



# Anti-bullying

## Definition:

Bullying behaviours are about an imbalance of power where there is deliberate intent to cause harm or distress. It is not considered to be bullying if people of equal power have a difference of opinion. Bullying behaviours impact on the person being bullied, those doing the bullying and those looking on. Bullying incidents can be isolated or repeated. Peer Support Foundation, 2006.

The serious long term effects of bullying behaviours, such as the higher incidence of youth depression, anxiety and lower self esteem reinforce the need to address the issue effectively within a broad school context.

Peer Support Australia's anti-bullying training focuses on a whole school approach, inclusive of school staff, students and parents. The program includes a range of strategies for all members of the school community to make a positive contribution to reducing the incidence of bullying behaviours.

Students need to be taught how to recognise bullying behaviours when they occur and how to deal appropriately with such incidents. The only way change can be brought about is through the systematic teaching of skills and strategies to help students when they encounter a bullying situation. They need to be supported in their endeavours to bring bullying behaviours into the open so that they can be addressed in a positive manner.

Research suggests that students who experience bullying behaviours are more likely to speak to their friends about it, making a peer led approach to addressing the issue more appropriate. In evaluating the efficacy of the Peer Support Program in 2003, Dr Louise Ellis wrote, "The positive results suggests the program is worthwhile, especially in changing the attitudes to bullying, which is one of the study's significant findings."



## 4 Types of bullying

- ✦ physical
- ✦ verbal
- ✦ social
- ✦ psychological

## Working through Conflict

This 8 session module supports students to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to make a positive contribution to the creation and maintenance of a safe school environment.

*Working through Conflict* is an experiential, skills based learning module designed to engage students as it addresses the issues of bullying behaviours in a whole school context.

*Working through Conflict* recognises that all members of the school community can play a role in reducing the incidence of bullying behaviours.

*Working through Conflict* contains a range of activities to reflect on the many relationships students have, assisting to develop an understanding and appreciation of close friends and the distinction between these and acquaintances. Students are given the skills to intervene in bullying situations and develop resilience which strengthens their ability to deal more effectively with bullying behaviours if they occur.

*Working through Conflict* focuses on developing the following skills:

- decision making
- problem solving
- assertiveness
- empathy
- relationship building
- conflict resolution