

The Upstanders Fact/Tip Sheet

Tips:

- **Stop, pause, and breathe** before you respond. If it feels unsafe tell a trusted person.
- **Shift the focus:** Question the bullying behavior. Simple things like changing the subject or questioning the behavior can redirect the bully's focus.
- **Use humor to say something funny and redirect the conversation.** Sometimes it's hard to question or criticize bully behavior. Humor can be a great way to acknowledge the toxicity of bully-behavior without directly blaming or attacking any one person.
- **Find strength in numbers:** Bystanders can intervene as a group to show that there are several people who don't agree with the bullying.
- **Walk with the person who is the target** of bullying to help diffuse potential bullying interactions.
- **Trust your gut:** If something feels wrong, your gut is most likely telling you something. It's okay to take a step back and acknowledge that a situation may be toxic. Learning to identify a situation of bullying can be challenging, so listen to your instinct when something feels off.
- **Reach out privately to check in** with the person who was bullied to let them know you do not agree with it and that you care. It makes a difference.
- **Validate those around you.** Whether or not someone has been bullied, validating one's feelings is always appreciated. By showing empathy towards others and acknowledging that they are heard, we can foster a more kind and empathetic community.
- **Be proactive!** You can be an upstander without an incident of bullying having to take place. Take positive action to prevent bullying with some of these tips:
 - Be inclusive by welcoming others to join activities and groups
 - Be a role model for pro-social behavior by showing kindness, respect, and empathy towards others.
 - Walk or sit with/near vulnerable kids who may be targets of bullying.
 - Get involved with bullying prevention efforts at school or in the community
- **Include school staff, parents & students when developing rules and policies** around bullying. Giving students a role can be a great way to help them set their own climate of respect and responsibility. Parental involvement can reinforce these messages at home.

Tips by StopBullying.gov (edited for clarity and length):

<https://www.stopbullying.gov/prevention/bystanders-to-bullying/index.html>

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Facts:

- About 37% of young people between the ages of 12 and 17 have been bullied online. 30% have had it happen more than once (DoSomething.org / CyberBullying.org)
- Instagram is the social media site where most young people report experiencing cyberbullying, with 42% of those surveyed experiencing harassment on the platform. (DitchtheLabel.org)
- 60% of young people have witnessed online bullying. Most do not intervene. (The Children's Society)
- More than half of bullying situations (57%) stop when a peer intervenes on behalf of the student being bullied. (PACER.org)
- 4 out of 5 students (81%) say they would be more likely to intervene in instances of cyberbullying if they could do it anonymously. (Media Smarts)
- When bystanders intervene, bullying stops within 10 seconds 57% of the time (*Hawkins, D. L., Pepler, D., and Craig, W. M. (2001). Peer interventions in playground bullying. Social Development, 10, 512-527.*)

Notes: