



SCOUTS UNITAIRES DE FRANCE IN LONDON

LET'S STAMP OUT BULLYING TOGETHER

This guide has been written to help you deal with bullying and take steps to reduce the chances of it happening in your Group or unit. **It is the responsibility of all adults in the Scouts Unitaires de France in London to develop a caring and supportive atmosphere, where bullying in any form is unacceptable.** Ensuring that scouting activities take place in a caring and supportive environment means maintaining moral and being aware of any changes. Regrettably, at some time we will have all experienced bullying, either as a victim or observer of someone else's misery. Maybe we have unwittingly caused someone else to be miserable?

What is bullying?

Bullying is a social problem found in all walks of life. Some may say 'it's just part of growing up', but many will be aware of the misery bullying causes. It is all too easy to ignore an instance of bullying and assume it is a one-off, or that young people will sort out their differences. Often this is not the case. Young people feel powerless to stop bullying and may carry its effects long into their adult lives. Bullying can take many different forms, some less obvious than others.

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour that may be repeated over a period of time.

It doesn't have to be a long-running series of incidents – it can be any occasion where someone deliberately intimidates or harasses another. Half of primary school age children and more than one in four secondary school students say that they have been bullied within the last year. These are some of the types of bullying they describe:

- Being called names, laughed at, threatened
- Teased, gossiped about
- having money, mobile phones or other possessions taken
- Being hit, pushed, pulled, pinched or kicked
- Receiving abusive or threatening text messages or emails
- Being ignored or left out
- Being attacked or abused because of their religion, gender, sexuality, disability or appearance

Name-calling is the most common form of bullying that is reported. It can include calling someone names because of their appearance, their accent, because they're not good at something, for any reason or even for no reason at all. Where or when do you draw the line between bullying and simply having some good-natured fun? ***Well, if the person which it's aimed at doesn't see it as fun, if the teasing becomes nasty, hurtful or vicious, it becomes bullying.***



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Who can be bullied?

Everyone. Some individuals may be picked on because of differences in their age, height, hair colour or sex.

Adults can also feel the pain of bullying behaviour. What are the effects of bullying?

Bullying hurts. It makes people feel that it's somehow their fault or that there is something wrong with them. It can have a devastating effect on young people's self-esteem and destroy their confidence. They may become more withdrawn and insecure, more cautious and less willing to take any sort of risk. It can leave people feeling lonely, isolated and very unhappy. Bullying has an effect on everyone, not just those directly involved. Some feel they can only stand on the sidelines and do nothing because if they intervene they run the risk of being turned on themselves. This makes them feel helpless and guilty.

How do I recognise the signs of bullying?

Bullying often happens away from others and as a result bullying is not always easy to detect. But you can watch for signs, for example, the person who:

- hesitates to come to meetings or join in activities
- asks to change groups or patrols
- is the last one to get picked for a team for no apparent reason, or get picked on when people think your back is turned
- is often the target of jokes
- is reluctant to go to certain places or work with certain individuals
- has money or personal possessions go missing
- has bruising or some other injury
- is quiet and nervous, withdraws from everybody else and becomes quiet and shy (especially in the case of people who are usually loud and noisy)
- is usually quiet but becomes suddenly prone to lashing out at people, both verbally and physically
- refuses to talk about the problem

How can I help?

If someone tells you that they are being bullied, the first and most important step is to listen. Remember to observe the principles in the "Young People First" Code of Good Practice when dealing with sensitive issues. Ask the young person if they are ready to address the issue and how. Create an atmosphere where they feel comfortable and secure and able to tackle the problem in a positive way.

