

preventing bullying!

A Parents Guide

Copies of this publication, in colour and with graphics, can be ordered from Kidscape.

All Rights reserved. This information is provided for personal use only. No part of this publication may be reproduced or sold in any form without prior, written permission from Kidscape.

Dear Parents,

Thank you for sending for this valuable guide. This is a positive step towards helping your child. I was severely bullied at school in the early seventies. Unfortunately at that time there was no KIDSCAPE to offer my Mother support and advice. She battled in vain to get my school to notice that there was a very real problem. The school was very dismissive and my individual teachers were frightened to speak out. Eventually I had no alternative but to change schools. This was drastic action as my bus journey to the new school was over an hour each way.

I was very happy in my new school as I was able to break the bullying cycle by starting all over again. In many ways this was an easier option than the task that now faces you. I most strongly urge you to be bold and brave in your fight for what you know is right for your child. If your child is a victim, it is not their fault. Something about them may have made them stand out from the crowd but, if you analyse these qualities, you will probably find these are what make your child special and what will probably make them successful in later life. These qualities should be protected - your child should not be forced to change. Many successful people, people in the public eye, people who have pursued their dreams, have succeeded in spite of being bullied at school. They didn't change.

I strongly believe that if I or my parents had given in, and I had become like everyone else, I would not be the person I am today, happy and fulfilled in my chosen career.

With best wishes.

Amanda Ross
K1DSCAPE Trustee

Amanda has had a successful career in broadcasting for the last thirteen years. She has presented a number of TV shows and now runs her own production company which last year made over 45 hours of programmes for BBCI.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is not always easy to define. However, Dan Olweus, an expert in the prevention of bullying, says that bullying includes:

- deliberate hostility and aggression towards the victim
- a victim who is weaker and less powerful than the bully or bullies
- an outcome which is always painful and distressing for the victim.

Bullying can be:

Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, and any other forms of violence, threats (i.e. If you don't give me your dinner money, you'll be sorry')

Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing

Emotional: excluding (i.e. sending to Coventry), tormenting (i.e. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation

Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

Sexual: unwanted physical contact, abusive comments, homophobic abuse

Emotional bullying like ridicule and sending to Coventry seems to be more common than physical violence and, judging from what young people tell us at Kidscape, it can also be the most difficult type of bullying to cope with or to prove.

Peter, a 9 year old victim of emotional bullying, told us that the only time he was believed by his teacher was when he had bruises on his legs after being kicked by the bullies in the playground, although his mother had been complaining to the school for months about the constant torment Peter was suffering.

Persistent school bullying can result in

- depression
- low self esteem
- shyness
- poor academic achievement
- isolation
- threatened or attempted suicide

Unchecked bullying also damages the bully who learns that he or she can get away with violence, aggression and threats and that this sort of behaviour gets them what they want.

When school bullies carry on bullying as adults they run into all sorts of problems. KIDSCAPE, sponsored by the Co-Op, recently carried out a survey of young offenders which indicated that many had been actively involved in bullying at school. Studies have found that adults who were bullies as children have a higher

chance than others of acquiring a criminal record, tend to be aggressive, and have problems in maintaining relationships.

SOME MYTHS ABOUT BULLYING

Friends and relatives may say some of the following things to you if you tell them about the bullying. They are well-meaning but wrong! Bullying is NEVER a good thing; it is always damaging, both for the victim and for the bully.

“I was bullied at school and it didn't do me any harm.” This is often said aggressively as if the person is still ashamed. They may have forgotten the pain they suffered.

“He'll just have to learn to stand up for himself.” Children who tell about bullying have usually reached the end of their tether. If they could have dealt with the bullying, they would have. Asking for support is not weakness but a recognition that they cannot cope with the situation on their own.

“Tell him to hit back - harder.” Bullies are often bigger than their victims so the victim could get seriously hurt by 'hitting back'. Hitting back reinforces the idea that violence and aggression are acceptable.

“It's character-building?” The sort of 'character' it builds is not the sort of character most parents want for their children. Bullying can damage victims' self esteem and can make them reserved and distrustful.

“Sticks and stones may break your bones but names can never hurt you?” Bruises left by blows fade and heal but the scars left by name-calling can last for ever. An 84 year old man wrote and told us: “I can remember every word those fiends said. I've been hearing their bullying jeers all my life”.

