



Definition of Bullying

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- **An Imbalance of Power**: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- **Repetition**: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

The following types of bullying are most often seen among children and adolescents:

- **Verbal**—includes name-calling; insults; making racist, sexist, or homophobic jokes, remarks, or teasing; using sexually suggestive or abusive language; threats of violence; and offensive remarks. This is the most common form of bullying.
- **Physical**—includes hitting, kicking, pinching, punching, scratching, spitting, other physical aggression, and damage to or taking someone else's belongings.
- **Relational/Social**—includes spreading untrue stories about someone, excluding from social groups (social isolation), and being made the subject of malicious rumors.
- **Sexual**—comments, abusive comments, unwanted physical contact.
- **Electronic/Cyber Bullying**—any type of bullying that is carried out via an electronic medium such as text messaging, cell phone calls, pictures or video clips via mobile phone cameras, e-mail, chat rooms, social networking sites, and other web-sites.