You can make differences in the following ways:

The Scout's Law is a guide to respectful behaviour and these should form the basis for supporting anyone who is being bullied, as well as the bullies:

- 2. A Scout is loyal to his country, his parents, his chiefs and his subordinates*
- 3. A Scout's duty is to be useful and to help others.*
- 4. A Scout is a friend to all, and a brother to every other scout.*
- 5. A Scout is courteous and chivalrous.*



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Furthermore you can make a difference by:

- Acknowledging that bullying is a problem and happens in all levels of society.
- Be aware of the potential problems bullying may cause.
- Watch for the early signs of distress.
- Encourage young people to tell.
- Calm the situation as soon as possible.
- Offer support to help young people who are bullied.
- Agree a “safe word” with a young person who is being bullied and needs your attention discreetly.
- Try to establish from the young person being bullied if there is a particular time or place where the bullying takes place and be supportive during those times.
- Give the young person being bullied a “buddy”, someone they can talk to if they feel uncomfortable or threatened.
- Help young people feel good about themselves.
- Make it clear to young people and adults that bullying behaviour is unacceptable in Scouting and in wider society.
- Try to find constructive ways to help those who are bullying change their behaviour.
- Punishing bullies doesn’t end bullying.
- It is important to stress that it is the bullying behaviour that is disliked, rather than the person.
- Work with the young people in your section to create an Anti-Bullying Code (see below).

Involving Parents...

We should always aim to work in partnership with parents so that they are made aware of the situation and the actions we are proposing. Where appropriate suggest other sources of advice and help e.g. one of the national help lines (see below).

Where a young person is responsible for bullying others, think about whether it would be appropriate to talk to the parents to help resolve the situation. It may be that the parents have encouraged the behaviour e.g. told them to stand up for themselves. If the parents disagree with your approach it could make the situation worse. Cooperation is very important in resolving bullying behaviour and ensuring that the bully gains a better understanding of the consequences and the need to change. Get their agreement to put the Anti-bullying Code into practice at all times.

If all else fails, contact your Unit Chief, Group Chief or Safeguarding Representative for more advice.

How to prevent bullying from happening in the future?

- Help to create an atmosphere of friendship and respect amongst the whole group.
- Be a good example to others in your unit and expect others to do the same.
- Plan activities which develop friendship, working together, and fairness. Create sketches for the



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members to enact during meetings, share some positive thoughts at the end of a campfire.

- Discuss the consequences of bullying with your unit and let young people share their thoughts and experiences.
- Young people are more likely to stick to rules they themselves have created. Together with your group create a policy or charter for dealing with bullying behaviour so that you can:
 - improve members' self confidence
 - promote good behaviour in your unit
 - create an good environment in your unit where bullying behaviour is less likely to happen
 - improve everyone's awareness of bullying and its consequences
 - make sure everyone is aware of the action that may be taken if bullying takes place.

An example Anti-Bullying Code for your unit

1. **WE DO** have respect for everyone as individuals whatever their differences.
2. **WE DO** take bullying seriously – it's not 'just a bit of fun'.
3. **WE DON'T** accept any bullying behaviour – name-calling, physical violence, threats, nasty rumours in person or by text or email, excluding them from games and activities or any other way of making people feel bad.
4. **WE DO** report any bullying we see whoever it's aimed at. It should be reported to a Leader or someone else we trust like our Patrol Leader.
5. **WE DO** create an atmosphere of respect for one another and take any form of bullying seriously.

Adults and Leaders in Scouting

Not only children are bullies or are bullied. Adults can sometimes behave like a bully and sometimes they can be the victims of bullying. **Adults and leaders in Scouting must never become party to bullying in any form not only amongst the children in their care but amongst adults in the whole Organisation.**

Bullying carries on because of the fear it creates

– not just for those who are bullied, but also for others who witness the bullying. To stop bullying it is necessary to break the cycle once and for all. **Bullying behaviour will never be tolerated.**

Help lines and useful internet sites

- Childline: www.childline.org.uk 0800 1111
- NSPCC: 0808 800 5000
- Beat Bullying: www.beatbullying.org.uk
- National Bullying Helpline - contains various helpguides for both children and adults; www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk 0300 323 0159
- http://www.kzoo.edu/psych/stop_bullying/for_kids/what_would_you_do.html