“That's not bullying! It's just kids teasing.” Teasing is one thing but when it gets out of hand it can turn into vicious taunting. Once teasing begins to hurt the victim it is no longer 'just a bit of fun' and should be stopped.

WHY DO SOME CHILDREN BULLY OTHERS?

There are plenty of different reasons why a child may become a bully. Some children may turn to bullying as a way of coping with a difficult situation: the death of a relative, their parents' divorce; some are just spoilt rotten and bully to get their own way; some are victims of abuse and take out their humiliation and anger on others; some want to be 'top dog' and are prepared to use aggression and violence to command obedience and loyalty.

Whatever the causes of the bullying, bullies pick on others as a way of making life better for themselves. They are frequently bigger and stronger than their victims and they use intimidation to get what they want. They are often not happy and use bullying as a way of trying to achieve popularity and friends.

Bullies have to learn that bullying is unacceptable and that, if they continue to behave unacceptably, then there are consequences. Although they should be given plenty of encouragement and help to change, bullies must not be allowed to get away with tormenting others.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS THE BULLY

If you learn that your child is a bully:

- try and stay calm
- try not to become angry and defensive
- ask exactly what your child has been doing
- ask if they have behaved like this before

Talk to teachers, playground supervisors, other parents - the more you can find out about what has been going on, the easier it will be to work out why your child has been bullying and what can be done about it.

- **HELPING THE BULLYING CHILD**
- see if he or she has any ideas about why they bully and what they think might help them stop
- reassure your child that you still love them - it's their behaviour you don't like but you will work with them to help change this
- find out if there is something in particular which is troubling him or her and try to sort it out
- work out a way for your child to make amends for the bullying
- set up some sort of reward for good behaviour
- set limits. Stop any show of aggression immediately and help the child find other, non-aggressive ways of reacting
- if your child bullies when faced with certain situations, help them work out and practice alternative ways of behaving
- explain that getting away from a situation where they can feel themselves losing their temper, or things getting out of hand, is not weakness. It is a sensible way of ensuring that the situation doesn't get worse
- teach your child the difference between assertive behaviour and aggressive behaviour - use the Assertiveness Section in this booklet
- praise your child when they do things well. Create opportunities for them to shine
- talk to the school staff. Explain that your child is making an effort to change his or her behaviour. Ask what ideas they have to help. It might be helpful for you

and your child to talk to an educational psychologist. Ask the school to arrange this

- talk to the staff about setting realistic goals for your child - don't expect too much too soon - and about rewarding him or her when they achieve one of these set goals. Ask if the school can provide a room where the children could go if they feel they need time to 'cool off'
- other children may deliberately provoke a bully, especially if they think the bully is trying to reform. Explain to your child that they may be taunted and provoked but that they should try not to respond aggressively. The child should walk quickly away if they think someone is trying to pick a fight

Parents can help by controlling their own aggression and by making it clear that violence is always unacceptable.

The Kidscape Beat Bullying! booklet has more suggestions for young people.

WHO ARE THE VICTIMS?

Children who bully pick on people because they need a victim. They will find something about the victim to focus on: wearing glasses, having protruding ears, being in a wheelchair, coming from a different culture. Whatever it is, this so called difference is just an excuse which the bully needs or creates to 'justify' his or her behaviour.

The 'difference', whatever it is, is not the victim's fault. Nobody should suffer bullying because of the way they look or because they have a different cultural background to other pupils. Schools should provide an environment in which differences are appreciated and children feel valued.

However, we should recognise that some children may be vulnerable to bullying because they may have specific problems such as poor co-ordination, speech or language difficulties. School staff should be made aware that these children may need extra help. In some cases, preparing all the children by discussing issues generally may avoid problems.

SPECIAL NEEDS

If your child has some special needs, he or she may be bullied because other children don't understand why they look or behave differently. Sometimes the bullying can be worse if the child's special needs are not immediately apparent (hearing loss or cystic fibrosis, for example). If this is the case with your child, then talk to your child's teacher about educating the other pupils.

