



What Can I Do If I Am Being Bullied

While it may not seem like it, you do have options. There is always something you can do.

What you do will depend on many factors, including the type of bullying that occurred, the support available to you and what approach you want to take to manage the bullying.

Firstly, make sure you are actually being bullied.

Bullying is repeated aggressive behaviour that can be physical, verbal (name-calling, taunting, insulting), or relational. Bullying can be:

- someone telling you that you are incompetent, hopeless, useless, etc.
- a coach distancing you, stopping you from joining in
- several people ganging-up on you

Below are suggestions from people that have been bullied and experts in the field. Please note that bullying takes many forms and different approaches need to be considered. What works for one person in a particular situation may not work for another person. Think about the suggestions below and which are most suitable for your particular circumstances.

- Speak out and tell someone – a parent, coach, manager or senior club member – if you are being bullied. Explain to them what is happening and that you want the bullying to stop. Most sporting organisations prohibit bullying and should do something to stop bullying occurring.
 - If possible, avoid the bully and being alone with the bully.
 - Do not travel to and from training and games alone.
 - In some situations ignoring the bully can work, for example if it is a one-off incident and is nonthreatening verbal abuse. Remember, however, that ignoring the bully will not always work. Some types of bullying (e.g. physical and psychological) should not be ignored.
 - Be aware of how you react when bullied and if necessary modify your reaction. Experts agree that a passive or distressed reaction can encourage the bully(ies) because it is the reaction they are looking for. Try reacting in a calm, assertive manner.
 - Consider confronting the bully(ies) and standing up to them. You could say, “What did I do to you?” But do not react by physically hurting them as you will most likely find yourself in trouble.
 - Research bullying on the web or obtain a book by a respected expert that provides strategies for dealing with bullying
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