

# Don't be a bully, don't be bullied either



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**S**ixteen-year-old Vivek joined a boarding school in Ooty. Initially, he was very excited about making new friends and going to a boarding school. It had always been his dream but after two-three months he started falling in subjects he had earlier topped in.

Teachers also started complaining about his behaviour. His studies, and even his extra-curricular interests, took a back seat as he refused to stay in school. One day he gulped a handful of sleeping pills and had to be admitted to hospital.

The school authorities asked his parents to take him back. After bringing him home, his parents learnt that he was being bullied by a group because he had been doing well. They had to search for a new school and the boy had to repeat a class. It took him a while to return to his normal self.

Bullying is a problem that strikes early and strikes hard.



Most of us might know at least one person who has taken teasing or name-calling to another level and disrespected personal boundaries. In other words, each of us knows at least one bully. It is a problem that is mostly kept hush-hush but in some situations can get really out of hand. Many children in schools and parks in neighbourhood groups and birthday parties silently tolerate being bullied and are that much the worse for it.

## Who is a bully?

A bully is a person who picks on someone weaker and derives pleasure in tormenting them physically, emotionally or psychologically. Bullies like to be in a position of power and often enjoy being feared.

## What is the reason behind bullying?

Bullies are primarily atten-

tion-seekers. They want to be noticed for their loud and mostly obnoxious behaviour. They pick on weak and vulnerable opponents so that chances of their being defeated are almost zero.

Control is another major aspect of bullying. Bullies have to feel that they have a high degree of control over their victims. The more the individual reacts or shows fear, the more pleasure the bullies derive out of it.

## What to do if you are being bullied?

Bullies target your self-confidence. So the most important thing to do is to show that you are not afraid. Don't cry or react to their actions because that is what they would like you to do. Ignoring them is good too because they thrive on attention.

Tell an adult about the bullying — be that a teacher, a parent or an older sibling.

## THEY ARE BULLIES TOO



*Mean Girls* is a 2004 American teen comedy film directed by Mark Waters. The screenplay, written by Tina Fey, is based in part on the non-fiction book *Queen Bees and Wannabes* by Rosalind Wiseman, which describes how female high school social cliques operate and the effect they can have on girls. The film stars Lindsay Lohan and features a supporting cast of Tina Fey, Rachel McAdams, Lacey Chabert, Amanda Seyfried (in her film debut), and Lizzy Caplan.

The fourth title in the *Kissing Hand* book collection, *Chester Raccoon and the Big Bad Bully* sees Chester Raccoon coping with another common problem of childhood: a bully at school. Inspired by Mrs Raccoon, Chester, Runny and Cassy decided to approach the bully as a group. They invite him to play proving that the best way to get rid of an enemy is to make him or her a friend.



Talk about it with friends, share your experience to gather support. There is strength in numbers.

## How to stop being a bully

To stop being a bully, the first step would be to accept that you are one. It is not easy to admit to that your "harmless" teasing and practical jokes might be bullying to those at the receiving end.

The next step would be to put yourself in place of the person you are teasing and imagine how you would feel. Especially if the teasing is in front of others they might be feeling humiliated. I am sure you would not like feeling small in front of your friends and peers. Once you do this simple mental exercise you might not feel as inclined to poking fun at others as usual. The change will be good for you! Instead of earning fear you might earn friends!

## Checklist

Take the following quiz to know if you are a bully. If your answer is "yes" to 1 or 2 questions, you might be a bully in the making. Stop now before it is too late. If your answer is "yes" to more than 3 questions, you are definitely a bully and you might need help to stop behaving in this manner.

- Do you pick on people who are smaller than you, or on animals?
- Do you like to tease or taunt other people?
- If you tease people, do you like to see them get upset?
- Do you think it's funny when other people make mistakes?
- Do you like to take or destroy other people's belongings?
- Do you want other students to think you're the toughest kid in school?
- Do you get angry a lot and stay angry for a long time?
- Do you blame other people for things that go wrong in your life?
- Do you like to get revenge on people who hurt you?
- When you play a sport or game, do you always have to be the winner?
- If you lose at something, do you worry about what other people will think of you?
- Do you get angry or jealous when someone else succeeds?

