

Anti-discrimination law

Discrimination is when someone is treated unfairly because they happen to belong to a particular group of people or have a particular characteristic'.

The law in NSW says that people must not treat you unfairly or harass you just because:

- you are a person with a disability (disability discrimination)



- you or someone in your family is from a different country, or you are Aboriginal (race discrimination)



- you are too old or too young (age discrimination)



- you are a man or a woman (sex discrimination)

- you choose a partner who is the same sex (homosexual discrimination)



- you care for a family member (carers' responsibilities discrimination)



- you have changed sex – or look like you have (transgender discrimination)



- you are married or single or defacto (marital or domestic status discrimination)

- you have AIDS (disability discrimination)



- you are pregnant or breastfeeding (sex discrimination)

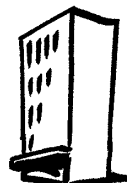


The law says that people must not treat you unfairly or harass you because of any of these things in the following places:

- when you go for a job



- at work



- when you rent a house, flat or room



- at government schools, colleges and universities



- in services like shops, banks, hospitals, hotels, clubs, coffee shops and offices

Bullying

What is bullying?

Bullying is a pattern of unreasonable and inappropriate behaviour towards others, (although it may occur as a single event). Such behaviour intimidates, offends, degrades, insults or humiliates the other person. It can include psychological, social, and physical bullying. Most people use the terms "bullying" and "harassment" interchangeably and bullying is often described as a form of harassment.

Bullying at school is when a student, or group of students, behaves in a way that is cruel or hurtful to another student. This includes someone being physically violent, making threats or harassing the other person. Bullying can happen in the playground, in the toilets, going to and from school or in the classroom.

What does bullying include?

- teasing
- calling names
- saying things to put the other person down or make fun of or humiliate them
- excluding a person from groups or activities
- making nasty comments because of their race, gender or sexuality
- pushing or hitting a person or being violent in some other way
- making threats or saying things that make a person scared
- forcing someone to do silly or dangerous things
- damaging or hiding a person's things
- demanding money, food or possessions
- belittling someone's abilities and achievements
- writing mean or spiteful notes or graffiti
- making fun of how someone looks

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is when someone uses technology like the internet or a mobile phone to deliberately hurt, humiliate, harass, or threaten someone else.

Cyberbullying may include:

- sending nasty text messages or emails
- posting hurtful comments on social networking sites like MySpace
- prank calls
- putting up inappropriate, nasty or private photos or videos onto the internet
- distributing these photos or videos
- hate sites
- bullying in blogs, chat rooms, virtual worlds or on gaming sites

What can be done about bullying?

Bullying must be treated seriously. It can amount to a criminal offence, when there is physical violence, intimidation or threats of harm.

Students who are being bullied must tell someone what is happening and get assistance. This could be:

- the school counsellor
- their parents
- one of their teachers
- the Principal

They should keep telling people until someone helps them.

If a student has a friend that is being bullied, they should try to support them by talking to them about what is happening and asking them if they can help. They could offer to go with them to talk to one of the above people.

Students can also call the Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800.