



What is bullying?

What to do if you are being bullied



Updated: March 2026

What this document is about



This Easy Read document is part of the information about **Pink Shirt Day 2026**.



You can find Easy Read information about **Pink Shirt Day 2026** at this website:

<https://pinkshirtday.org.nz/resources/easyreadpinkshirtday>

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What is bullying?



Bullying is when 1 person or a group of people treats you badly.

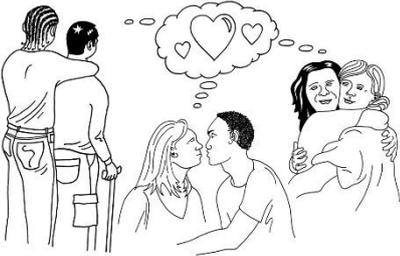
Bullying can be when someone:

- says nasty things to you / about you:
 - in person
 - online – this is called cyberbullying
- ignores you or leaves you out
- hits you / kicks you / pushes you.
- tells lies about you.

People can be bullied for their differences like their:



- culture / ethnicity – where they are from
- religion
- age
- **sexuality**
- **gender**
- body shape / size
- disability.



Sexuality is things like:

- who you are attracted to
- who you want to be in a relationship with
- if you want to be in a relationship or not.



Gender is if you are:

- a woman
- a man
- another gender like nonbinary.



People can be bullied in places like:

- schools
- workplaces.



Bullying is **never** okay.

If you are being bullied it is important to remember that:

- you are not alone
- there are people you can talk to
- support is available.



How you can help stop bullying



You can help stop bullying by being an **Upstander**.



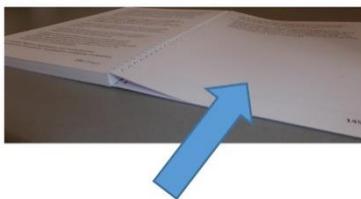
An **Upstander** is someone who helps stop bullying by:

- words they use
- actions / things they do.



More information about being an Upstander is available here:

<https://pinkshirtday.org.nz/upstander>



On **pages 8 to 15** there is more information about ways you can help someone who is being bullied.

1. Āwhinatia – Support the person being bullied



Some ways you can awahi / support someone being bullied are by:



- letting them know they are not alone
- encouraging them to ask someone they trust for support



- going with them to get support
- helping them leave the place where they are being bullied
- sharing online support pages with them like this website:



<https://pinkshirtday.org.nz/help>

2. Haukotia / Distract - Interrupt the bullying in some way

Ask the person being bullied if
they want to:

- go for a walk
- do something else.

Help them to leave the bullying
place they are in.

3. Karangahia – Call it



You can let the bully know they are doing something wrong.

Only do this if it is safe.



Use your words to show aroha / kindness to the person being bullied.



It can be hard to speak up when someone around you is being bullied.

It can make a big difference if you do.

4. Taihoa ake, ka haumaruru – Leave and act



If you do not feel safe while bullying is happening then you should move away.



Let the person being bullied know that you saw what happened.



Do this when everyone is safe.

Ask them if you can do anything to support them.



If it is safe then try talking to the person doing the bullying.

5. Tautokohia – Get some other help



Support the person being bullied to talk to someone they trust.



This could be:

- whānau / family
- kaiako / teachers
- kaimahi / people you work with
- a trusted friend
- a **helpline**.



A **helpline** is a number you can call to talk to someone who can support you.

Some helplines that you can talk to are:



Youthline:

- free phone: **0800 37 66 33**
- free text: **234**
- webchat: **<https://youthline.co.nz>**
- email: **talk@youthline.co.nz**

Youthline is for:



- young people
- parents
- whānau / family
- friends.



Some more helplines are:

1737 Need to Talk:

- free phone: **1737**
- free text: **1737**

1737 Need to Talk is for anyone who wants to talk to a trained counsellor.



Lifeline:

- free phone: **0800 543 354**
- free text: **4357**

Lifeline is for anyone who wants to talk to a trained counsellor.

Some more helplines are:



- **What's Up:**

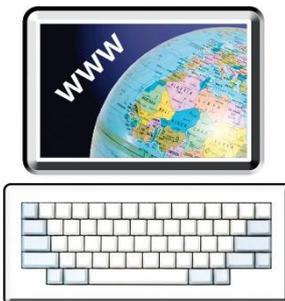
- free phone: **0800 942 8787**

- chat online:

<https://whatsup.co.nz>



What's Up is for children and young people.



There is a list of more helplines on this website:

<https://pinkshirtday.org.nz/help>

What to do if you are tamariki / child or rangatahi / young person being bullied



Bullying is **not** a part of growing up.



Everyone should feel safe:

- at home
- at school
- while playing sports
- in the community.





Some things you can do to help keep yourself safe if you are being bullied are:

- stay calm
- walk away / move away
- get support – tell someone you trust that you are being bullied like a:



- friend
- parent
- kaiako / teacher



- do not go to places that make you feel unsafe
- hang around your friends.





If you are being bullied **online** there is information on this website that can help:

<https://tinyurl.com/3255yep9>



Online can mean being on a:

- computer
- device like an iPad / tablet
- mobile phone.

