

Seriously!?

Stigmas Attached to Bullying

How would you respond to each statement?

Serious. As in so true, for real, definitely.

Seriously!? Meaning no way, not happening, are you kidding me?

*Answer key is on page 2.



1. Bullying is the same as arguing. *Serious | Seriously!?*
2. Bullying only happens in middle school. *Serious | Seriously!?*
3. Bullies come in all shapes and sizes. *Serious | Seriously!?*
4. Calling someone “gay” or “retard” is funny. *Serious | Seriously!?*
5. Bullying can happen online and even by cell phone. *Serious | Seriously!?*
6. Bullying is just for boys. *Serious | Seriously!?*
7. Words will never hurt you *Serious | Seriously!?*
8. If you see bullying, you can help stop it. *Serious | Seriously!?*
9. Bullying makes you tougher. *Serious | Seriously!?*
10. Kids who are being bullied may not want to tell anyone, especially an adult.
Serious | Seriously!?
11. Some people deserve to be bullied. *Serious | Seriously!?*
12. Telling an adult about bullying is tattling. *Serious | Seriously!?*
13. Bullying is just a normal part of growing up. *Serious | Seriously!?*
14. Bullying is about wanting power. *Serious | Seriously!?*
15. If you ignore bullying, it will go away. *Serious | Seriously!?*
16. You should fight back. *Serious | Seriously!?*
17. Students who are bullied should just learn to deal with it. *Serious | Seriously!?*

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8161 Normandale Blvd.
Minneapolis, MN 55437-1044
952.838.9000
952.838.0190 TTY
952.838.0199 fax
PACER@PACER.org

1. Bullying is the same as arguing. Seriously!?

People argue about lots of things. Let's say you and a classmate get into an argument about who's the best hip-hop singer. That disagreement isn't bullying. It would be, though, if your classmate told everyone to not hang with you because of what you said and got them talking trash about you. When there's a power imbalance (like being outnumbered) and the intention is to be mean or control someone else, that's bullying.

2. Bullying only happens in middle school. Seriously!?

Kids can bully even before they leave the sandbox, calling others names, leaving someone out on purpose, or making fun of others. It can start early, and it's at its worst in middle school.

3. Bullies come in all shapes and sizes. Serious.

It's not like the movies, where the bully is a big, tough-looking kid who wears all black and grunts a lot. It can be quiet girls and scrawny boys. Bullies can be popular, unpopular, tall, short, rich, poor, or anything else. The only way to tell who might be a bully is by how they act, not by how they look.

4. Calling someone "gay" or "retard" is funny. Seriously!?

Think about it. If you use "gay" to mean something that isn't cool, it's like saying that people who are gay aren't cool. If you call people "retard" when they do something you think is dumb, that's a slam against people with developmental disabilities. Interesting way to look at it, isn't it.

5. Bullying can happen online and even by cell phone. Serious.

It's called cyberbullying, and it includes things like sending mean e-mails or texts, posting gossip or embarrassing pictures on My Space or Facebook, and putting cruel videos on YouTube. Because cyberbullying is out there for the whole world to see, it can be particularly devastating. You know what makes it even worse? Sometimes it's done anonymously, so you don't even know who's trying to hurt you. Nasty stuff!

6. Bullying is just for boys. Seriously!?

Girls can and do bully. While boys tend to bully physically, girls often use verbal and social bullying, such as gossip and leaving people out.

7. Words will never hurt you. Seriously!?

Yeah, you have heard this one before. People used to think bullying was just physical. Now we know better. Even though words don't leave bruises or broken bones, they can hurt as much as a beating.

8. If you see bullying, you can help stop it. Serious.

Most teens who see bullying want to help put an end to it. How? Speak out, stand together, tell. You can always do something, either directly or indirectly—even if you're afraid. No

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one should have to deal with bullying alone.

9. Bullying makes you tougher. Seriously!?

Tougher? Maybe on another planet.. Fact is, bullying makes you feel scared, worried, and down on yourself.

10. Kids who are being bullied may not want to tell anyone, especially an adult. Serious.

You know it. Why don't kids want to tell? For starters, they might be embarrassed that they're a target. Lots of kids worry that the bully might try and get even. And telling adults can be a mixed bag. Some might not take the teen seriously. Others might overreact, avoid dealing with it, or not know what to do.

11. Some people deserve to be bullied. Seriously!?

The way people act or look is never a reason to bully them. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and consideration.

12. Telling an adult about bullying is tattling. Seriously!?

Tattling means sharing petty secrets or information about someone, usually to cause trouble. Telling means reporting a harmful or dangerous situation to an adult to help protect someone. If you don't tell, who are you protecting? Not telling only protects people who are doing something that they shouldn't be.

13. Bullying is just a normal part of growing up. Seriously!?

Normal? Getting beat up, being left out of social situations, getting made fun of or gossiped about is normal? It's not.

14. Bullying is about wanting power. Serious.

Kids who bully love to have power, and they use it on purpose to intimidate, hurt, or harass others. They especially love it when their target gets upset, angry, scared, or sad. That reaction makes them feel even more powerful. (So don't give it to them!)

15. If you ignore bullying, it will go away. Seriously!?

Sometimes ignoring bullying can work, especially if you do it with confidence, but usually it's better to address the issue. Parents or other trusted adults can help.

16. You should fight back. Seriously!?

They push you, you shove back, they push you harder...where does it end? Reacting with anger and violence often is just the response bullies want, and it usually makes the situation worse.

17. Students who are bullied should just learn to deal with it. Seriously!?

No one deserves to be bullied. Someone who is bullied should not be alone.

However you wanna say it, bullying is a serious issue. That's a fact, true, for sure and definitely.

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