



**THEME OF THE MONTH
NOVEMBER 2021**

**PEER-ON-PEER
ABUSE & BULLYING**



WHAT IS PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE?

Peer-on-peer abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control carried out between children (those under the age of 18), and within their relationships, friendships, and wider peer associations.

Peer-on-peer abuse can take various forms, including:

- Physical and sexual abuse
- Sexual harassment and violence
- Emotional harm
- On and offline bullying
- Teenage relationship abuse

Online peer-on-peer abuse is any form of peer-on-peer abuse with a digital element. This could be sexting, online abuse, coercion and exploitation, peer-on-peer grooming, threatening language delivered via online means, the distribution of sexualised content, and harassment.

It is important that we understand that abuse is not always perpetrated by adults. Children can abuse other children and this can happen both inside and outside of educational settings.



EXAMPLES OF PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE INCLUDE:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- Sexual violence; this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)

RECOGNISING PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE

Symptoms of possible peer-on-peer abuse may include:

- Absence from school/college
- Physical injuries
- Mental or emotional issues
- Inability to sleep
- Alcohol or substance misuse
- Changes in behaviour
- Inappropriate behaviour for age
- Being abusive to others



Children and young people may not always understand that they have experienced or carried out peer-on-peer sexual abuse. This might be because:

- They don't understand what constitutes appropriate, inappropriate, problematic or abusive sexualised behaviour
- They have experienced sexual abuse themselves and don't realise that what happened to them was wrong
- They don't know whether consent was given
- The abuse happened between friends or partners
- The abuse took place online
- They blame themselves for the abuse they received

IMPACTS OF PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE

Peer-on-peer abuse can manifest itself and impact a child in many ways, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Causing physical injuries
- Encouraging drug and alcohol abuse
- Going missing/running away
- Compromising their sexual health
- Committing criminal offences
- Acting disengaged from school
- Affecting their mental health and emotional wellbeing



REPORTING PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE

If you believe a child is in immediate danger, you should contact the police on 999. If you are worried about a child but they are not in immediate danger, you should always share your concerns.

Follow your organisational child protection procedures, including sharing concerns with your nominated child protection lead. Organisations that work with children and families must have safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

Report to the police as appropriate (for example, if an allegation of rape, sexual assault or sexual offence is made). This should happen alongside a making a referral to children's social care, following local authority guidelines.

Contact the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000 or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk. Their trained professionals will talk through your concerns and provide expert advice.

Contact the Report Abuse in Education Helpline if you work in a school setting on 0800 136 663 or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk.

Contact your local child protection services. Their contact details can be found on the website for the local authority the child lives in.

(<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/>)



PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE: THE FACTS

- Rates of violence are higher for girls in England than in any other country.
- 1 in 3 girls have experienced sexual violence from a partner before they turn 18 years old.
- 4 in 10 teenage girls have experienced sexual coercion when they have been aged between 13 and 17 years old.
- 48 percent of girls have experienced instances of emotional and online abuse from their partners.
- Young people have reported that physical, sexual and emotional abusing, as well as being abused by their peers, is a means of survival in gang affected neighbourhoods.
- Two thirds of contact sexual abuse experienced by children under the age of 17 was perpetrated by someone under 18 years old.
- Almost a third of girls aged between 16 and 18 years old have been subjected to unwanted sexual touching in UK schools.



WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is a type of behaviour, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group. If left unaddressed, bullying can have a serious impact on a young person's mental health, self-esteem and ability to succeed in education.

Bullying can include:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse such as: name calling, spreading rumours or social inclusion
- Intimidation or threats of violence
- Racial, sexual or homophobic abuse
- Cyberbullying



BULLYING AT WORK

Bullying at work can involve rudeness and arguments, but it can also be more subtle.

Forms of workplace bullying can include:

- Overloading people with work
- Excluding and ignoring people or their contribution
- Spreading malicious rumours
- Unfair treatment
- Picking on or undermining someone
- Denying someone's promotion opportunities or training

GET ADVICE

If you are being bullied in the workplace you should speak to someone about how you might deal with the problem informally. This person could be:

- Your manager or supervisor
- Someone in the HR department
- An employee representative, such as a trade union official
- Your LSP tutor or a member of our Safeguarding team

LSP'S SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT TEAM

If you have any concerns at all, please don't hesitate to contact a member of our Safeguarding and Prevent team:

Safeguarding and Prevent Officer: Andy Hamer

Email: andy.hamer@learningskillspartnership.com

Number: 07526 168286

Deputy Safeguarding Officer: Phil Cawthra

Email: phil.cawthra@learningskillspartnership.com

Number: 07773 537452





MORE INFORMATION

www.learningskillspartnership.com
info@learningskillspartnership.com

A photograph of a whiteboard with a blue top border. The whiteboard is crossed out with a large white 'X' that extends from the left edge of the frame. The text on the whiteboard is written in black marker and reads: "Bullies are not welcome here!". A white marker with a black cap is visible in the bottom right corner of the whiteboard.

Bullies
are
not
welcome
here!