

The scale and impact of identity-based bullying in schools

Anti-Bullying Week shines a spotlight on bullying and encourages all children, teachers and parents to take action against bullying throughout the year. The theme of Anti-Bullying Week 2017 is 'All Different, All Equal'.

It acknowledges the simple fact that children and young people are too often bullied in schools because of their race, faith, gender, disability, sexual orientation or trans status, irrespective of whether those differences are real or perceived.

Here we explain some of the evidence behind this conclusion and the messages featured in ABA and the EHRC's [video](#) for Anti-Bullying Week 2017.

54 per cent of young people have been bullied at some point during their time in school or college.

[Ditch the Label \(2017\), Annual Bullying Survey 2017](#)

Across Britain, 6 per cent of young people experience bullying on a daily basis.

[Department for Education \(2015\), Bullying: Evidence from the longitudinal study of young people in England 2, wave 2](#)

1 in 3 pupils said they had been bullied because of their identity on a monthly or more frequent basis in the past year.

[Department for Education \(2017\), Omnibus survey of pupils and their parents/carers](#)

Children with special education needs (SEN) and disabilities are particularly vulnerable

75 per cent of students with Autism / Aspergers and 70 per cent of those with a physical disability say they have been bullied compared with 50 per cent of students with no disability.

[Ditch the Label \(2017\), Annual Bullying Survey 2017](#)

Children with SEN in England are twice as likely as other children to experience bullying all of the time.

[Institute of Education, University of London \(2014\), Are disabled children and young people at higher risk of being bullied?](#)

Children and young people who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual or Transsexual (LGBT) also experience significant bullying ...

Nearly half of LGBT pupils are bullied for being LGBT at school.

Nearly 1 in 10 trans pupils are subjected to death threats at school.

[Stonewall \(2017\), School Report 2017](#)

Girls and young women often experience bullying differently to boys and young men ...

59 per cent of girls and young women aged 13–21 said that they had faced some form of sexual harassment at school or college in the past year.

[Girlguiding UK \(2014\), Girls' attitudes survey 2014](#)

19 per cent of girls and young women aged 13–21 said that they had experienced unwanted touching at school or college in the past year.

[Girlguiding UK \(2017\), Girl' Attitudes Survey 2017](#)

71 per cent of 16–18-year-old girls said they heard sexual name-calling such as “slut” or “slag” towards girls at school daily or a few times per week.

[End Violence against Women \(2010\), YouGov poll results](#)

57 per cent of girls and young women at school and college were bullied compared to 49 per cent of boys and young men.

But only 8 per cent of girls and young women admit to bullying others compared to 16 per cent of boys and young men.

[Ditch the Label \(2017\), Annual Bullying Survey 2017](#)

Race and faith are factors that lead to bullying too ...

10 per cent of young people who are bullied think it was because of attitudes towards their race while 4 per cent believe it was because of attitudes towards their religion

[Ditch the Label \(2017\), Annual Bullying Survey 2017](#)

11 per cent of young people (aged 11, 13 and 15) reported being bullied because of their ethnicity

[Brooks, F, Magnusson, J, Klemmer, E, Chester, K, Spencer, N, and Smeeton, N \(2015\), HBSC England National Report 2014. University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield, UK](#)

Bullying is pervasive with harmful effects on children and young people's attainment, ambition, emotional wellbeing and health ...

36 per cent of those bullied said that it had a moderate to high impact on their studies

[Ditch the Label \(2017\), Annual Bullying Survey 2017](#)

Half of bullied LGBT pupils feel that homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying has had a negative effect on their plans for future education

Two in five pupils who had been bullied for being LGBT have skipped school because of this bullying

[Stonewall \(2017\), *School Report 2017*](#)

Pupils who had been bullied were much less likely than those who had not been bullied to say they felt safe, healthy, achieving, supported, respected, included or happy in their school.

[Equality and Human Rights Commission \(2015\), *Prejudice-based bullying in Scottish schools*](#)

More than four in five trans young people have self-harmed and more than two in five have attempted to take their own life because of being bullied

[Stonewall \(2017\), *School Report 2017*](#)

37 per cent of students bullied in the last year developed social anxiety and 36 per cent developed depression.

[Ditch the Label \(2017\), *Annual Bullying Survey 2017*](#)

Three quarters of girls and young women said anxiety about potentially experiencing sexual harassment affects their lives in some way.

[Girlguiding UK \(2015\), *Girls' Attitudes Survey 2015*](#)

Children who were frequently bullied were over 4 times more likely to report symptoms of mental ill health than those bullied less frequently or not at all.

[Office for National Statistics \(2015\), *Insights into children's mental health and wellbeing*](#)

Many of the effects of bullying continue into adult life ...

People who were frequently bullied in childhood were more likely to use mental health services in childhood, adolescence and also in mid-life, compared with people who were not bullied in childhood.

At age 50, those who had been bullied in childhood were more likely to have anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts, and to be less satisfied with their lives than those who had never been bullied.

[Evans-Lacko, S., Takizawa, R., Brimblecombe, N., King, D., Knapp, M., Maughan, B., & Arseneault, L. \(2016\). Childhood bullying victimization is associated with use of mental health services over five decades: a longitudinal nationally representative cohort study. *Psychological Medicine*, 1-9. DOI: 10.1017/S0033291716001719](#)

Bullied children were also more likely to suffer physical health problems in middle age.

Men and women who suffered childhood bullying were also at greater risk of heart disease, diabetes and other illnesses.

[Takizawa, R.; Danese, A.; Maughan, B.; Arseneault, L. / Bullying victimization in childhood predicts inflammation and obesity at mid-life: a five-decade birth cohort study. In: Psychological Medicine, 10.2015.](#)

There can be no place for bullying in schools if children and young people are to exercise their right to learn free from discrimination and to realise their potential. However, children and young people are not always confident that schools can provide the support they need ...

63 per cent of students bullied in the last year reported it to someone, mainly to a teacher ...

...but 37 per cent never told anybody.

[Ditch the Label \(2017\), Annual Bullying Survey 2017](#)

Fewer than two thirds of pupils, in Scotland, reported either general or prejudice-based bullying while less than half of pupils who reported it to a teacher felt it had helped their situation.

[Equality and Human Rights Commission \(2015\), Prejudice-based bullying in Scottish schools](#)

A third of pupils in England said they had been bullied at least monthly for a reason related to their identity. However, just 9 per cent of parents/carers reported being aware that their child had been bullied monthly or more often for any reason.

[Department for Education \(2017\), Omnibus survey of pupils and their parents/carers](#)

Only 55 per cent of Year 10 pupils had confidence in their school's ability to help them if they were bullied.

Pupils experiencing frequent and sustained bullying also had less confidence that their school could help them, when compared to other pupils.

[Welsh Government \(2010\), Survey into the prevalence and incidence of school bullying in Wales](#)

As pupils get older, they become less confident that the school will be able to resolve bullying issues.

[Estyn \(2014\), Action on bullying](#)

Teachers had least confidence in dealing with bullying related to trans pupils, pregnancy and maternity, asylum seekers and refugees, and Gypsy and Traveller children.

[Equality and Human Rights Commission \(2015\), Prejudice-based bullying in Scottish schools](#)

Fewer than a third of bullied LGBT pupils say that teachers intervened when they were present during the bullying

[Stonewall \(2017\), School Report 2017](#)

54 per cent of 7-10 year old girls said they wanted to learn about how to deal with bullying at school

This Anti-Bullying Week we're asking schools and education authorities to understand who is being bullied in their own schools and to take action to prevent and tackle this issue.

Let's celebrate difference and help more children and young people feel safe and realise their potential.