








YAS MODULE: Online Bullying

WHAT'S INSIDE:

- What is Online Bullying?
- Is it Really Just Banter?
- Online Bullying and the Law
- Responding to Online Bullying Incidents
- Reaching Out for Support
- Life after bullying
- Take a stand against online bullying!
- Sample Action Plan

Key Learning Objectives

-  Be able to identify different types of online bullying
-  Be able to differentiate between bullying and banter
-  Identify and understand the laws around online bullying and harassment
-  Identify the steps to effectively respond to bullying incidents
-  Be motivated to stand-up to online bullying when it happens

Hello

Introduce yourself to the group:

Tell the group your name and a little about who you are and why you are here today.

Explain your role as a local YAS leader.

The Netsafe YAS are a group of young people who care about making a positive difference for other young people around the country. We discuss online safety topics and identify solutions to the challenges young people may face online. Together we can empower each other to make safer choices online and learn how to access support when things do go wrong.

Introduce your topic and explain what your action will cover.

Today we will be talking about online bullying and how to recognise and respond to incidents. We will touch on the laws around online bullying and harassment and learn how to effectively respond when we or someone we know is being bullied online. At the end, we'll talk about what it means to be an upstander and how each of us can lead positive changes within our school.

Kick it off

An energiser or ice breaker activity is a great way to start your Action. An effective energiser will be fun, energetic and make everyone feel more comfortable participating in your Action.

Create discussion with conversation starters

Before you begin, you can introduce the group to your topic by giving them questions to think about and discuss. Here are some examples or you can make up your own.

- 1 How is online bullying different from other forms of bullying?
- 2 Why do you think some people choose to bully others online?
- 3 What can online bullying look like?
- 4 How does it make you feel to see or hear about someone being bullied online?
- 5 Do you think social media networks have a duty to protect users against online bullying? Explain.

What is online bullying?

Online bullying is when someone does things online to another person that causes them fear, distress or another negative emotion – they are doing it on purpose and it's not usually just a one-time thing. Online bullying can be private (e.g. in direct messages or by text) or more public (e.g. public posts or in a public group).

There are a few ways that online bullying is different to other types of bullying. Here are some examples:

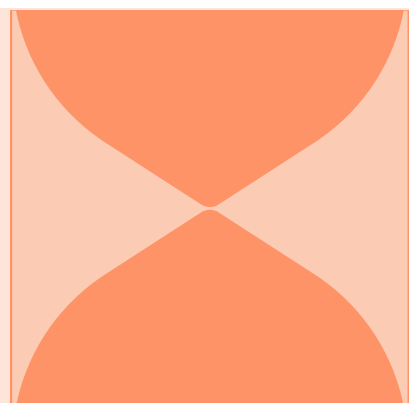
- Things online can be shared with a lot of people very quickly
- Photos, images, messages and other things can stay up online for a long time
- The bullying can happen anytime which can make it feel like it's hard to get away from
- People can use anonymous accounts to bully others, so it's sometimes difficult to tell who is doing it

Here's what online bullying can look like:

- Trying to embarrass someone
- Calling someone names
- Spreading rumours and lies
- Spreading private information about someone
- Using fake accounts to make fun of someone
- Meme pages that embarrass someone
- Repeatedly sending someone unwanted messages
- Excluding people from online groups, chats, events etc. on purpose
- Hacking or impersonating someone else online being committed, please call 111.

It's important to note...

Bullying isn't banter between mates. True banter or 'roasting' isn't meant to shame, upset or offend someone or make them feel uncomfortable.



Is it really just banter?

It isn't always easy to tell the difference between banter and bullying. Having a laugh with your friends is a normal part of friendships, but how do you know when the jokes have gone too far?

Banter is a friendly back and forth between two people or a group of people. True banter or 'roasting' is not meant to shame, upset, belittle, offend or make someone uncomfortable. Banter between friends is a shared joke where everyone is able to have a laugh together.

How can you tell if the banter has gone too far?

1

Is there only one person in on the joke?

