



# Peer Pressure and Bullying

## Q.1 Who are peers?

Peers are people of similar age and social group. Individuals spend most of their time with their peers as they easily identify with them. Peers often influence our attitude and behaviour.



## Q2. What is peer pressure?

Peer pressure is the direct or indirect influence of your peers to behave or act in a certain way. It is the process in which individuals within the same group influence others in the group to engage in a behaviour or activity that they may not otherwise engage in. Individuals are pressurized because of the need to be accepted by their peers.

## Q3. What is positive peer pressure?

Positive peer pressure is often overlooked, but it does exist and may be described as a peer's influence to do what is right.

The outcome of positive peer pressure is always constructive. My friend pressurized me not to bunk my class.

Some examples of how positive peer pressure manifests are:

- Studying
- Helping a friend in need
- Volunteering for community service
- Joining a sports team

**My friend  
pressurized me not  
to bunk my class.**



#### Q4. What is negative peer pressure?

Negative peer pressure is harmful and against school rules, home rules and personal values. It pressurises others to do things against their will which are inappropriate and disadvantageous. The outcome of this kind of peer pressure is always negative.

Some examples of how negative peer pressure manifests are:

- Skipping school
- Vandalizing
- Smoking
- Sneaking out of the house
- Bullying
- Disrespecting others

## Ways to Say “NO” to negative peer pressure



#### Q5. How can we deal with peer pressure?

A person first needs to distinguish between positive and negative peer pressure and use life skills like critical thinking, decision making and effective communication to say 'No' to negative peer pressure and 'Yes' to positive peer pressure. There are effective and impactful ways to say 'No' to negative pressure.

1. Polite refusal
2. Give reason
3. Be firm
4. Walk away
5. Cold shoulder
6. Give an alternative
7. Reverse the pressure
8. Avoid the situation
9. Strength in numbers
10. Own your feelings

## Q6. What is bullying?

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power or perceived power over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

**Light and harmless jokes about your friend or the other person is not bullying.**

**Any comment, joke or action that hurts your friend or the other person is bullying.**



## Q7. What are the types of bullying?

There are four major types of bullying. These are :

**Physical** – includes hitting, kicking, pushing and pulling



**Verbal** – includes teasing, calling names, insulting and mocking



**Social** – includes exclusion from the group, boycotting the bullied, ignoring the person, refusal to share things and spreading rumours

Telling other kids  
not to be friends  
with someone

Excluding  
others

Spreading  
rumours



**Cyber (internet/online)** – includes the use of digital technology to harass, stalk and abuse by making fake profiles, posting pictures without permission and hurtful comments.

Prank calls on  
phones

Rude comments  
on social media  
and networking sites

Mean  
texts  
on the  
internet



## Q8. What is cyberbullying?

UNICEF describes cyberbullying as bullying with the use of digital technologies. It can take place on social media, messaging platforms, gaming platforms and mobile phones. It is repeated behaviour aimed at scaring, angering or shaming those who are targeted. Examples include:

- spreading lies about or posting embarrassing photos of someone on social media
- sending hurtful messages or threats via messaging platforms
- impersonating as someone and sending mean messages to others on their behalf



Face-to-face bullying and cyberbullying can often happen alongside each other.

But cyberbullying leaves a digital footprint – a record that can prove useful and provide evidence to help stop the abuse.