- find out as much as you can about your child's special needs - there is usually a support group which can help with information - and suggest that the teacher uses the material to teach the children

- suggest that a member of the support group come and talk to the class or school
- there may be things that other children could do to help, like carrying lunch to the table if a child has a problem with co-ordination or being available to help if asked
- contact Disability Information and Advice Line (DIAL) which has names of trainers who provide disability awareness training for schools (see list at the end of this booklet)

RACIAL AND CULTURAL BULLYING

All incidents of racial bullying should be reported immediately to school staff who should investigate without delay. The victim should be reassured and the bullies made to understand that racial harassment of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Section 71 of the Race Relations Act requires local education authorities to make appropriate arrangements to prevent racial harassment occurring, or to deal with it if it happens in spite of their arrangements. Under Section 19 the local education authority is required to provide a non-discriminatory service. This implies the adoption and implementation of a proper policy, monitoring its effectiveness and a full inquiry into any complaint.

Further information and advice is available from the Commission For Racial Equality, or from the local Council for Racial Equality, or from the Citizens Advice Bureau.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is not the same as flirting which is part of a mutual 'getting to know you' process. Sexual harassment is unwanted attention that makes people feel uncomfortable, attacked or humiliated. It can include taunts or touching of a sexual nature, remarks about an individual's body, suggestive or obscene letters or gestures, and derogatory posters, photographs, graffiti or drawings. Sexual harassment is completely unacceptable.

VICTIMS: POSSIBLE SIGNS OF BULLYING

A child may indicate by their behaviour that he or she is being bullied. If your child shows some of the following signs, bullying may be responsible and you might want to ask if someone is bullying or threatening them.

Children may:

- be frightened of walking to or from school
- change their usual route

- not want to go on the school bus
- beg you to drive them to school
- be unwilling to go to school (or be school phobic)
- feel ill in the mornings
- begin truanting
- begin doing poorly in their school work
- come home regularly with clothes or books destroyed
- come home starving (bully has taken dinner money)
- become withdrawn, start stammering, lack confidence
- become distressed and anxious, stop eating
- attempt or threaten suicide
- cry themselves to sleep; have nightmares
- have their possessions 'go missing'
- ask for money or start stealing money (to pay the bully)
- continually 'lose' their pocket money
- refused to say what's wrong (too frightened of the bully)
- have unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts
- begin to bully other children or siblings
- become aggressive and unreasonable
- give improbable excuses to explain any of the above

HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD

If you are worried that your child is being bullied, ask him or her directly. Children who are being bullied are often frightened to tell about what is happening so be prepared for your child to deny at first that there is anything wrong. Encourage your child by saying that you are concerned and that you want to help and support him or her, whatever the problem.

Take whatever your child says seriously and find out what exactly has been going on.

Don't promise to keep the bullying secret but reassure your child that you will help them sort out the problem.

If you find that your child is a perpetual victim and that they are bullied wherever they go, try and think how your child reacts to people. Perhaps they don't know how to talk or play with other children? Help them develop social skills by role-playing with them. (Pretend you are another child and help your child work out acceptable approaches.) If you discover that your child is being bullied because

they have an obnoxious habit (picking their nose, for example) help them change this behaviour.

SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF BULLYING

Bullying has been compared to form of brainwashing, with the victims ending up believing that somehow they deserve to be bullied. Victims feel vulnerable and powerless. Their self-esteem may have been considerably damaged, especially if the bullying has been going on for some time, and you need to build up their self-confidence with plenty of praise and affection.

- keep telling your child that you love them very much and that you are 100% on their side
- reassure them that the bullying is not their fault
- explain that reacting to bullies by crying or becoming upset only encourages them. Victims should try not to react to the bullies' taunts. If bullies can't goad the victim into a response, they'll get bored.
- practise assertiveness techniques with your child - see the Section on Assertiveness in this booklet. Practise saying 'No' very firmly and walking away from a bully. It is hard for the bully to go on bullying if the victim doesn't get upset and just walks away
- help your child think up simple responses to the bully's most frequent taunts. Responses don't have to be brilliantly witty or funny but victims say that it helps to have a reply prepared
- try and minimise opportunities for bullying: i.e. don't take valuable possessions to school, don't be the last person in the changing room, don't linger alone in corridors. Stay with a group even if they are not your friends - there's safety in numbers
- if the bully threatens your child to get money or possessions, tell them that they should give up whatever it is the bully wants. Keeping safe is more important than keeping possessions
- make time to sit down and talk to your child - encourage them to tell you how they feel; discuss their ideas and feelings
- praise them whenever they accomplish something or whenever they behave well
- make opportunities for your child to do well; for example, let them help with tasks around the house - praise them when they carry them out
- give them responsibilities - this helps to make them feel valued and important
- make a star chart (every time they do something helpful or behave well, they get a star to stick on a chart - every five or ten stars give them