If you, or someone else, are the only person in on the joke then this might be a sign that the joke is more bullying than banter. Good banter is about a back and forth exchange, not a one-way-attack on another person.

2

Is the joke embarrassing, insulting or shaming towards another person?

A bit of friendly joking is one thing, but if your banter intends to, or has the effect of, embarrassing or shaming another person then you should think twice before you say it.

3

Is the joke about someone's gender, religion, sexuality, race, ethnicity or disability?

There are some things that it's best not to joke about. Making fun of personal or sensitive parts of someone's identity is going beyond banter and towards bullying.

4

Has the person let you know (or is acting like) they don't like it?

Banter is only fun if both sides are in on the joke together. If the person who the joke is aimed at seems uncomfortable or has asked you to stop, take that as your cue that the banter may be about to cross the line into bullying

Online bullying and the law

There is a law in New Zealand called the Harmful Digital Communications Act that has been created to help people who are being targeted online by others. Some types of bullying are covered by this law. The law also covers other things like encouraging people to take their own life (this is illegal in New Zealand) and sharing nude or nearly nude images/photos without the consent of the person in them.

Online bullying can be classified as a criminal offence if the person doing it:

- intended the communication to cause harm; and
- it is reasonable to expect that a person in the position of the targeted individual would be harmed by it; and
- the targeted individual suffered serious emotional distress.

If someone is found guilty of serious harassment and bullying online they could face a fine of \$50,000 or be jailed for up to two years (maximum sentences).

Responding to online bullying incidents

If you or a friend is being bullied online

1. Reach out

Talk to someone that you feel you can trust. This could be a close friend, a parent, other family members, or even a teacher. If you or a friend would rather talk to someone else, you can contact Netsafe for support.



Netsafe is available to help seven days a week.

You can:

Call 0508 NETSAFE (0508 638 723)

Email help@netsafe.org.nz

Online report at netsafe.org.nz/report

Text 'Netsafe' to 4282

Here are some other organisations that you can reach out to for support

te ara taiohi whakatapua kia ora ai

youthline

Youth Line (free counselling service for young people)

0800 376 633



The Lowdown

0800 111 757



Rainbow Youth

Book a support session online at www.ry.org.nz



What's Up

0800 WHATS UP (0800 942 8787)

If you're worried that you, your friend, or anyone else is in legitimate danger, contact the Police by dialling 111.

2. Play nice/Think twice

It's normal to feel mad at people who are bullying you or a friend, but adding to the drama will only make things worse. It's best to find other ways to help manage the situation without taking revenge.

3. Keep evidence

Save texts and emails and take screenshots of anything that might disappear later. Make sure you keep track of dates, what has happened, who you think did it and why.

4. Report it

Block or report the bully online. Most social networks have safety centres with tips on how to deal with bullying on the platforms. Here are some handy links:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/help/116326365118751>

Instagram: <https://help.instagram.com/547601325292351>

Twitter: <https://help.twitter.com/en/safety-and-security/cyber-bullying-and-online-abuse>

TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/safety/resources/anti-bully?lang=en>

5. Recruit Back Up

Identify other people who will be supportive. Remember that different people might be able to help in different ways. If you don't want to talk to a parent or teacher, you can contact Netsafe for advice and support seven days a week.



“I think I bullied someone online, what can I do?”

Sometimes we do or say things about other people online that we aren't proud of, that we regret or that we know deep down isn't right. It's quick and easy to send a snap or message, write a comment or share something in a group chat that we didn't take the time to think about how it might make that person feel.

Recognising that something you've done doesn't feel quite right is a good thing, but it doesn't mean you should dwell on it. We can't change the past, but luckily, we can choose which actions we take next. Here's what you can do to help make things right:

1

Delete what you can

If the post or comment is still somewhere online, delete it if you can. It can be hurtful for the person affected if they are being reminded of something that was said about them because they know it's still online, even after it's happened. If you know that other people are still sharing it around, you can ask them to stop if you feel uncomfortable.

