

## Kindness versus Bullying

### ***To be kind is cool...to be kind is easy...to be kind can change the world***

If you are not sure what bullying is, just think about stuff that you wouldn't like others to do to you, in particular if they would do these behaviours over and over again... ***Telling people not to bully doesn't work as well as to tell them to do the opposite.*** What can we do instead of bullying and teasing? The answer is easy – being kind. To be kind to others has the potential to change the world – one kind act at a time. Here are some ideas for school and at home – please add to the list as you see fit and try new ways of being kind to others.



- **Be kind to yourself** – *It all starts with how you are thinking about yourself!*
- **When you are kind to others don't expect anything in return** – *do it because it makes you feel great...*
- **Hold the door open for someone you don't know**
- **Introduce yourself to a student you haven't met before and ask them what they like doing** – *listening is a skill*
- **Be encouraging** – *if someone succeeds – tell them that they did well to work it out and didn't give up – uplift them*
- **Be patient** – *wait your turn and enjoy the waiting time*

- **Be empathetic** – *Really try to understand what's going on for someone who is struggling without wanting to rescue them*
- **Hold your tongue** – *Pause before speaking or writing when you are mad, agitated or doubtful – take 3 or more deep breaths before acting – try to respond instead of reacting*
- **Send a thank you card or note to your parent, teacher or someone who helped you**
- **Have you got a special skill - donate your talents to someone that is in need**
- **Don't be annoying** – *if you want attention use random acts of kindness to get noticed...*
- **Tell people who care about you that you love them and give them a hug - especially after an argument**
- **Do a chore for your sibling, step-sibling or half-sibling without wanting anything in return**
- **Bake someone a cake or cookies or make a meal for the family**
- **Say kind things about others on social media (facebook, etc.) or in conversations**
- **Spread the word and invent more acts of kindness** – *Let others know you are on a mission to spread kindness and they will be inspired to do the same*



***Kindness creates a ripple effect in your and other people's life...***

Your suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Kindness versus Bullying

## Defining Bullying

It's easy to assume everyone knows what bullying is. But often the term bullying is used to describe other aggressive behaviour. This can make it hard for schools, parents and whānau, and the wider community to consistently identify and deal with bullying when it happens. Most widely-accepted definitions of bullying are based on four elements:

1. Bullying is deliberate - harming another person intentionally
2. Bullying involves a misuse of power in a relationship
3. Bullying is usually not a one-off - it is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated over time
4. Bullying involves behaviour that can cause harm - it is not a normal part of growing up.

Bullying can happen anywhere, in person or online (cyberbullying), at any time, and can be verbal, physical or social (relational). It can be obvious or hidden.

Kids who bully use their power — such as physical strength, knowing something embarrassing, or popularity — to control or harm others. Bullying is when one student (or a group of students) keeps picking on another student again and again to make them feel bad. They say or do things to upset them, make fun of them, stop them from joining in, or keep hitting or punching them.

## What is not bullying?

Bullying is a word often used to describe behaviour that is not actually bullying — not all verbal or physical aggression is bullying. For example:

- a one-off fight or argument, or difference of opinion between friends where there is no power imbalance and they can sort it out between themselves
- not liking someone or a single act of social rejection
- one-off acts of meanness or spite
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence
- using sexist or racist terms but doesn't mean to cause harm
- theft: taking someone else's things once is theft but not necessarily bullying.

These other behaviours may be just as upsetting and serious but may need to be dealt with in a different way. You will need to use your judgment to decide whether a specific incident is bullying.

## Empathy for the bully

People that bully others are often victims of bullying, or ignorant to the impact their behaviour has on others, indicating sometimes limited capacity to mentally process social situations. In general, the way people relate to other people indicates their own relationship with themselves. If a person is feeling content with who they are, they will most likely interact with others from a space of acceptance and fairmindedness. If a person is in conflict with themselves and has doubts about their value as a person, they might have a tendency towards bullying. If we see a person's behaviour towards us as a reflection of their relationship with themselves rather than an insult on us and our value as a person, it will shift our position from a victim to an observer. This understanding can help to separate ourselves from the 'drama' the bully is attempting to entangle us in. It allows us to see the bully more clearly as a person who is suffering from unknown internal psychological pain or confusion.