## Q9. Is cyber bullying a crime?

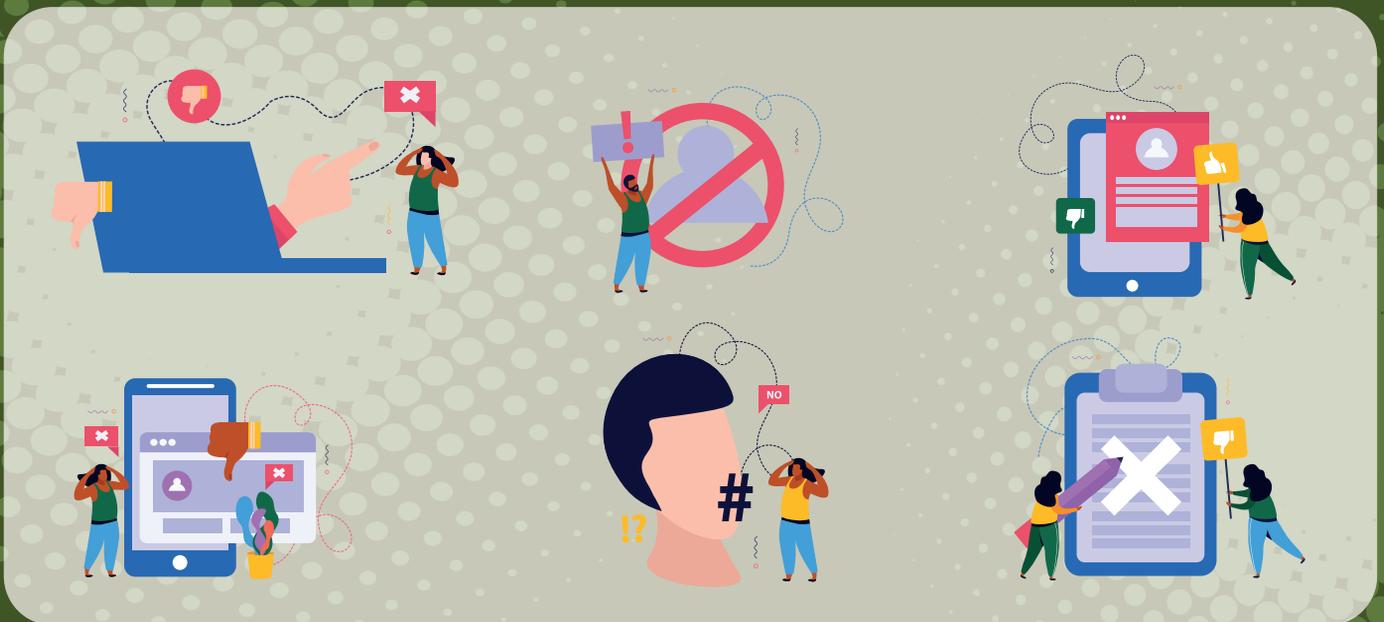
Various provisions of the IPC and the Information Technology Act, 2000 (IT Act) can be used to counter cyber bullies.

The IT act covers cyber stalking of women, online sexual harassment and uploading vulgar or obscene photos of the victim on fake profiles.

## Q10. What can I do to prevent cyber bullying?

You can follow the steps highlighted in the box below to keep yourself safe and secure-

- Don't share personal information with anyone, including your best friend
- Be careful before posting any personal information, pictures of you or others, and arranging any online or physical meetings with online friends
- Respect the privacy of other users on the internet



- Don't respond to mean, rude, alarming messages and emails that make you uncomfortable. If anything makes you uncomfortable online, tell your parents or guardians right away
- Don't respond if someone bullies you. Remember that your reaction is exactly what the bully wants
- Don't retaliate
- Save the evidence
- Block the bully

## Q11. How does bullying harm the victim?

Bullying can cause both immediate as well as long term impact on the victim. A few examples of impact on victims.

- Displaying high levels of emotion that indicate vulnerability and low levels of resilience, withdrawing socially and having low self-esteem
- Exhibiting depression, anxiety, increased feelings of sadness, loneliness
- Presenting changes in sleep and eating patterns
- Losing interest in activities they used to enjoy. These issues may persist into adulthood
- Showing decreased academic achievement and school participation. They are more likely to miss, skip, or drop out from school
- Demonstrating a higher risk of self-harm and/or suicide, in extreme cases



## Q12. What can I do if someone bullies me?

Being a victim of any kind of bullying is hurtful, and it is important for you to know two things:

- a. You are not alone
- b. It is not your fault

**These are some of the methods that we can use to tackle bullying:**

- Don't give the bully a chance/ignore the bully/walk away
- Stand tall and be brave/ be confident in yourself
- Stand up for yourself
- Don't bully back
- Feel good about yourself
- Get a buddy and be a buddy
- Tell an adult/ get help from adults/guardians/school teachers

## Q13. What can I do if someone is getting bullied in front of me?

Bullying is a reality we all face at some point in our lives and we must not be mute spectators when someone else is being bullied.

We can lend our support to the person being bullied by:

- Empathising with the victim and being non-judgemental
- Being a buddy to the victim
- Informing an adult or senior you trust when you witness bullying
- Taking a stand against bullying as a group
- Ignoring the person acting like a bully





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