2

Let them know you're sorry

Reach out to the person and apologise to them. It can be hard to say sorry, but it can be really important for the other person. It doesn't have to be a long apology, you just need to let them know that you're sorry for any hurt or embarrassment you might have caused.

3

Think about what you'd do next time

Take a minute to think about the situation, what happened and what you could do differently next time. This way, you're prepared and know what to do if it happens again. Here's a few tips for situations that might crop up:

- Your friends are being mean about someone in a group chat: Don't join in. If you're talking about a situation that's OK, but you don't need to make mean comments or personal attacks about the people involved while you do it.
- Someone has said something mean about someone you care about: Take a deep breath and think. You don't want to do something out of anger because it could make the situation worse for the person you care about. Most social media platforms let you report content or accounts that are acting against their community guidelines, so report it if you can.
- Your friends are joking around about someone in the group and you're not sure if it's going too far: It isn't always easy to tell the difference between banter and bullying. If you're unsure, it's best to stop and check in with the person the group is joking about.

4

Spread some positivity

You might have done something in the past that you don't feel great about, but you can do something that makes you feel good right now. You never know who might need a little bit of positivity today. You could message or send a snap to someone that you haven't heard from in a while just to say hello, comment something kind or encouraging on a friend's post, or even just post an encouraging or inspiration quote online.

Reaching out for support

Drama and gossip can feel like a part of life. But it doesn't have to be that way. If someone is bullying or harassing you or someone you know online you can ask Netsafe for help and advice – no matter what your situation is.

How to connect with Netsafe

The Netsafe helpline is open seven days a week to give you free and confidential help. They'll talk to you about what's happening and let you know if there's anything you can do to stop the bullying and stay safe.

They can also look into what's happening and work with you and the person bullying or harassing you to get them to stop – but they won't do this unless you say it's OK. They may also contact online platforms like Facebook or Snapchat to ask them to block or remove posts or other harmful content.



The Netsafe helpline is open from 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am – 5pm on weekends.

You can:

Call 0508 NETSAFE (0508 638 723)

Email help@netsafe.org.nz

Online report at netsafe.org.nz/report

Text 'Netsafe' to 4282

Other organisations that can offer advice and support:

Youth Line 0800 376 633

The Lowdown 0800 111 757

Rainbow Youth Book a support session online at www.ry.org.nz

What's Up 0800 WHATS UP (0800 942 8787)

YouthLaw (free legal advice helpline for anyone under 25 years old)

0800 UTHLAW (0800 884 529) – Monday to Friday, 10am-4pm **Email:** nzyouthlaw@gmail.com

If you're worried that you, your friend, or anyone else is in legitimate danger, contact the Police by dialling 111.

Life after bullying

Being bullied online can really knock your confidence and it can be hard to know how to get back to feeling normal again. Here are some ideas of things you could try if you're recovering from something hurtful that happened online.

Talk it out

It can be hard to reach out for help and to talk about something negative that's happened to you. Even though it isn't easy, talking to someone is one of the best things that you can do to make yourself feel better about the situation. Sometimes speaking to someone else can help give you a different perspective and make you feel more in control.

Turn your anger into something positive

It's normal to feel mad when someone has been nasty to you online. Being angry can be a positive thing, as it means you understand that what happened to you was unfair and not your fault. Try to channel your anger into doing positive things to make your situation better. This could include using your anger to block and report the person who is being mean to you online.

If your anger is making you want to hurt someone, break something or hurt yourself then it's worth reaching out for help.

Try new things

One of the best ways to rebuild confidence is to try doing some new things, like playing a new game, eating lunch in a different place, or doing something creative like writing something or drawing a picture. It doesn't matter what you decide to do, the main thing is to start off slow and watch your confidence grow over time.

Be true to yourself

Don't let the person bullying you make you feel like you need to be anyone else except yourself. We are all different and that's a good thing!

A world without difference would be so boring. Imagine if there was only one type of music, or sport or only one colour! Don't forget that our differences are important and they make you who you are.

Standing up to online bullying

Are you a bystander or an upstander?

