

Bullying—What It Is and What YOU Can Do About It

By Gabe Nae'ole



The word bully often brings to mind a big kid, usually a boy, on the playground stealing lunch money and pushing smaller kids around. But bullies can be either boys or girls, and they can be big or small. They can be different in the ways they try to hurt other people, but they are the same in one important way: all of them want to hurt or control someone else on purpose.

Before we talk about appropriate responses to bullying, it's important to know the different types of bullying and the different roles involved in bullying situations.

Three different types of bullying are *verbal*, *physical*, and *relational* bullying. *Verbal bullying* happens when a person uses words to show his or her power and to make others feel badly, usually by teasing and taunting. This type of bullying happens most often with both boys and girls. *Physical bullying* is when the bully actually strikes another person's body—hitting, punching, kicking, or pushing. Boys are more likely to use and experience this type of bullying, but girls use it too. *Relational bullying* is when the bully uses relationships to hurt someone. This happens when the bully refuses to talk to or play with someone, leaves someone out of games, or even convinces a

group of people to be mean, too. Girls use and experience this kind of bullying more often than boys.

Bullying situations involve three different roles:

the *bully*, the *bullied*, and the many *bystanders*. The *bully* is the person who wants to feel powerful and intends to harm someone else. The *bullied* is the person who is getting teased, picked on, or hurt. The *bystanders* are the ones who are watching the bully be mean to someone else. Not enough people realize that *bystanders* actually have a lot of power, and they can help stop bullies!

If YOU are getting bullied...

- **Tell an adult you can trust.** And if he or she doesn't do anything about it, keep telling until someone does.
- **Stay in a group.** Bullies like to pick on kids who are by themselves a lot. Hanging out in a group makes someone less of a "target."
- **If it feels safe, try to stand up to the bully.** The bully will probably keep bullying if they think you won't do anything about it. Sometimes even saying "knock it off" and then walking away can stop a bully.
- **Join clubs or activities where you can make new friends.** Sometimes, just having more interests and a larger group of friends can help you feel safe and feel better about life. Friends are great!

If YOU see someone else getting bullied...

- **Report the bullying to an adult.** Bullying is NOT OKAY. Many people who are bullied are too scared to tell a grown up; but you can help them out! Step up and do the right thing!
- **Support the person who is being bullied.** Sometimes, the best thing you can do for someone who is being bullied is be their friend. You would be surprised how much of a difference that makes!
- **Stand up to the bully.** If you feel safe doing this, tell the bully that he or she is wrong and should stop. If you don't feel comfortable speaking up, you can turn around and walk away. If everyone watching were to turn around and walk away (getting help would be good, too), the bully would lose the audience. We know how bullies love the power of having people watch!

For more information about preventing bullying, other types of violence, or substance abuse, visit Pacific Resources for Education and Learning's (PREL's) Nā Hoa Ho'ōla (Partners That Work to Bring Health) website at www.nahoahoola.org. To learn about PREL's *Ho'oikaika Kino* (Strengthen the Body) curriculum to prevent substance abuse and violence in upper elementary grades, please contact Miki Cachola-Solomon at cacholam@prel.org.

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For more information on Nā Hoa Hō'ola see the back cover of this publication.

