

## Definition of Bullying

"Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communication made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a pupil or group of pupils as defined in Education Code Section 48900.2 (sexual harassment), 48900.3 (hate violence), or 48900.4 (harassment, threats, or intimidation towards school employees), directed toward one or more pupils that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing a reasonable pupil or pupils in fear of harm to that pupil's or those pupils' person or property.
2. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
3. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
4. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

### What Does This Mean?

Bullying is a form of emotional or physical abuse that has three defining characteristics:

1. **Deliberate** - a bully's intention is to hurt someone
2. **Repeated** - a bully often targets the same victim again and again
3. **Power Imbalanced** - a bully chooses victims he or she perceives as vulnerable

Bullying occurs in many different forms, with varying levels of severity. It may involve:

- **Physical Bullying** - poking, pushing, hitting, kicking, beating up
- **Verbal Bullying** - yelling, teasing, name-calling, insulting, threatening to harm
- **Indirect Bullying** - spreading rumors, telling lies, getting others to hurt someone

## Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is defined as threats or other offensive behavior sent through an electronic means (online, email, IM, phone text, etc.) to a victim or sent or posted about the victim for others to see. It can take the form of a message on email or IM or a social networking site from someone who is threatening to hurt you or beat you up. It might be rumors posted on your profile or spread online for others to see. It might be the deletion of you on a friend's "buddy list" to make you feel left out. It could be a profile made by someone pretending to be you. Or, someone hacking into your profile and writing comments pretending they're from you. In general, cyber-bullying is bullying or harassing that happens online. Much of it is similar to what teenagers experience offline in schools, homes, or the community, but has the additional aspect of utilizing technology. ([www.cyberbully411.org](http://www.cyberbully411.org))

## Books about Bullying

In this article in *School Library Journal*, librarian Joy Fleishhacker recommends the following books to spark discussion on the subject of bullying:

- *Bully* by Patricia Polacco, grades 4-6 (Putnam, 2012) – This illustrated middle-school drama deals with cyberbullying, pressure to dump a boyfriend, and exclusion.
- *The Bully Book* by Eric Kahn Gale, grades 5-7 (HarperCollins/Harper, 2013) – An entire sixth-grade class turns on a boy, revealing the mindset and methods of the bully.
- *Bystander* by James Preller, grades 6-9 (Feiwel & Friends, 2009) – A boy takes a stand against a bully, only to become the next victim.
- *Hokey Pokey* by Jerry Spinelli, grades 5-7 (Knopf, 2013) – Jack lives in a day-dreamy world in which kids do as they please and adults are nowhere to be found, but it has to end...
- *Slob* by Ellen Potter, grades 6-8 (Philomel, 2009) – Owen is overweight and super-smart – the perfect magnet for bullies (including a sadistic P.E. teacher) in his progressive New York City school.
- *The Truth About Truman School* by Dori Hillestad Butler, grades 5-8 (Albert Whitman, 2008) – An underground website designed to let students discuss the truth about their school is invaded by anonymous posts harassing a popular girl.
- *Warp Speed* by Lisa Yee, grades 5-9 (Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine, 2011) – A bullied student becomes a track star, revealing truths about him and his tormentors.
- *Girls Against Girls: Why We Are Mean to Each Other and How We Can Change* by Bonnie Burton, grades 6-10 (Zest, 2011) – A well-researched text written in a chatty style explores malicious gossiping, social shunning, and verbal abuse.
- *Teen Cyberbullying Investigated: Where Do Your Rights End and Consequences Begin?* by Tom Jacobs, grades 7 and up (Free Spirit, 2010) – Judge Jacobs introduces landmark court cases involving teens and tweens involved in cyberbullying.
- *We Want You to Know: Kids Talk About Bullying* by Deborah Ellis, grades 5-9 (Coteau, 2010) – Kids 9 to 19 talk about their experiences as victims, bullies, and bystanders – eye-opening, intimate, shocking, and hope-filled, says Fleishhacker.

“Bullied: Middle-Grade Books to Spark Discussion” by Joy Fleishhacker in *School Library Journal*, April 2013 (Vol. 59, #4, p. 36-38), [www.slj.com](http://www.slj.com).

Source: Irvine Unified School District.

[https://www.iusd.org/student\\_services/bullying/index.html](https://www.iusd.org/student_services/bullying/index.html)