A **bystander** will sit back and let bullying happen by doing nothing to stop it. They can be seen laughing at the situation, spreading gossip and rumours about the incident, or watching quietly.

An **upstander** on the other hand, stands up for people who are being bullied and can make a positive difference in difficult situations. They can be seen offering support and comfort, while letting others know that bullying is NOT cool.

How you can be an Upstander

Speak up

If you notice someone is being bullied online speak up if you feel safe and comfortable doing so. You can tell the person to stop and that bullying is hurtful and uncool.

Offer support

Speak to the person being bullied and offer words of support and encouragement. Include them in activities and let them know that they are not alone.

Talk to a trusted adult

If they are upset, encourage the person being bullied to speak to a trusted adult or to get in touch with Netsafe or Youthline for free and anonymous advice and support. If they prefer, you can contact these organisations on their behalf.

Spread positive messages

Share positive messages on your social media channels and when commenting on other peoples' images and videos. Kindness and positivity are contagious and you could begin a culture of respect and acceptance.

Create a group or event to take a stand against online bullying in your school

No one likes to be bullied online or offline. Start a club or group at your school around bullying and gain the support of other students and teachers to end bullying in your school.



An orange hourglass graphic is centered on the page. The top and bottom bulbs of the hourglass are filled with a darker shade of orange, while the central neck is a lighter shade. The text 'Online Bullying' is positioned to the right of the hourglass, and 'YAS Sample Action Plan' is in a white box at the bottom.

Online Bullying

YAS Sample Action Plan

Action Topic:

Online Bullying

Group Type:

Year 9-13;
10-40 students

Resources I will need:

- Printed copies of the We Stand Up activity sheet
- Paper
- Coloured pencils or markers
- Stickers, coloured paper, other art supplies (optional)

By the end of the action, my peers will:

- Be able to identify different types of online bullying and differentiate between bullying and banter
- Understand the laws around online bullying and harassment
- Be able to identify the steps to effectively respond to bullying incidents
- Be motivated to stand-up to online bullying when it happens

*Before your Action, please read the YAS Action Facilitator Sheet

Key Words	Welcome & Introduction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> bullying online bullying banter harassment Harmful Digital Communications Act (HDCA) Netsafe upstander 	<p>Introduce yourself and your role with the YAS: The Netsafe YAS is a programme that brings together young people to discuss online safety topics and identify solutions to the challenges they may face online. Together we can empower each other to make safer choices online and learn how to access support when things do go wrong.</p> <p>Introduce the topic: Today we will be talking about online bullying and how to recognise and respond to incidents. We will touch on the laws around online bullying and harassment and learn how to effectively respond when we or someone we know is being bullied online. At the end, we'll talk about what it means to be an upstander and how each of us can lead positive changes within our school.</p> <p>Energiser</p> <p>Hands Up, Hands Down (see instructions below)</p> <p>Pre-Action Chat</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How is online bullying different from other forms of bullying? Why do you think some people choose to bully others online? What can online bullying look like? How does it make you feel to see or hear about someone being bullied online? Do you think social media networks have a duty to protect users against online bullying? Explain.
Teaching the Topic	
Instructions	Activities
<p>Present topic using "Online Bullying" PowerPoint presentation</p> <p>Use activities to help my peers understand the topic</p>	<p>We Stand Up (see instructions below)</p> <p>All About Meme (see instructions below)</p>
End of Action - Wrap up	
<p>Answer any questions from the group (if you are unsure, refer peers to a trusted adult or the Netsafe website)</p> <p>Continue the fun: As a group, come up with action ideas for Bully Free Week and Pink Shirt Day at your school</p>	

Activity 1 – We Stand Up

Goal

To help your peers understand what online bullying is and identify ways to support and stand up for a person who has experienced online bullying.

You'll need

Download the We Stand Up Activity Pack and print out as many copies as needed.

