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## What is Bullying?

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**Bullying happens** when a person with greater power takes unfair advantage of a less powerful person and these negative actions are repeated into a pattern of behavior. Bullying means there is an imbalance of power so that the victim cannot successfully defend himself or herself. Power can be physical size, strength, numbers, social standing, verbal skill, economic power, cultural or ethnic power, level of intelligence, popularity, gender, etc. Bullying is the persistent abuse of an underdog. The child who bullies watches for opportunities to pick on the victim and the victim feels tormented and defenseless.

### Characteristics of those who bully

1. Strong desire for power and control over others.
2. Physical strength greater than average for own age, and greater than victims.
3. Age usually older than victim's.
4. Average or above average self-esteem.
5. Charming manipulators.
6. Low-average to above-average popularity outside of own group of followers.
7. Remorseless.
8. Continual tormenting of victims.
9. Lack of empathy or understanding for others, lack of conscience.
10. Defiant attitude toward authority, refusal to follow rules sometimes violent behavior toward parents and teachers.
11. Actions become worse when a victim fights back.
12. Thrive on dominance and control.
13. Enjoyment in bullying others.

### Alarming Stats:

**47% of high school students** say they were bullied, teased, or taunted in a way that seriously upset them in the past year (*Character Counts Study by the Josephson Institute of Ethics*).

The study reports the responses from 43,321 high school students.




### For More Information

Kentucky Center for School Safety



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# Who are the victims?

**Many episodes of violent crime** have their roots in a bully/victim struggle. However, there are certain individuals who are most often targeted for bullying. Traditionally, we have thought of these victims as the passive type. Research has revealed that there is another group of individuals who are often targeted as well. These have been “provocative” victims, because they provoke, or hassle others.

### Characteristics of Victims

1. Rarely tell about being bullied because they think will make matters worse.
2. Don't think adults can or will help.
3. Are repeatedly teased in a nasty way, called names, belittled, ridiculed, intimidated, degraded, threatened, given orders, dominated.
4. Are made fun of and laughed at by others.
5. Get picked on, pushed around, shoved, punched, hit, kicked.
6. Are involved in “quarrels” or “fights” in which they are unfairly defenseless and from which they try to withdraw (maybe crying).
7. Have their books, money or other belongings taken, damaged or scattered around.
8. Have bruises, injuries, cuts, scratches or torn clothing that cannot be given a natural explanation.
9. Are (often) alone and excluded from the peer group during breaks and lunch time, do not seem to have a single good friend.
10. Are chosen among the last in team games.
11. Sometimes carry weapons to protect themselves.
12. Show sudden or gradual deterioration of school work.

### Remember...

**long-term effects of bullying include:**

- ▶ Poor academic performance
- ▶ Anxiety and loss of interest in socializing
- ▶ Aggression or violence toward others
- ▶ Depression and suicidal thoughts




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