

Lesson: What is Bullying?

Bully. What does the word make you think of? For some people, it's that girl at school who always makes fun of them. For others, it's the biggest guy in the neighborhood who's always trying to beat them up or take their things. Sometimes "bully" means a whole group of kids, ganging up on someone else. No matter what situation or form it comes in, bullying can make you feel depressed, hurt, and alone. It can keep you from enjoying the activities and places that are part of your life.

Bullying happens everywhere, whether it's your town or Paris, France. It happens all the time, and it's happened since forever. Because it's so common, many adults think bullying is just a normal part of growing up. You've probably heard parents or teachers say things like: "Don't let it get to you" or "You just have to be tougher."

But why should something that can make a person so miserable have to be part of growing up? The answer is, it doesn't! Each and every one of us has the right to feel safe in our lives and good about ourselves. So IML put together this guide to give you all the basics of dealing with bullies.

Let's start by looking at the different kinds of bullying:

Physical bullying means:

- Hitting, kicking, or pushing someone...or even just threatening to do it
- Stealing, hiding or ruining someone's things
- Making someone do things he or she don't want to do

Verbal bullying means:

- Name-calling
- Teasing
- Insulting



Relationship bullying means:

- Refusing to talk to someone
- Spreading lies or rumors about someone
- Making someone do things he or she doesn't want to do

What do all these things have in common? They're examples of ways one person can make another person feel hurt, afraid, or uncomfortable. When these are done to someone more than once, and usually over and over again for a long period of time, that's bullying.

The reason why one kid would want to bully another kid is this: when you make someone feel bad, you gain power over him or her. Power makes people feel like they're better than another person, and then that makes them feel really good about themselves. Power also makes you stand out from the crowd. It's a way to get attention from other kids, and even from adults.

So why would someone need to hurt someone else in order to feel good about themselves or get attention? That's what we explore in the next section.