Instructions

1. Talk about online bullying and the steps you can take to support a friend who is being bullied online.
 2. Split the group into teams of 2-3 students and give each team a scenario from the We Stand Up activity sheet.
 3. Have each team discuss their scenario and come up with a plan of support for the person or people in the scenario.
 4. After each team is finished, ask teams to share their scenarios and plans of support with the group.
 5. Once a team has finished presenting, you can ask the group whether they would add anything to the plan of support.
-

Continue the Fun

Some people who experience bullying don't reach out for support because they are afraid, they are ashamed or they don't know where to turn. As a group, come up with ways that young people in your school can easily access support if they experience bullying online.

Activity 1: Scenarios

SCENARIO 1:

Your friend Jacko loves to paint and often posts their artwork to his Instagram account. He gets a lot of compliments on his work which makes him happy. Recently, one of his followers has been posting “this guy thinks he’s Picasso. Get a life” on every one of the photos. Jacko ignores them but the person starts DM-ing him more hurtful messages almost every day. You know the person who is making these comments, they love trolling other people and have been known to be quite violent at times.

SCENARIO 2:

You are in a WhatsApp group with 10 of your friends where everyone shares funny memes and videos. One of your friends, Bobo, has started making his own memes and sharing them with the group. You start to notice that most of Bobo’s memes are about a student in your class and they are often jokes about the student’s looks and how they dress. Everyone in the group thinks they are hilarious and soon they are being shared outside of the group as well.

SCENARIO 3:

You hear someone crying in the bathroom. When you ask what’s wrong they tell you that a girl named Neta has taken an embarrassing photo of them at a sleepover and is now teasing that she will share it to the school’s Facebook page. Neta emails them the photo everyday with the words “Hahaha! Everyone will know you are a baby who sucks their thumb in their sleep.” You know that Neta likes to embarrass other students in the school and that her teasing about sharing the pic may not be a joke.

SCENARIO 4:

Your sister is a big online gamer and loves to spend her evenings and weekends playing Caves & Carnivores. The game has text and voice chatting features to help players from around the world come together to defeat the carnivores. Your sister has made lots of friends online and you often hear her laughing as she plays in her room. Last night you noticed your sister was sad and for the first time since you can remember she wasn’t playing the game. When she leaves for school the next morning you see a bunch of mean messages on her computer from other gamers.

SCENARIO 5:

You and your friend are feeling cute so you decided to make up a dance routine and film it for your Tiktok fans. Once you upload it, your friend immediately starts getting messages on their Instagram account from someone they don’t know (@tiktokimaster00) telling them that they saw the video and would like to meet up. Your friend tells them “no thanks, I don’t even know you” and you both go about your day. A few days later your friend mentions that she’s been chatting to @tiktokimaster00 and they are planning to meet after school.

SCENARIO 6:

You and your group of friends are always joking around with each other. Everyone is always trying to one-up each other and be the funniest one in the group. One day in the group chat, Mika starts poking fun at Chal because his shirt had a hole. He starts calling Chal poor and asking if he lives in a cardboard box. Your other friends post pictures of cardboard boxes and keep making jokes about him. After this Chal suddenly exits the group chat. You notice his mood is really low the next day and that he’s actively avoiding everyone in the group.

Activity 2 – Where Do We Fit In?

Goal

To help your peers discover fun and effective ways to stand up to online bullying.

You'll need



PAPER



MARKERS OR
COLOURED
PENCILS



STICKERS, COLOURED PAPER,
OTHER ART SUPPLIES (OPTIONAL)

Instructions

1. Have chat with the group about how young people can stand up to online bullying.
2. What are the key messages we'd like to send to online bullies?
3. What are the key messages we'd like to send to people who have been bullied?
4. How can we keep these key messages positive and relevant to young people?
5. Give each person a paper and some colouring pencils or markers.
6. Ask everyone to create a meme (original or based on an already popular meme) that sends a message against online bullying or in support of someone who has been bullied online.
7. After everyone has finished, ask if anyone would like to share their memes with the group.

Continue the Fun

Find a place in your classroom or school to share the memes with other students to spread some encouragement, positivity and messaging against online bullying.