children being targeted or you have any concerns about a child, then let either your manager, or the school know what is happening.
- 3) **Keep a record.** Note down your concerns so that if your manager or the school doesn't seem to be taking any action and you are worried about a child, you can share with someone else (e.g. the local children's services team).

4) Don't underestimate what you see. If a child is being physically or sexually assaulted on your bus, or subject to sexual harassment or harassment targeted at their race, faith, gender, sexuality or disability then you must take action. Contact the police if a child is at immediate risk of harm and report any bullying, harassment or assault.

5) Set standards. Work with your manager (if applicable) and the school to agree acceptable standards of behaviour on the bus. This should include how pupils get on and off the bus, use of language and physical behaviour. Agree a process for dealing with any breaches of this behaviour policy.

Who can help

These are organisations that offer advice and help to children and teenagers going through a bullying situation:

Kidscape www.kidscape.org.uk (we also offer a Parent Advice Line).

Childline www.childline.org.uk

The Mix www.themix.org.uk (for under 25s)

YoungMinds www.youngminds.org.uk