

# Teasing and Sarcasm

Some teasing is done in good-natured fun; but when teasing gets out of control, it can be hurtful. Before jokingly teasing a friend, ask yourself these questions:



Is this an okay subject to tease someone about?

Will my friend understand that I'm teasing?

Have I been teasing my friend a lot lately?

Will this get on my friend's nerves?

If you are teased and you don't like it, resist the urge to hit or push your friend. You can ignore the teasing and simply walk away, or you can respond to the teasing by trying to diffuse the situation. Try making statements like these:

- "And your point is...?"
- "I've heard that one in primary school"
- "Tell me when you get to the funny part"
- "Can't you think of anything important to say?"
- "I'm sorry, were you speaking to me?"

**Sarcasm can be a form of teasing.** The words in this kind of teasing are nice, but the way the words are spoken adds to the teasing of sarcasm. When you use nice comments to be sarcastic, you exaggerate the expression in your voice and on your face. Say each phrase on the left in a sarcastic tone to show the meaning on the right.

"Yeah, whatever"	means:	You are not bothered
"Ah, well done"	means:	That's stupid
"Pizza face"	means	Spotty face

Before you tease someone, ask yourself this question:

Am I treating this person the way I would like to be treated?



# Facts about bullying

## **Bullying:**

- Is any behaviour by an individual or a group that deliberately harms another.
- Can be physical or involve threats of physical harm.
- Can be name-calling or spoken teasing.
- Can be demanding money or things, or making someone do something they do not want to do.
- Can involve excluding someone (deliberately leaving someone out of an activity, ignoring them etc.)
- Is usually repeated over a period of time.
- Takes place when one person or group has more power than the person or group being bullied.

## **Bullying is not:**

- An accidental bump or jostle, in the school corridor, for example.
- An argument with a friend.
- A friend being nasty over something specific.
- A one-off fight or argument.

## **Why do people bully?**

- Very few people who are happy with themselves bully others
- Sometimes bullies have been bullied themselves - they are looking for someone to take their anger out on.
- Sometimes bullies are jealous.
- Bullying can make people feel strong, respected and powerful, but they often feel bad too.

# What to do about bullying

## What can you do if you are bullied?

- Keep being positive; say positive things about yourself and other people.
- Be proud of who and what you are (we all belong to different groups and are all equally valuable).
- Don't keep it to yourself: Always tell someone- a teacher, a parent or another adult.
- Think about the consequences of the different ways you might deal with bullying.
- Some ways of dealing with it are:-
  - Ignoring it or staying relaxed, fogging (see next page)
  - Being assertive- using your body language, eye-contact, tone of voice, words you say.
  - Remember why people bully.

## Six good reasons to tell:

- You have the right to live without the stress or fear of being bullied.
- Taking action is better than doing nothing.
- There is nothing embarrassing about being bullied- think how many people it happens to.
- It is braver to tell than to hide it.
- If you think there is something wrong with you, is it because the bullies have made you feel this way? This is a common effect of being bullied and **IT IS NOT TRUE**.
- Bullying does not say anything about **YOU**. It says a lot about the **BULLY**. (If you call me a hippopotamus, does it mean that I am one?)

# Creating a Fog

Creating a 'Fog' is a technique that you can use if you feel you are being bullied.

- Remind yourself that the bully has said this to many other people - what they say tells us more about the bully than about you.
- The bully wants to see your reaction - don't give them that satisfaction.
- Imagine a huge cloud of fog around you that swallows up insults so that they cannot affect you.
- Use a normal bored-sounding voice.
- Say something neutral:
  - "Yeah, whatever"
  - "If you say so"
  - "Well, you could be right"
  - "maybe"
  - "Ummm"
  - "Yes that's true, I do wear glasses"
- Make sure your body language, tone of voice and the words you use all give the same message:

**'I'm really not bothered by anything you say or do'**

**Stick with it.** It might not work the first time.

## **Remember:**

- Always tell someone. Do not go through this alone.
- Telling someone will not make it worse; it will make things better.
- Mum and dad (or whoever looks after you) will be there for you.
- Your school will not tolerate bullies. Your teachers want you to be happy.
- You are great and wonderful! It is okay to be different and to have other hobbies and interests.  
Be proud of yourself.
- Everyone makes mistakes and gets things wrong – but that does not justify bullying!
- Bullying is always wrong – no one deserves it; so speak up and you will get help.