## SNAPSHOTS OF LIFE ON SCHOOL CAMPUS



### Holi blast

The girls of Lower Nursery Section D of La Martiniere for Girls had a blast at a Holi party hosted by their mothers. The party took place at mom Megha Kejriwal's terrace. Twenty mothers joined hands to make the party a success. They all cooked something for the kids. The kids enjoyed a splash and the colouring competition was an instant hit. "The excellent music was the highlight of the party. My daughter and I had a great time," said Padmeshree Kathotia who made mini cupcakes for the kids. "I loved the food and kept coming back for more," she added. "I had a great time at the party. I gave *pichkaris* to all my classmates present there," said Divah Kathotia.



### Rally for rights

The girls of Mahadevi Birla World Academy stood for women's rights and gender sensitisation as they took part in a walk, *From Darkness to Light*. They marched from their school to Park Circus and back to raise awareness among the people that "women are not a victim". They were joined by their peers at La Martiniere for Boys and also the girls and mothers of Mahadevi Birla's integrated school Little Angels. "It is important for women to be proud of their identity and to let people know that when they say no it means a no," said Anjana Saha, the principal of Mahadevi Birla World Academy. The girls also performed a flash mob.

Text by Jhinuk Mazumdar, pictures by Anindya Shankar Ray



## Spirit of sports

Inactivity is a silent killer. Activity instils in us a spirit of adventure.

Exercise helps sculpt the body in artistic form and in having a better body constitution and, therefore, stay in fine fettle. It helps in advancing the strength of mind and achieving control over it. One does not always need to hit the gym to exercise — brisk walking, light jogging, other light exercises and sports can do much more.

Some parents not only stop their interests after putting their children in some sports institutions but also actively monitor the interest of their child and never let their spirit waver. Today's children not only take profound interest in



Meditation learnt for one purpose comes to help in many ways. It increases the much-needed concentration power in the youth, enhances the breathing process helping in calming the body.

Children have a natural inclination for sports and games from where they derive exercise in a fun and agreeable manner. They can return to their studies and other chores, feeling rejuvenated and energised. Physical fitness is essential to students for procuring distinctions in examinations as ailing bodies do not make sharp minds.

Participating in a sport also inculcates in the student the ability to handle pressure with an optimistic view and still perform well to win and teaches them to lose graciously upholding the sportsman

spirit. Therefore those parents, who think that sports and exercise limit the time their children have to focus on their studies, must think twice. Any sport instils in children the sporting spirit. It is necessary not only in the field of sports and games but also in everyday life. It helps us handle life's problems and challenges with greater alacrity and with greater proficiency.

In India, which is a land of diversity, the spirit to remain united can never fall short and therefore, every sport needs our support and encouragement to add to the spirit of unity and to champion the strength of mind and body of an individual for which India has always been popular and thus enabling to live a longer and happier life.



### Silver jubilee for Sahay

Sahay (Social Action for Helping All Youth) celebrated 25 years of its journey with a programme at Science City mini auditorium recently. The organisation was established in 1989. It is an affiliated agency of Children International, a charitable organisation based in Kansas City, Missouri, the US. Children International operates a network of over 80 community centres located in 11 countries. The organisation's Sponsored Children (Past & Present) & volunteers participated in the programme in the presence of a host of dignitaries. A welcome dance kick-started the event followed by the lighting of the lamp, a short film on the journey of SAHAY and speech of the guests &



dignitaries. The kids performed to *O Ganga tumi boichho keno* and also enacted a skit on child labour along with volunteers of the organisation. There was also a yoga display.

### Annual sports

Asian International School held its annual sports day at the school ground recently. Students from classes LKG-VII participated in the meet. The event started with march past by the students of four houses — Einstein, Gandhi, Ashoka and Teresa. Principal Joyita Majumder and patron Shashi Sharma hoisted the National Flag. The highlight of the day was the dress competition, held for the students of LKG. The children came dressed in colourful costumes of their choice. The best three dressed students were given gift hampers. The ribbon drill and pom pom drills by students added colour to the event. The mass drill was followed by events like Get Ready Race, Spoon and Marble Race, Sack Race and Skipping Race for classes II-V. For classes VI & VII, there were the 50m flat race and hurdles. Parents also participated very enthusiastically in Fathers 50m flat race and Mothers 25m walking race. Ashoka (Green House) was awarded as the best house and Einstein got the award for best house in the march past.

