

Survey finds one in three bullied outside school

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The Anti-Bullying Alliance releases the results of its annual poll of children and young people today to mark the start of Anti-Bullying Week 2007.

The 2007 Anti-Bullying Week campaign focuses on "bullying in the community" with the message "safer together, safer wherever", to remind us that we all have a role to play in keeping children and young people safe wherever they are.

This year's poll shows that 35% of a sample of 7-18 year olds say that they have been bullied outside of school. The survey carried out by BMRB for the ABA with 1,078 7-18 year olds in England, found that the most likely places for children and young people to experience bullying outside school were on the street (16%), on the way to and from school, and in the park (12%).

The majority also (55%) thought that about half or more of the bullying that happens in school actually starts outside of school and 4 in 10 said bullying outside of school was more worrying as adults weren't around to help. However, more than half reported that they would tell an adult in school if they were bullied outside of school.

Chris Cloke, ABA Chair, said: "We must think carefully about what children and young people are telling us. Clearly, whilst we welcome the finding that a significant majority felt safe when they were out in their communities, more than a third had experienced bullying " this is simply unacceptable. Young people also draw a critical link here between bullying in school and bullying that starts out in the community or which may be exacerbated by community conflicts or local feuds. We need to support our schools in responding to this challenge, which is a significant one."

The poll also found that:

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- Young people over the age of 15 reported more bullying than younger children, with 1 in 5 experiencing bullying on the streets of their community.

- Just over half young people said they would talk about bullying outside of school to friends and parents/carers, and 30% said another family member. 1 in 10 stated they would talk to the police

- Worryingly, 6% said they would keep it to themselves and not turn to anyone for help.

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In this year's Anti-Bullying Week pack for schools, ABA highlighted research* identified four main types of behaviour that constitute bullying outside of the school space as: barging in, extortion, intimidation and name calling.

Mark Vickers, Headteacher of Manhood Community College in West Sussex said: "Bullying in the community is an issue for us all, not just for schools. There is a growing need for outside agencies, community partners, parents and carers and school leaders to work together to ensure that our communities are kind and cohesive and that children are safe, secure and supported. That is a responsibility we all share."

To date bullying outside of school has been under-researched**, so this survey is very important in helping us find out more about what children and young people really think about the issue. This survey has shown us that bullying outside of school is a significant problem. Whilst some children and young people feel able to turn to an adult for help, many still do not, and we need to change that.

With Anti-Bullying Week 2007 ABA aims to raise awareness of the damage bullying can cause, and to give teachers, parents, children and young people the message that together we can stop it.

Typical answers given to the question "What would have helped you deal with being bullied in the community?"

Support in the community

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- Having more community groups around
- People keeping an eye out on younger children and helping if they could
- If more support was given from people in the community
- More patrolling police officers
- A community centre in the local area

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Support from adults

- An adult to tell straight away
- Support to get through it
- Being able to talk to someone in confidence
- To see an adult ask if anything is going on or to see if there is a problem or if everything is ok?
- They stopped when I say I would tell an adult

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Support from School

- Teachers paying a bit more attention to it
- My teacher helps me If I am in trouble, and also a dinner lady
- I think that schools should help more with bullying outside of school.
- Make sure it gets sorted out straight away by school
- Have a safe area for children who are being bullied.

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Support getting to and from school safely

- Someone to oversee on the bus
- Someone on the bus
- A bus conductor
- Not walking alone
- Getting a teacher to come on the bus with you

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