
Defining Bullying Behavior

According to Pacer.org, bullying behavior can be broken down into five categories.

Verbal

This is the most common type of bullying and the easiest to inflict on other children. It can include:

- Teasing and name-calling
- Making threats or intimidating the target
- Demeaning jokes, rumors, gossiping and slandering
- Harassment based on sexual orientation

Physical

This is usually the easiest type to recognize since it is visible and can include:

- Physical contact such as hitting, kicking, pushing, pulling hair, or biting
- Unwelcome contact
- Throwing objects
- Taking or damaging property


With this type of bullying, there is a perceived intent to harm, which can also include instances of “pretending” to physically harm the target.

Social/Emotional

This is the most sophisticated of all types of bullying, generally very calculated and often done in groups. It is often the most difficult for children to define or recognize as bullying. Social/Emotional Bullying can include:

- Alienating or excluding others from groups, clubs, cliques, or activities
- Purposefully ignoring or giving the “silent treatment”
- Spreading rumors or damaging another’s reputation
- Publicly humiliating others or making fun of them





Because it is often subtle, children may not understand why it is happening to them and they may feel as if they have done something to deserve it. Social/Emotional bullying is generally difficult for the casual observer to detect since they do not have full knowledge of the social structure surrounding the individuals or behavior.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is the use of technology to harass, hurt, embarrass, humiliate, or intimidate another person. Cyberbullying can include:

- Emails or text messages that include lies, threats, gossip, sexual harassment, hate speech, or ridicule
- Releasing someone's personal information online, such as name, address, or school
- Encouraging others to electronically pass on hurtful information

Sexual

Sexual bullying is often the most difficult for children to report or discuss and can include:

- Sexually-charged comments
- Inappropriate or lewd glances
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Lewdness or exposing private body parts in a public setting
- Sexual assault

Even though this subject may be uncomfortable to talk about, children need to know acceptable boundaries and appropriate behavior in social relationships. They need to be provided with the appropriate social rules and norms for dating and flirting so they can act with respect toward their peers, and recognize when someone is not respecting them sexually.

If your child encounters any of these types of bullying, take action. For information on what to do and how to report it, visit the Utah Parent Center website:

<https://utahparentcenter.org/resources/bullying/>