- a small treat)
- help them make a 'feel good' poster: find a happy photograph of your child and stick it in the centre of a piece of paper. Around it write down some of the pleasant things which different people have said about your child, together with reminders of the successes they've had. Put it somewhere they can see it every day
- sometimes victims become withdrawn - help them develop social skills: invite other children round (don't invite more than one at a time at first otherwise they might 'gang up' on a meek, quiet child) and arrange outings
- encourage your child to join groups like Rainbows or Scouts where they can make new friends
- try not to let your child sit around moping - they need diversions. Encourage them to develop a hobby or a sport
- encourage them to do something they are particularly good at - this will help their self-confidence

The Kidscape Beat Bullying! booklet has more suggestions for young people.

HOW TO APPROACH THE SCHOOL

When you learn that your child is being bullied, keep a diary of incidents and make a note of all injuries with photographs and details of doctor/hospital visits. A written record makes it easier to check facts. Keep a note of everyone you speak to about the bullying, and keep copies of any letters you write.

When talking to school staff try not to be aggressive, or lose your temper, or shout, or swear. A good working relationship between you and the school should help the situation.

STEPS TO BE TAKEN

Assault/Theft: If your child has been attacked or has had property stolen, you should report this to the police even if the bully is under 10, the age of criminal responsibility. Ask the police to make out a charge sheet.

Form Teacher: Contact the Form teacher: Request a meeting and ask for an investigation. Make a follow-up appointment for a week later to discuss the results of the investigation and whether action taken by the school has been successful. You might also want to discuss the problem with the Head of Year.

Accept whatever the school offers to do to help your child, i.e. arranging for your child to talk to a support teacher everyday. You may not think the arrangement will work but it is important to try out any positive solutions.

Head Teacher: if your child is still being bullied, make an appointment to see the Head Teacher. Make a short list of points you want answered - use this as a

reminder in the meeting. Ask to see the school's Discipline or Anti-bullying policy (if it has one). Find out what has happened in the past with cases of bullying. You can take a relative or friend with you as a supporter. If a meeting is not possible, write to the Head Teacher.

Board of Governors: If the bullying continues, contact the Board of Governors. The name and address of the Chairperson of the Board of Governors is available from the School Secretary. If you cannot discover the address, send your letter to the Chairperson via the School. In Scotland the equivalent of the Governing Body is the School Board.

Local Authority: If the Governors don't help, you can complain in writing to the local Director of Education. Your Town or County Hall can give you the name. Your letter should begin, 'I am writing to make a formal complaint...'

if you wish to complain to the Secretary of State for Education you can do so, using the following form of words for Grant Maintained Schools.

For Grant Maintained Schools, write to the Secretary of State for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1. Your letter should begin, 'I am writing to complain and ask you to use your powers under Section 496 and/or 497 of the Education Act 1996 because I/we believe that the school is acting unreasonably...'

Town or County Councillor/MP: If the matter is not settled speedily, contact your Town or County Councillor at the Town or County Hall. Make an appointment to see them at their 'surgery'. Ask them to speed things up. If you have written to the Secretary of State, contact your MP for help.

Another School/Home Education: If you make no headway and the bullying continues, you might have to consider sending your child to another school. You can also arrange for your child to be educated at

home. See the list at the end of this booklet for organisations which provide advice on home education.

DON'T BE PUT OFF....

Don't be put off if the school does not respond at first. Sometimes schools can be very defensive and reluctant to acknowledge that bullying is taking place. Also, if they agree that bullying is going on, it means that they have to do something about it. It is easier to pretend nothing is happening. Staff may also try to blame the victim for the bullying. This is wrong. Bullying is not the victim's fault. It is a school discipline problem and it is up to the school to sort it out. Don't be fobbed off with excuses and vague promises of 'something will be done'. Insist on action and make it clear that you will not be satisfied until you are sure that your child is no longer bullied.

YOUR CHILD'S RIGHTS

Schools are charged with a **duty of care** towards their pupils - they are said to be in loco parentis. Schools also have a duty to provide an adequate and efficient education. If your child's education is being disrupted by the bullying, you have the right to say that you believe that the school is failing in its 'duty of care'.

You have the right to complain to the Governing Body. All Governing Bodies have a parent representative. You can contact the Parent Governor or the Chairman. The Governing Body is legally bound to hear your complaint and treat it reasonably and within the law.

