ARTICLE SET 1: Bullying

What do you learn from these news articles about bullying?

BULLYING

WHY DOES IT HAPPEN?

THE LOWDOWN

Bullying is something that can affect anyone, from famous footballers to young people in school. People can suffer from:

- Physical bullying: hitting, kicking, pushing
- Verbal bullying: name-calling, shouting, threatening
- Cyberbullying: hurtful messages online, upsetting pictures

So, what drives bullies to do it? That can be hard to pinpoint exactly. Some of the motivating factors include:

- Race
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Faith
- Appearance
- Disability

The important thing to remember is that bullying is never okay. Everyone is different and that's a good thing!

LYDIA'S STORY

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LYDIA, 16, was bullied at school for three years.

"My experience of bullying was online and face to face, but sometimes it got physical. It started when I was ten years old. People would usually shout horrible remarks at me, comment and text mean messages and make meme pages of me.

Why? It was because of my hobbies and the things I do. I love acting and making YouTube videos – and they would mock me for the way I looked. People would also exclude me from games and ignore me in activities. It made me feel like I wasn't good enough and a failure because I didn't know how to stop it. I lost my self-esteem and it made me upset.

I found it hard to tell people and faced it alone. In some ways that makes you feel more vulnerable and not strong, as you're not coping. I eventually told someone. My family supported me through it as well as my teachers.

It's hard to speak out because you don't want to be known as someone who isn't strong enough. Young people try to fit in with the "be tough" and "don't be a baby" sort of stereotypes.

But speaking out isn't weak. Speaking out shows how strong and brave you are and it makes you feel better as you get support to stop the bullying. As Anti-Bullying Ambassadors in our school, we are a visible presence, so that people who are experiencing bullying behaviour know that they have someone to speak to in confidence."

ARTICLE SET 2: Tackling bullying

What do you learn from these news articles about what is being done to prevent bullying?

FirstNews ● Issue 787 ● 16 – 22 July 2021

WHAT'S IN THE ONLINE SAFETY BILL?

THE Government is introducing a new set of laws that aim to protect people from harm on the internet, including some relating specifically to children. A draft version of the Online Safety Bill has been published and has been met with both praise and criticism, and some campaigners say that the UK should be in charge of policing the internet here, not social media companies in America. We put some questions to Caroline Dinenage, the Government's Minister of State for Digital and Culture, to find out what the bill will do for children.

FirstNews ● Issue 799 ● 8 – 14 October 2021

SCOTLAND

● **LGBT-inclusive lessons begin**

Scotland has become the first country in the world to include LGBT education across the school curriculum. The news means pupils will learn all about LGBT issues, such as same-sex marriage and same-sex parenting, and about different events in history. There will be resources and a website with information to support young people. It's hoped the move will promote equality and tackle bullying in schools.

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FirstNews ● Issue 808 ● 10 – 16 December 2021

SCHOOL BULLYING TO BECOME CRIME

Politicians in France have approved new laws that would make school bullying a crime. The bullying rules can apply to both pupils and staff, while punishment for the crime could result in up to three years in jail or a €45,000 (£38,400) fine. However, Erwan Balanant, the man who drafted the new rules, said they were "not about sending children to prison" but rather about sending a strong message to society that bullying will not be tolerated.

ARTICLE SET 3: Beating the bullies

What do you learn from these news articles about how to beat bullying?

BEAT BULLYING WITH KINDNESS

IT'S Anti-Bullying Week from Monday 15 – Friday 19 November, with this year's theme being One Kind Word.

The week, organised by the Anti-Bullying Alliance, aims to highlight how serious the issue of bullying is for children and young people.

It will kick off with Odd Socks Day on 15 November, supported by CBBC star Andy Day and his band, Andy and The Odd Socks. The day encourages everyone, young and old, to express themselves and celebrate what makes us all different and unique.

This year, being kind is more important than ever. You could ask someone if they're okay or simply compliment someone on their outfit, for instance. One kind word can go a long way.

To find out more, and how you can get involved, visit **anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk**.

NEED SUPPORT?

CHILDLINE

ChildLine is the UK's free, confidential helpline for children and young people.
Helpline: 0800 1111
Website: childline.org.uk

EACH

EACH has a freephone Helpline for children experiencing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or harassment.
Helpline: 0808 1000 143

THE MIX

Offers support to anyone under 25 about anything that's troubling them.
Helpline: 0808 808 4994
Website: www.themix.org.uk/get-support

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

TIME TO SPEAK UP

From name-calling to spreading lies online, bullying behaviour can take many different forms. Every day, thousands of young people experience it. Often they won't speak out about the problem because they might not know who to tell or be scared of the consequences if they do. Young person's charity The Diana Award wants to change this and show that help and support is available.

ARTICLE SET 3: Beating the bullies

What do you learn from these news articles about how to beat bullying?

FirstNews ● Issue 804 ● 12 – 18 November 2021

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU'RE BULLIED?

One idea from Ruby, is "if someone's sending nasty messages over a social media site, just take some screenshots or screen recordings so you've got a record of it, and then just block them".

"If they still find a way to keep on bullying you, then I reckon you should tell an adult you trust. It can be a mum, a dad or even a teacher at school."

Katie also advises that "it is always a good idea to try to talk to a trusted adult like a parent or a teacher, but if you feel like you can't do that there are helplines as well that you can call".

After all, as Katie says, we should try to remember that we "should never feel ashamed or embarrassed about the fact that you've been bullied. So many people get bullied – I was bullied – it doesn't matter what you look like, what clothes you wear, how you talk – we're all really different, but that's what makes us really special and amazing. Be proud of who you are".

It's never good to ignore bullying, since it can start to have an impact on your mental health.

Ruby reckons the best thing to do is to talk about it and get it sorted before it turns into an even bigger problem – and we agree here at *First News*!

FirstNews ● Issue 798 ● 1 – 7 October 2021

KEEPING OTHERS SAFE ONLINE!

Don't engage with nasty comments

It can be difficult when you see someone being bullied and left mean comments online, and you might want to step in. However, whenever you reply, like or share a post, you make that post more popular. This could mean that more people see it. Commenting can also encourage bullies to reply or say nasty things to you directly. Instead, you can screenshot the comments and show them to a trusted adult.

Send a message of support

If someone you know is being bullied, then one of the best ways you can help out is by letting them know that you're there for them. You could send a private message, or talk to them in person. It can also help to do things you both enjoy together, like watching a film or playing a game, to help take their mind off the bullying.

Report posts and people

If you see something you don't like, or something that might hurt someone's feelings, report the post. It's also important to block people who are negative online. If your friend is being bullied or receiving online hate, show them how to block and report people or content.

Be sure to tell someone if you see anything online that you're unsure about

Think before you post

When you're posting something online, think about who might see it. Would you be happy for your parents, carers or teachers to see it? Could what you've written be considered rude or upsetting to someone that reads it? If you're not sure, then maybe you shouldn't be posting or commenting.

Posting negative things back to people who are bullying others online can sometimes make things worse. Help your online space to be a positive place! By creating content and commenting positive messages, you encourage others to do the same.