



Young People Count – No: 1153050

Policy and Procedures

Anti - Bullying Policy

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

Young People Count's aim is to prevent bullying from happening between young people who are a part of our organisation or take part in our activities.

We aim to make sure bullying is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen and that those involved receive the support they need.

We aim to provide information to all staff, volunteers, young people and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with bullying.

OUR COMMITMENT IN REGARD TO ANTI-BULLYING:

This policy statement applies to anyone working on behalf of Young People Count including trustees, paid staff, volunteers and young people.

Separate documents set out:

- our code of behaviour for young people and adults
- our policies and procedures for preventing and responding to bullying and harassment that takes place between adults involved with our organisation.

1) Working with the Young People:

- i) From the outset we will work with young people to define bullying in its various forms, and make sure that young people understand the impact of bullying on others.
- ii) We will discuss and agree with the young people how this is monitored and the need for the young people themselves to be active in 'policing' so that bullying is identified and dealt with promptly.
- iii) During these discussions we will agree with the young people what action should be taken to ensure that any bullying is addressed.
- iv) Visual images, words and slogans will be printed and displayed within the centre to describe the above agreements.
- v) Use of music, arts and drama will be a way of establishing an anti-bullying message.
- vi) We will actively work with young people who are victims or potential victims of bullying to have strategies to stand up to, deflect and avoid bullying situations, bringing in agencies when appropriate.

2) Action taken by the staff team regarding anti- bullying.

- i) The staff team will ensure consistency in following up on any signs of bullying according to the agreements made with the young people.
- ii) The staff team will involve parents if there is any sign of bullying continually beyond the agreed consequence.
- iii) If necessary, the staff team will involve the police.
- iv) Incidents will be recorded and kept in all cases when persistent bullying takes place.

What is Bullying?

Bullying includes a range of abusive behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally

It includes but is not limited to:

Verbal abuse: name-calling, saying nasty things to or about someone, spreading rumours

Physical abuse: hitting, pushing, physical assault

Emotional abuse: making threats, undermining, excluding from a friendship group or activities

Cyber bullying/online bullying: excluding from online games, activities or friendship groups; sending threatening, upsetting or abusive messages; creating and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos; 'trolling' - sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games; voting for or against someone in an abusive poll; setting up hate sites or groups about a particular person; encouraging young people to self-harm; creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name

Racist abuse: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

Sexual abuse: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

Homophobic abuse: because of, or focusing on the issues of sexuality

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Young people who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving and may well have serious issues themselves, which affect their behaviour.

It can affect a person's health and development and, at the extreme, can cause significant harm. All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse. Everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying.

Some of the signs and symptoms of being bullied

Young People may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of coming to the group or participating in certain activities
- Doesn't want to go to the group/organisation on their own
- Changes their usual routine
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill before coming to the group/organisation
- Begins to behave negatively within the group/organisation
- Comes home with clothes torn or personal possessions damaged or missing
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has money that is continually 'lost'
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home starving (money or lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

We will seek to prevent bullying by

- holding regular discussions with staff, volunteers, young people and families who use our organisation about bullying and how to prevent it. These discussions will focus on: - group members' responsibilities to look after one another and uphold the behaviour code - practising skills such as listening to each other - respecting the fact that we are all different - making sure that no one is without friends - dealing with problems in a positive way - checking that our anti-bullying measures are working well providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racial, sexist, homophobic and sexual bullying
- putting clear and robust anti-bullying procedures in place
- making sure our response to incidents of bullying considers: - the needs of the person being bullied - the needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour - needs of any bystanders - our organisation as a whole

- reviewing the plan developed to address any incidents of bullying at regular intervals, in order to ensure that the problem has been resolved in the long term

We recognise that bullying is closely related to how we respect and recognise the value of diversity. We will be proactive about:

- seeking opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference
- increasing diversity within our staff, volunteers, children and young people
- welcoming new members to our organisation

Support to deal with the aftermath of bullying

- Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, parents and members of staff or volunteers may need
- Consideration should also be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged bully

More information about responding effectively to bullying is available:

Protecting children from bullying and cyber bullying:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying>

Recognising and responding to abuse:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/recognising-and-responding-to-abuse>

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up based on legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in the UK. The NSPCC provides summaries of the key legislation and guidance on:

Bullying - <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying>

Online abuse - <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/online-abuse>

Child protection - <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system>

(All information taken from 'NSPCC Anti-bullying policy example')

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1598/anti-bullying-policy-example.pdf>