

# **This week is Anti-bullying Week – #OneKindWord**

**The annual event to raise awareness of bullying of children and young people gets underway today. The theme is One Kind Word designed along with young people and adapted by the UK's leading anti-bullying organisations including the anti-bullying service [respectme](#).**

Adeniyi Alade, Head of Childline in Scotland, said: "Each year, we hear from hundreds of children in Scotland who are being bullied. We know that the pandemic has been extremely tough for children as they have grappled with home schooling, being isolated from family and friends and worries about the virus. On top of this, some children were also being bullied.

"Children experiencing bullying online have told our counsellors that during lockdowns it felt even more overwhelming. The extra time they were spending online for their education, entertainment and to keep in contact with friends and family was making the bullying feel inescapable.

"Although for other children, the lockdowns provided some respite from the bullying they had previously experienced. But this meant that they felt anxious at the thought of returning to school.

"As we continue to move out of the pandemic and adjust to the

new normal, it is essential that children know where to turn to for support. Our trained counsellors are always here for children and believe that no child should have to deal with bullying alone.”

- In 2020/21, Childline delivered 334 counselling sessions about bullying to children living in Scotland.
- More than a quarter (29%) of these were about online bullying.
- In 2019/20, Childline delivered 558 counselling sessions about bullying (in person and online) to children living in Scotland.
- The data shows that there was a 40% reduction in total counselling sessions about this issue in the year of the pandemic, which included lockdowns and children not attending school for months. However, there was only a fall in counselling sessions about bullying in person (464 sessions in 2019/20 and 238 in 2020/21). There was no reduction in the number of sessions for online bullying (94 sessions in 2019/20 and 96 sessions in 2020/21).

## **Advice from NSPCC and Childline**

### **For children**

- 1. Share how you are feeling with other young people.** Childline’s online [message board](#) is a non-judgemental space where you can speak to other children who are in a similar situation to you about your experiences and feelings. This can help you feel less alone and will give you an online support network that you can turn to.
- 2. Talk to an adult you trust** about the bullying you are experiencing so you feel less alone and so that adult can support you. This could be a parent, teacher or you can speak to a Childline counsellor on 0800 1111 or

online at [childline.org.uk](https://www.childline.org.uk)

3. **Take a break** from your device if you are being bullied online and do something you enjoy such as sport, listening to music or art.
4. **Remember** the bullying is not your fault.
5. **Get into a healthy routine** and make sure you look after yourself by eating healthily, getting enough sleep and taking time out for yourself.
6. **Report** and block someone if they are sending you messages online that upset you.

### **For Adults:**

#### **Signs to spot that your child may be being bullied online:**

- Not wanting to go to school or take part in normal activities.
- Getting anxious or angry if you go near their device.
- Feeling withdrawn, upset or angry at home.
- Problems sleeping or eating.
- Having angry outbursts that seem out of character.
- Spending more or less time online than normal.

#### **Signs to spot that your child may be being bullied in person**

- Belongings are getting lost or damaged.
- Physical injuries such as unexplained bruises.
- Being afraid to go to school.
- Not doing as well at school.
- Being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn.
- Problems with eating or sleeping.
- Bullying others.

#### **What to do if you think your child is being bullied**

1. **Talk** to your child and remind them to come to you with anything that might be making them feel anxious or sad. If your child speaks to you about an experience of

bullying that they've had online or in person, try to remain calm and don't overwhelm them with questions and reassure them that it will be ok, and that you're always there for them.

2. **Show them how to report or block** a message that they've received from someone online that upsets or worries them.
3. **Don't take their device away** if they've had a negative experience online. Although you may want to do this if they are upset, this may make them feel like whatever has happened is their fault. Instead, suggest they take some time away from the app they received the messages on and do another online activity they enjoy like playing a game.
4. **Know where you can get further support.** Adults can call the [NSPCC](#) helpline for advice on 0808 800 5000. There is also further advice on the NSPCC website.

# Anti-Bullying Week

15-19 November 2021

**ONE  
KIND  
WORD**



is spreading kindness for **#AntiBullyingWeek #OneKindWord**



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