



DISABILITY BUSINESS AND ADVOCACY SERVICES

when i'm at work: bullying

a fact sheet for supported employees



This fact sheet tells you:

- ▶ what bullying is
- ▶ about the different kinds of bullying
- ▶ how to know if you are being bullied
- ▶ what your human rights are
- ▶ what you can do if bullying happens to you
- ▶ who you can talk to about bullying.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaving in a way that hurts another person's body or hurts their feelings. It is about power. This means that bullies try to make themselves more important by picking on others around them.

Sometimes people are not aware that they are bullying others, or that their bullying harms other people. Bullying does harm people. It can happen anywhere, including when people work together.

- ▶ A worker may bully another worker.
- ▶ A supervisor (team leader) or manager may bully a worker or a group of workers.
- ▶ A group of workers may bully a worker or another group of workers.

Other words you might hear that mean the same as bullying are:

- ▶ picking on
- ▶ teasing
- ▶ bashing up
- ▶ harassing
- ▶ sledging.

Different kinds of bullying

There are different kinds of bullying.

Bullying can be hurting someone's body on purpose by:

- ▶ pushing them around
- ▶ hitting, kicking, punching, pinching, slapping or doing any other things that hurt them.

Bullying can be saying you will hurt someone's body by threatening them, for example, by saying 'if you tell, I'll hurt you'.

Bullying can be hurting someone's feelings on purpose, for example, by:

- ▶ not letting them join in
- ▶ stealing, moving or hurting their things (their bags or lunchboxes, for example)
- ▶ always teasing or playing practical jokes on them
- ▶ saying things that upset them

- ▶ calling them names
- ▶ laughing rudely at them
- ▶ spreading rumours (stories that are made up) about them
- ▶ ignoring them when they speak.

Bullying can be using your voice to hurt people on purpose, for example, by:

- ▶ being rude about them, their friends, or their families
- ▶ calling them names
- ▶ swearing at them
- ▶ shouting at them.

Bullying is not okay. If we all speak up and report bullying whenever it happens, either to us or to someone else, bullies will be stopped.

How do you know if you are being bullied?

- ▶ You will be feeling uncomfortable or frightened around the person or people doing the bullying.
- ▶ If the bullying is happening at work, you will feel nervous about going to work and while you are at work.
- ▶ You will feel worried about what will happen next.

What are your human rights?

The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** says that everyone in the world has the right to **freedom, justice and peace**.

This means that you have the right to:

- ▶ live without fear
- ▶ feel safe
- ▶ enjoy the same rights that other people do.

These rights spread into every part of your life including your family, home, community and workplace. They include the right to:

- ▶ make your own decisions about things
- ▶ get help and a fair go if you are in trouble
- ▶ work where and when you choose.

If your rights are not looked after, you might be being bullied. There are laws to stop this from happening.

Remember that everyone has a right to work, live, study and play in a place that is free from:

- ▶ bullying
- ▶ discrimination
- ▶ violence.

No one should be treated like this.

Disability Services Standard 12 is about the protection of human rights and freedom from abuse. The standards were developed partly by your workplace and mean that your workplace must make sure that you are safe and treated fairly when you are at work.

Your workplace must stand up for your rights when you are at work and when you are training. Your workplace must make sure that nobody can:

- ▶ hurt you
- ▶ talk to you in a way that you do not like
- ▶ treat you badly because of your disability.

What can you do if bullying happens to you?

Tell someone what is happening to you

If you are being bullied, tell someone about what is happening to you.

You can talk to your family, a friend, a team leader, your supervisor or your manager, and ask them to help you do something about it.

At work, your manager has to make work a safe place for you. That means your manager must do something to stop bullying if it is happening to you at work.

If you have a friend who is being bullied, talk to them about what is happening and ask them if you can help them to do something about it. You could offer to go with them to talk to the supervisor or the police.

It is very important to remember that bullying can harm you in all sorts of ways, not just physically.

If someone is bullying you, they are taking away your human rights and you should tell someone it is happening.