You do not have to send your child to school. Under Section 36 of the Education Act of 1944 parents have a legal duty to see that their child receives "*efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability, and aptitude either by regular attendance at school or otherwise*". This means that you can educate your child at home if necessary.

If the bullying is very bad and your child is extremely distressed, your doctor may decide that spending some time away from school will help him or her. Once you have a sick note from the doctor advising a spell at home, you can keep your child away from school for the duration of the sick note without fear of legal action being taken against you.

WHAT CAN THE SCHOOL DO ABOUT BULLYING?

If the school has an anti-bullying policy, it should deal with any bullying incident in accordance with the procedures set out in the policy. These anti-bullying guidelines should be familiar to every person in the school, and pupils should understand what will happen if they persist with bullying.

The school should be prepared to:

- Take the problem seriously
- Investigate the incident
- Interview bullies and victims separately
- Interview any witnesses
- Decide on appropriate action, such as:
 - obtain apology from bully/ies to victim
 - impose sanctions against bully/ies
 - inform bully/ies' parents
 - insist on return of items "borrowed" or stolen
 - insist bully/ies compensate victim
 - hold lessons/class discussions/assemblies about bullying

- provide a safe haven during school hours for victim
- provide support teacher for victim
- encourage bully to change his/her behaviour
- Hold a follow-up meeting with victim's family to report progress
- inform all members of staff about incident and action taken
- Keep a written record of incident, interviews and action taken

WHOLE SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

In its *Bullying - Don't Suffer in Silence, An anti-bullying pack for schools*, which is available from the Department for Education and Skills, the Government stated that **"Head teachers must by law have a policy to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils. Challenging bullying effectively will improve the safety and happiness of pupils, show that the school cares and make clear to bullies that the behaviour is unacceptable."**

If your child's school does not have an anti-bullying policy, ask if they are using the Government Packs. Inform the school that organisations like Kidscape have training programmes, books and videos which explain how to devise and implement an effective anti-bullying policy. In fact, Kidscape has a policy which can be used as a model by the school.

Contact the PTA and the Board of Governors. Ask when an anti-bullying policy is going to be introduced. Make a fuss about it. The more parents insist that they will not put up with bullying any longer, the more pressure there is on schools to take positive action.

COMMUNITY BULLYING

This is the name given to bullying which takes place outside school. Sometimes the bullying starts in school but then spills over into evenings and weekends. Sometimes it may begin independently of any school and only take place when the victim is at home or playing nearby. Community bullying can be very hard to deal with, especially if the bullies' parents won't intervene to stop their children tormenting others. Verbal threats, taunts and harassment are within the scope of the law although they are more difficult to prove.

The list below gives some suggestions for dealing with bullying outside school:

- keep a written record of all incidents and of all the people you talk to about the situation - this makes it easier to check facts and helps convince outsiders about what is happening
- try and find out who is doing the bullying

- if it is children from another school, contact their school and find out how they propose to control their behaviour. (If they wear a uniform, the school will not be able to claim that the bullying has nothing to do with them.) The school is responsible for pupils from the school start time to the school finish time and the school shares responsibility with parents for crimes committed off school premises during the school day
- try having a quiet word with the bullies' parents
- if the bullies are neighbours and don't respond to complaints, inform the Council/Tenants/Residents Association/Neighbourhood Watch
- tell the Council Environmental Officer about the situation
- visit the Citizens Advice Bureau and discuss the problem with their legal adviser
- find out about local self-assertiveness courses for your child (the Library or Leisure Centre should have details). Use the Assertiveness Notes in this leaflet
- enrol your child in self-defence/martial arts classes, not to turn them into Rambo but to learn self-defence skills which will help to increase their confidence
- talk to local youth leaders who may know all the children involved
- involve your children in activities which do not involve the bullies: playschemes, Scouts, Brownies, Cubs, St John's Ambulance/Red Cross/ youth groups
- seek advice from local religious leaders
- inform the police, talk to the Community Liaison Officer(CLO) and ask if they can help. They may decide to caution the bullies. If the officer you speak to is unhelpful, ask to talk to the Officer in Charge, or even try a different shift. Police responses vary from area to area
- talk to any witnesses of the bullying and/or attack - would they be prepared to back you up? To bring a charge of Verbal Assault, you need at least one witness to confirm what happened
- if possible, video, photograph or tape-record incidents. This will provide proof of what is going on. Also bullies will often stop picking on others once they realise that their behaviour is being recorded
- all physical assaults should be reported to the police even if the assailant is under 10, the age of criminal responsibility.
- take pictures of all injuries (hold a ruler against bruises to show their size) and keep a record of all medical treatment
- there are several types of assault charge which depend on how seriously the victim is hurt

Common Assault: minimal injuries (no cuts, no bruises). Parents/victim ask Magistrates Court to issue a summons to assailants to answer charge.

