

Girls Who Bully Other Girls

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Boys who get angry with each other often work things out quickly and physically. They fight by pushing and throwing punches! When girls get angry at each other, they more often act by using hurtful words or withholding friendship. Their bullying is quieter and often goes unnoticed. But the results are just as painful as a physical punch. Unless you are aware of what is happening, you may miss it entirely.

How Girls Bully

Here are some common ways a girl might bully another girl.

Teasing	Taunting
Name-calling	Pushing
Exclusion	Mean looks
Insults	Whispering
Telling untrue stories	

Why Girls Bully

When a child or teen uses bullying techniques, her purpose is to take away the other girl's confidence or power. You might not see the bullying take place because it often occurs during unstructured times of day, such as free time or mealtimes. It usually takes place when there is not a lot of adult supervision.

Why are girls mean to each other? Sometimes the hurtful behaviours are unintentional. Younger girls or those new to an environment may be trying to fit in. They may not know how to do this and can be ridiculed or hurt by other girls because they make social mistakes. Often time will take care of these types of problems. Other times, a bullied girl may need an adult's counsel.

The Bully Herself

Often a girl who is bullying others is fighting her own battles. She may be lonely, insecure, and angry. She may be overwhelmed by serious problems, such as suffering from physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. The bully may be confused and wrongly think that by bullying she is being a leader. She may be jealous or lack confidence in herself. This girl may be seeking attention or simply trying to fit into her social setting.

How Can Leaders Help?

What can caregivers do about bullying? Begin by talking. Help every girl to understand what is acceptable behaviour and what is not. Many may not have thought about how their actions are making other girls' lives miserable. Let them know that bullying is always wrong. Making someone else feel unimportant or worthless is always wrong.

When you identify a girl who has been bullied by other girls, talk to her alone about this serious problem. Make sure she knows it is not her fault. Talk to her about her feelings. Let her know that she is not alone and she has no reason to be ashamed. If you see behaviours in her that encourage the abuse, talk to her about them and how she might begin to change.

How Can the Victim Help Herself?

Sometimes she cannot. Let her know that she can come to you if she cannot handle the situation. But here are some things you can suggest she do:

- Tell the other girl to stop the behaviour. She might admit how much it hurts. Sometimes this works.
- Try ignoring it. Help her to focus on what is positive in her relationships. Remind her again that she is not alone.
- Tell an adult.

Although bullying (often called relational aggression) can never be eliminated entirely, it is important for girls to understand that they will feel better about themselves and each other when they learn to be kind, especially to the girl who does not fit in. God is our Heavenly Father, and He loves each child and teen. When His children hurt each other, on purpose or by accident, they hurt Him.