

PUSHED TO THE EDGE

Phoebe's Story

Phoebe switched schools during her sophomore year. Within a few weeks of being the new kid at school she started dating one of the most popular boys in her class.

Things were going great for Phoebe – until a jealous group of students started ganging up on her at school, leaving mean notes in her locker and threw things at her in the halls. The bullying didn't stop at school – the group of students sent her mean emails and hateful messages on Facebook and Twitter.

Phoebe put up with the harassment for months. Then one day, as she walked home from school, one of the students threw a can of soda at her from a moving car.

Later that evening, Phoebe committed suicide. Her life was ruined because of bullying, and so were the lives of the six students who harassed her. They're all facing felony charges and possible time in prison.

DEALING WITH A BULLY

You Deserve Better Treatment

Bullies like to pick on others because of their own insecurities, or because they're jealous of that person. They might also try to harass someone with a different background, accent, religion, race, or sexual orientation. Whatever the reason, **no one deserves to be bullied.**

Here are some survival tips you can use if you're being bullied:

- Ignore the bully and walk away
- Hold in your anger
- Don't fight with the bully
- Practice being confident
- Take charge of your life

If a bully just won't leave you alone, try one of these tactics:

- **Tell an adult.** Choose one that you trust, such as a teacher, coach, principal, parent, or counselor. It's ok to ask for help and this should be the first step that you take.
- **Surround yourself with friends.** Try to stay with your friends or siblings, if possible. Most bullies like to pick on people when they're alone without their support system.

If you're being bullied, speak up about it. Don't hide it, especially if you're being physically threatened. Turn to trusted adults and friends, and never resort to hurting yourself. It's never your fault if you're being bullied.

Bullying is a violent crime. Don't let a bully get away with it!

WORK IT OUT!

Are you a bully? Answer these questions honestly and find out.

1. I've spread a rumor about someone before.
a. True b. False
2. I've made fun of someone for being different in appearance, race, religion, or sexual orientation.
a. True b. False
3. I've thrown things, pushed, hit, or pinched someone on more than one occasion.
a. True b. False
4. I've gotten my friends to join in making fun of or intimidating a specific person.
a. True b. False
5. I've ignored or isolated someone from hanging out with me and my friends.
a. True b. False

If you answered True to any of these questions, then you're guilty of bullying. It's time to stop before you cause serious harm. Find a trusted adult, like a teacher or counselor, to talk to about changing your ways.

BULLYING



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CRUEL INTENTIONS

STICKS AND STONES

Signs of a Bully

Jason is a good football player, and he's popular at school. When Jason sees David in halls, he says things like, "Get out of my way, dork," and pushes him away.

Julie is not so popular, and hangs out with a small group of friends. She's not good at sports and avoids them when she can. Julie sits next to Rachel in history class. Whenever Rachel walks into the room, Julie says things like, "Don't you know that outfit's out of season?" Last year, Julie started calling Rachel "muffin top," and now all of Julie's friends call Rachel that, too.

Jason is popular, and Julie is not. Jason is a jock, and Julie hates sports. Yet they both have one thing in common: They're bullies.

CROSSING THE LINE

Where Does Bullying Happen?

You might think that bullying just happens at school – when the teacher isn't looking, on the bus, or in the hallway. However, bullying can happen in all kinds of places: at the movies, on the street, or even on the Internet. A bully can be anyone: a sibling, a classmate, a coworker, or even a friend's parent.

Bullies can be popular, an honor roll student, or a kid on the verge of flunking. A bully can be anyone – and anyone can be the victim of a bully.



HATEFUL & VIOLENT

Are You Bullying Someone?

Maybe you're aware that you're a bully, or maybe not. You might not fit the mold of what you consider a "typical bully," but if you do any of the following, then you're a bully:

- **Verbal bullying** means calling someone names, mocking, spreading rumors or gossip and mean teasing. It can also include making fun of someone's religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or looks.
- **Physical bullying** is when a bully gets violent: punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, biting, or slapping.
- **Isolation bullying** occurs when a bully – or a group of bullies – ignores someone, excludes them, or refuses to hang out with them.

STOP THE ABUSE!

Whether you call someone names, or constantly push them out of the way, bullying is very hurtful. In fact, bullying is considered abuse, and if you're bullying someone in any way, then you're an abuser.

Bullying often leads to low self-esteem, and it can make the target feel depressed, lonely and anxious. The person might even hurt themselves through self-mutilation, or even suicide. What would you do if you caused someone to go to the hospital – or die? Remember, the things you do to other people can stick with them for the rest of their lives. If you're a bully, it's not too late to stop.

HIGH-TECH HARASSMENT

When People Bully Online

Bullying doesn't always mean getting violent – sometimes it doesn't even happen face-to-face. Cyber-bullying happens online instead, and because the harassment doesn't stop even when the target goes home, it can be even more harmful.

Cyber-bullying might include:

- Emails
- Instant messages
- Text messages
- Blog or forum posts
- Messages through social media, like Facebook, Twitter, or MySpace

This type of harassment might include sending mean or violent messages, or posting embarrassing photos. Just like other types of bullying, cyber-bullies can be charged with a crime.



SCHOOL HALL CRIMES

What You Need to Know About Anti-Bullying Laws

As of August 2013, 49 states have anti-bullying laws. In some cases, bullying can be considered a crime and bullies can end up in court...or jail.

A bully that causes someone emotional or mental distress, physical harm, or causes the victim to hurt themselves, can be charged with any of these crimes:

- Criminal harassment
- Assault and battery
- Stalking
- Violation of civil rights

BULLYING ISN'T FUNNY

Knowing When to Stand up to a Bully

What would you do if your friend started picking on someone in the hallway or started spreading rumors about a new student?

Some teens join in. They might think that it makes them part of the cool crowd, or that it's harmless. Others are just afraid to speak up because they're worried that the bully will then turn on them.

Most bullies can be stopped if someone has the courage to speak up. If you see someone being bullied, try stopping the bully with one of these lines:

- "Hey, leave him alone."
- "That's really rude. What's wrong with you?"
- "That just wasn't called for."
- "Come on, let's go do something else."