Aggravated Common Assault: can be caused by a child under 14 or a female
NB: Children under 16 can be victims of Common and Aggravated Assault under Section 39 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988

Actual Bodily Harm (ABH): must be bruising, cuts or blood.

Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH): broken bones, severe bruising or hospital treatment.

GBH With Intent: the victim is very seriously injured, almost killed.

Sometimes straightforward solutions don't work, and people have to solve the problem in a different way: a mother whose son was being bullied by neighbours went with him to karate classes. After six weeks they staged a public karate demonstration in front of their house: the bullying ceased instantly!

SELF ASSERTIVENESS FOR VICTIMS AND BULLIES

Read this section through with your child. Role-play difficult situations with them so that they can practise some of these techniques.

If you are a victim of bullying or if you bully other people, practising some basic self-assertiveness skills can help you feel better about yourself. Self-assertiveness training can also teach you different ways of responding to difficult or upsetting situations.

There are three response styles:

- passive
- aggressive
- assertive

Passive people behave as if other people's rights matter more than theirs

Aggressive people behave as if their rights matter more than those of others

Assertive people respect themselves and others equally.

Roughly, victims tend to be passive and bullies tend to be aggressive.

This section is about how you can change your behaviour from passive or aggressive to become assertive.

MAKING REQUESTS

- **Be clear about what you want**
- **Plan ahead and practise**
- **Make your request short and precise** (That is my pencil and I want it back)
- **Decide what you want to say and stick to it** (I would like my pencil back). You don't have to be rude but don't get side-tracked.

SAYING NO

- **When you say NO, say it firmly.**
- **Listen to your body and to your feelings:** what do you really want to say? What do you really want to do?
- **Try not to get caught up in arguments** and don't get angry or upset if you don't get your own way.
- **If you don't want to do something, don't give in to pressure.** Be firm. Remember, we have the right to say NO.
- **If you are not sure and somebody is bugging you for an answer,** say "I need more time to decide" or "I need more information".

- **Don't make excuses:** keep your body posture assertive (don't stand all hunched up in victim-mode) and look the person in the eye. The other person will know from the decisive way you are speaking and standing that you mean business. (If you find looking people in the eye hard, practise keeping eye contact within your family.)
- **Offer an alternative:** "No, I don't want to play football. Let's go for a walk instead."

When we say No to someone, we are only refusing the request. We are not rejecting the person.

DEALING WITH TAUNTS AND INSULTS

Fogging: if you respond to insults with more insults, they can build up and up until they become unbearable. Try 'fogging'.

How it works: when other people make hurtful remarks, don't argue and try not to become upset. Imagine that you are inside a huge, white fog-bank: the insults are swallowed up by the fog long before they reach you. Nothing touches you.

Reply to taunts with something short and bland: "That's what you think". "Maybe". Then walk away.

This might seem very strange at first and very hard to do but it does work and it can help you blot out insults.

Practise by thinking of the worst things the bully says to you and pretend that you are inside your fog-bank - nothing reaches you.

DEALING WITH ANGER

If you lose your temper or become violent and aggressive easily, you need to practise controlling these feelings. It is not necessarily wrong to get angry but it is wrong to take out your anger on others.

Learn to recognise the signs that you are about to 'explode' - work out what you are going to do next time you feel that you are losing your temper.

- **getting away from the situation or the person that is making you angry** - this is not 'running away'. This is just the best way of keeping yourself and others from getting hurt either through a fight or through arguments and name-calling.
- **take several deep breaths and count to ten**
- **exercise helps you let off steam** - go for a run or play football
- **practise simple relaxation exercises** - anger, stress, and anxiety are often related and if you can learn how to relax, it will be easier to control your temper. Tense every muscle in your body and then slowly relax each individual muscle, starting with your toes.

You may have to pretend a lot at first and act in a way you don't really feel. But eventually the acting will cease and you will become more assertive than you thought possible!