This website has information on:



- what is **cyberbullying**
- what to do if you are being cyberbullied.

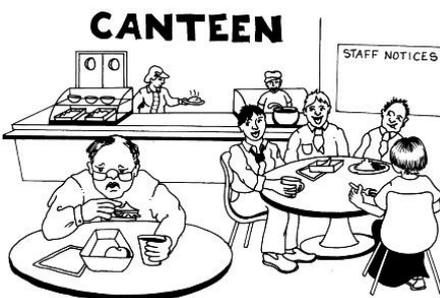
Cyberbullying is when you are bullied online.

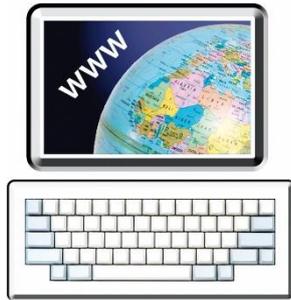
What to do if you are bullied at work



If you are being bullied at work it is important to ask for help if you:

- have trouble sleeping
- cannot finish your work
- feel:
 - sad
 - anxious
 - depressed
 - angry
 - unsafe
 - like not being with some people you work with.





Information about bullying in the workplace is available on the Pink Shirt Day website here:

<https://tinyurl.com/5xhp6p5j>

There are things you can do to stop bullying in the workplace such as:



- write down when you are being bullied



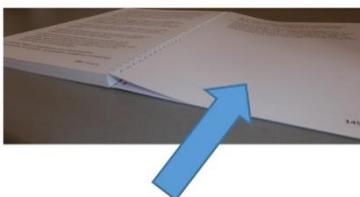
- ask for advice / support

- speak up

- follow any work rules around stopping bullying



- make a **formal complaint**.

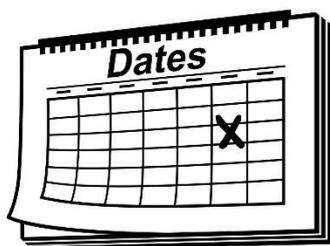


On **pages 21 to 26** we look at these things more closely.

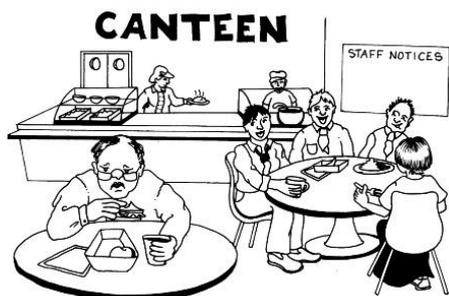
1. Write down when you are being bullied



Every time you are bullied you should write down:



- the date
- the time
- where it happened
- what happened
- who was around you
- what was said
- who said what
- how you felt.



2. Ask for advice / support

There are many people you can talk to if you are being bullied such as:



- a trusted friend
- someone you work with



- a manager
- **a union member**
- someone from an **Employee Assistance Programme**



- your local **Community Law Centre**



- the **Citizens Advice Bureau**
- a helpline.



A **union member** is someone who works at a **union**.



A **union** is an organisation that supports workers to make sure they are being treated well at work.



An **Employee Assistance Programme** is a service that supports workers with problems they have at work.



A **Community Law Centre** is a place that has people who can give legal advice.



You can use this **website** to find out where your closest Community Law Centre is:

<https://communitylaw.org.nz>



The **Citizens Advice Bureau** is sometimes called **CAB**.

CAB can assist you to:

- understand your rights
- fill out forms.



To find out more about CAB you can:

- go to this website:

www.cab.org.nz/

- call this phone number:

0800 367 222



3. Speak up

You could ask the person bullying you to stop.



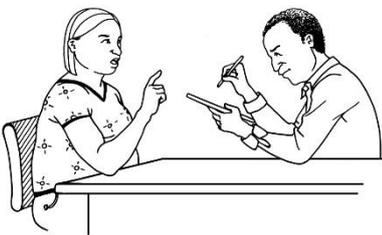
Only do this if it is safe for you.

You could talk to them:



- in person
- by email.

Tell them:



- what they do that upsets you
- how you would like them to speak to you.

4. Follow any work rules around bullying



Your workplace may already have rules around what to do if you are experiencing bullying.

5. Make a formal complaint



A **formal complaint** is when you make a written complaint about the bullying in your workplace.



Information on what should happen at your workplace after you have made a formal complaint is available on the WorkSafe **website** here:

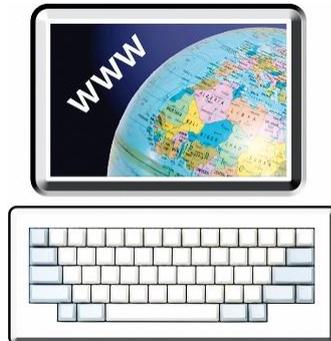
<https://worksafe.govt.nz/topic-and-industry/bullying/>

More information



More information about Pink Shirt Day is available on this website:

<https://pinkshirtday.org.nz>



Information on how to contact Pink Shirt Day is available here:

<https://pinkshirtday.org.nz/contact>



This information has been written by the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand.

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