

Student Services

Leading adolescent and child psychologist Dr Michael Carr-Gregg has put together six webisodes to give parents practical tips to deal with bullying. Below is a transcript of his practical advice about 'What is bullying'. The webisode is available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b597hE4k_ic

What is bullying?

Parents often find it difficult to tell the difference between bullying and the normal interaction between young people as they grow up and find their way in the world.

The easiest part of that is deciding what is not bullying.

All students will, from time to time, get into conflict with other students.

One-off incidents of conflict with an individual or a group, or an act of nastiness or spite, or random acts of aggression or intimidation, are not generally considered bullying.

While it can be upsetting, it is actually normal for young people to have a mutual argument or disagreement from time to time.

Learning to work through our differences and come to suitable outcomes is a really important part of growing up.

Bullying goes further than that. Bullying is the **deliberate** and **repeated** abuse of power by one student over another.

This power can be in many different forms, including physical strength, intelligence, wealth, or popularity.

Bullying has been reported as occurring in every school and kindergarten or day-care environment, in which it has been investigated.

It impacts on one in four young people and can happen in many different environments, including school, at home, and even on the sporting field - even at work.

So what are the typical bullying behaviours?

The National Centre Against Bullying defines five different types of bullying:

1. **Physical** bullying. This includes hitting, poking, tripping, pushing or damaging someone's belongings.
2. **Verbal** bullying, which involves name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks and verbal abuse.

Student Services

3. **Social** (or covert) bullying, which is where lies or rumours are spread, or someone plays a nasty joke, mimics, or deliberately excludes someone else.
4. **Psychological** bullying, where someone is threatened, manipulated or stalked.
5. And finally, **cyber** bullying, where someone uses technology (for example, email, mobile phone, chat rooms or social networking sites) to bully verbally, socially, or psychologically.

We also know that, generally, the type of bullying boys and girls experience is different.

We know boys, for example, are physically bullied more often than girls, and that girls are generally more often involved in indirect forms of aggression, such as excluding others, spreading rumours, or peer-group rejection.

While the bullying methods may vary, we know that being bullied at school can seriously affect the **physical** and **mental health** of students.

Identifying bullying is the **first step** in stopping it.