KLDSCAPE BOOKLIST

101 Ways to deal with Bullying, A guide for Parents, Michele Elliott, Hodder. Useful advice and information.

Bullying Wise Guide, Michele Elliott, Hodder. Practical advice about stopping bullying. For 10-14 year olds.

Beyond Bullying, Howard Martin, Gaby Shenton, Catherine Bracher-Giles. Guide to help cope with the after-effects of bullying. For age 17 and up.

Bully-Free, Michele Elliott, Gaby Shenton. Activities for young people to give them confidence to deal with bullying.

Keeping Safe, A Practical Guide to Talking with Children by Michele Elliott, Coronet. Practical, common-sense advice on everything from drugs to bullying to AIDS.

501 Ways to be a Good Parent, Michele Elliott, Hodder. Fun guide with 335 pages of practical solutions to real-life problems.

The Willow Street Kids by Michele Elliott, Macmillan. Fun, easy-to-read book for 7-11 year olds.

The Bullies Meet the Willow Street Kids, Michele Elliott, Macmillan. How the friends beat bullying, for 7-11 year olds.

Feeling Happy, Feeling Safe by Michele Elliott, Hodder. Colourful storybook for the under-5s.

How to Stop Bullying: A KIDSCAPE Training Guide, Michele Elliott, Jane Kilpatrick. Comprehensive manual establishing an effective whole school policy - 90 practical exercises for students.

Bullying: A Practical Guide to Coping for Schools, ed. Michele Elliott, Longman. Tried and tested ways to control bullying.

FREE BOOKLETS

Keep Them Safe. 16-page booklet with practical suggestions for teaching children basic safety strategies.

Stop Bullying! 20 page general booklet on dealing with bullying.

You Can Beat Bullying! A Guide for Young People. 20-page booklet for teenagers on how to solve the problem.

Why My Child? 26-page guide for parents whose children have been sexually abused.

Send a large, 60p stamped, addressed envelope to KIDSCAPE for your free copy.
KIDSCAPE, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London, SW1W 0DH.

Tel: 020 7730 3300. Fax: 020 7730 7081.

ORGANISATIONS WHICH CAN HELP

The following organisations may be able to offer additional help. Please visit our web site, www.kidscape.org.uk, and go to the *Links* section for further details

- Advice For Parents of Bullied Children. Kidscape Helpline 08451 205 204.
- DIAL UK, Disability Advice and Information Line.
- Commission for Racial Equality.

LEGAL ADVICE

- ACE, Advisory Centre for Education. Helpline:
- Children's Legal Centre Helpline
- Education Law Association (ELAS)

ADVICE ON HOME EDUCATION

- Education Otherwise.
- Home Education Advisory Service.

SCHOOL PHOBIA

- No Panic - Information and advice for all types of phobia

COUNSELLING

- Youth Access - Call for details of young people's
- Samaritans

WHAT IS KIDSCAPE AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

KIDSCAPE is a non-profit making, registered Charity which teaches children about personal safety. It was founded in 1984 by Dr Michele Elliott, a psychologist, teacher and mother of two boys. The KIDSCAPE Good Sense Defence programme has been developed to help children become better able to recognise and deal with a variety of potentially dangerous situations from bullying to coping with adults who try to harm them.

Over 2 million children in schools throughout the country are using the Kidscape programmes which are taught in a low-key, non-frightening way.

The Home Office has adopted the Kidscape 'Keep Safe' Code in its nationwide Crack Crime Campaign.

HOW IS KIDSCAPE DIFFERENT FROM OTHER CHILDREN'S CHARITIES?

Kidscape is the only national charity teaching children how to keep safe before they become victims - other children's charities try to help children who have already been victimised.

KIDSCAPE'S MESSAGE IS PREVENTION.

We all hope that children will never suffer the torment of abuse or bullying but we can't take their safety for granted.

The Kidscape programme can help protect children from bullying and abuse. It teaches children that no one should harm them and that they should tell if anyone does. Kidscape then tries to ensure that children are not victimised again.

Robert is 13. He has been bullied at school ever since he can remember. His school has now introduced an effective anti-bullying policy based on the Kidscape model. Bullying has been reduced by 80% and Robert is no longer afraid of his classmates.

Tilly is 10 and managed to escape from an attacker by kicking him and running for help. Her headmaster said that he was delighted that Tilly had paid attention to the Kidscape lessons and knew what to do.

Kidscape makes a real difference to children because it teaches them practical safety strategies they can use to keep safe.