Ask your supervisor or support worker if you need further help

Ask your supervisor or support worker if you need some extra help. This might include contacting a:

- ▶ counselling and support service
- ▶ refuge or shelter.

Talk to an advocacy service

Sometimes, the people you rely on for support can also be the people who bully or mistreat you. They could be people like parents or guardians, support workers, supervisors, or team leaders.

If this is the case, you should report the abuse to someone else, for example, another supervisor or manager, another relative or a good friend, or the police.

Your workplace will also be able to give you details about how to contact an advocacy or complaints service. These are other places you can contact if you need help.

Make a formal workplace complaint

Your workplace has a complaints policy. If bullying is happening to you at work, your workplace's complaints policy will tell you how to make a formal complaint about it.

Your support worker, team leader, supervisor or manager can help you with this. They can give you a copy of the complaints policy and tell you the things you need to do if you want to make a formal complaint.

It is one of your rights as a worker to have access to these things and to get help to use them if you need it.

Make a complaint to the Complaints Resolution and Referral Service

Bullying is not okay and you do not have to put up with it.

You can get someone to help you contact the Complaints Resolution and Referral Service (CRRS) or call them yourself. People there can help you with your problem. It is their job to help you sort problems out.

Remember, anything that you say to people at the CRRS is confidential. They will not tell anyone else about what you say without your permission.

Complaints Resolution and Referral Service (CRRS)

- ▶ 1800 880 052 (free call)
- ▶ www.crrs.org.au

Make a complaint to the National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline

You can call the Australian National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline to talk about your problem or to find out more about what the people there can do to help you.

The hotline can also help you if you need someone else to talk about your complaint for you, and to sort it out quickly. This is called 'advocating' for you. The hotline will find that special person for you.

Contact the hotline from 8am to 8pm across Australia, seven days a week.

- ▶ 1800 880 052 (free call)
- ▶ www.disabilityhotline.org



Get legal advice

Bullying can affect your health and safety.

If you think your health and safety at work are at risk, you can talk to people such as:

- ▶ a disability advocacy agency
- ▶ community legal centres like Legal Aid



- ▶ Whistleblowers Australia (02) 9810 9468
- ▶ Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1800 021 199
- ▶ WorkSafe Western Australia (08) 9282 0777
- ▶ WorkCover New South Wales 13 10 50
- ▶ WorkSafe Victoria Advisory Service 1800 136 089
- ▶ ACT WorkCover (02) 6205 0200
- ▶ Workplace Standards Tasmania 1300 366 322
- ▶ Anti-discrimination Commission Queensland 1300 130 670
- ▶ SafeWork South Australia 1300 265 255
- ▶ Northern Territory WorkSafe 1800 019 115

Call the police

Bullying is very serious and can be a crime.

The police should be told if someone has:

- ▶ hurt your body in any way
- ▶ threatened to hurt your body in any way
- ▶ damaged or stolen your things.

Once reported to the police, the bully may be given a warning or charged.

Police

Phone: 000

TTY: 106

Speech to speech relay service phone: 1800 555 727

From mobile with no network coverage: 112

Who can you talk to if you are being bullied

Disability advocacy agencies

http://www.facsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/disabilities/representation-advocacy_agencies_0907.htm

Domestic Violence Advocacy Service

Advice line: (02) 8745 6999 (lines are open from 9.30am to 12.30pm and from 1.30pm to 4.30pm Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, and from 9.30am to 12.30pm Wednesdays)

Rural free call: 1800 810 784

TTY: 1800 626 267

Website: www.dvas.org.au

Intellectual Disability Rights Service

Phone: (02) 9318 0144

Free call: 1800 666 611

Website: www.idrs.org.au

NSW Disability Discrimination Legal Centre (Inc)

Phone: (02) 9310 7722 (advice lines are open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9.30am to 12.30 pm)

Free call: 1800 800 708 (NSW only)

TTY: (02) 9310 4320

Free call: 1800 644 419 (NSW only)

Website: www.ddlcnsw.org.au