

# SAY NO TO BULLYING

Studies show one in four Australian children is affected by bullying. Help them understand the issue.



## CHILDREN'S LEGACY

Alannah and Madeline Mikac were aged six and three when they died with their mother in the Port Arthur massacre in 1996. The national charity set up in their memory - the Alannah and Madeline Foundation (AMF) - was founded on the belief all children should have a safe and happy childhood without being subjected to any form of violence.

With a mission of keeping children safe from violence, the AMF places great emphasis on prevention. It set up the Bear Buddies Framework

■ **Purpose:** To create friendly and caring primary school communities so bullying is reduced.

■ **How it works:** Children in prep are matched with a buddy in year 6. Together they learn about values such as caring for others, friendliness and respect.

■ Younger children feel safe and cared for.

■ Older children feel valued and respected.

...✚ Consider the numbers. If one in four Australian children is bullied, that means \_\_\_ students in your class and \_\_\_ in your school may be affected.

...✚ In a school of 800, it is likely that \_\_\_ would experience bullying.

...✚ List four things you could do in the course of your normal day to support the ideas behind the Alannah and Madeline Foundation.

Below: Buddy Bear visits schools to promote the annual Better Buddies Book Week.

## WHAT IS BULLYING?

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, which strives to protect children, has this definition for bullying: When someone (or a group of people) with more power than you, repeatedly and intentionally uses negative words and/or actions against you, which cause distress and risk your wellbeing. Bullying can be: physical, verbal, emotional or social, and can be carried out in person or electronically.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL AGAINST BULLYING LISTS FIVE TYPES:

**PHYSICAL:** ...✚ Using physical actions, such as hitting, poking, tripping or pushing. Includes repeatedly and intentionally damaging someone's belongings.

**VERBAL:** ...✚ Using negative words, repeatedly and intentionally, to upset someone. Examples include name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks and verbal abuse.

**SOCIAL:** ...✚ Examples include lying, spreading rumours, playing a nasty joke, repeatedly mimicking someone and deliberately excluding someone.

**PSYCHOLOGICAL:** ...✚ Repeatedly and intentionally using words or actions which cause psychological harm. Examples: intimidating, manipulating and stalking.

**CYBER:** ...✚ Using technology to verbally, socially or psychologically bully. Can happen in chat rooms, through social networking sites, emails or mobile phones.



## BE CYBER SAFE

Headspace is the name for Australia's National Youth Mental Health Foundation. Along with advice on other aspects related to young people's mental health and wellbeing, the organisation has developed tips to help young people avoid upsetting or humiliating their friends via the internet or other technologies.

TOP FIVE TIPS FROM HEADSPACE:

■ Never reply to anyone when angry. Wait for a period of time to cool down and think about not replying at all.

■ Consider the impact of sharing someone else's sensitive personal information or images. How would you feel if it was your information or images?

■ Don't forward messages, pictures or jokes that are offensive. Though you may not have started it, this also makes you a cyber bully.

■ Respect the views of other people. Disagreeing with them does not mean you have to be rude or abusive.

■ Cyber bullying can be upsetting and stressful. If you are concerned for yourself or a friend, tell someone, particularly if you are feeling unsafe or frightened.

...✚ **Dramatise the message:** write a two-minute skit about a cyber-bullying episode OR a one-minute television advertisement designed to educate young people about the importance of protecting each other from cyber bullying.

There are 30 Headspace Centres around Australia providing help and support for young people. Victorian centre locations: Sunshine, Glenroy, Highett, St Kilda, Frankston, Geelong, Corio, Warrnambool, Warragul, Morwell.

More help and information at the Headspace website.



## WHAT ISN'T BULLYING?

Light-hearted teasing or ribbing, a one-off comment with no harmful intention.

It is important to avoid classifying normal social behaviour as bullying, which instead involves sustained behaviour that is intended to be hurtful and harmful.

■ Write one real-life example of each type of bullying, explaining the specific action of the bully and the likely affect on the victim.

## IT'S SERIOUS

Young people often do not understand the impact of bullying behaviour, but governments and the law now recognise it as a major issue. Bullying isn't limited to schools, either. In Victoria, 40,000 workplaces now face snap inspections in a blitz on workplace bullying. There have also been cases of parents taking legal action against schools and alleged bullies.

■ Bullying in the workplace and in schools relies on victims and witnesses speaking up. But often bullying continues because people are unwilling to do in the bully.

...✚ As a class, discuss the challenges associated with speaking up against bullying and how they may be overcome.

## WEBSITES

- www.amf.org.au
- www.ncab.org.au
- www.beyondblue.org.au
- www.headspace.org.au
- www.worksafe.vic.gov.au