Bullying is when a person or a group shows unwanted aggression to another person who is not a sibling or a current dating partner. Cyberbullying (or “electronic aggression”) is bullying that is done electronically, including through the Internet, e-mail, or mobile devices, among others.

Bullying can be:

» **Physical**: punching, beating, kicking, or pushing; stealing, hiding, or damaging another person’s belongings; forcing someone to do things against his or her will

» **Verbal**: teasing, calling names, or insulting another person; threatening another person with physical harm; spreading rumors or untrue statements about another person

» **Relational**: refusing to talk to someone or making them feel left out; encouraging other individuals to bully someone

Bullying can lead to physical injury, social problems, emotional problems, and even death. Children and adolescents who are bullied are at increased risk for mental health problems, including depression, anxiety, headaches, and problems adjusting to school. Bullying also can cause long-term damage to self-esteem.

Children and adolescents who are bullies are at increased risk for substance use, academic problems, and violence to others later in life.

Children or adolescents who are both bullies and victims suffer the most serious effects of bullying and are at greater risk for mental and behavioral problems than those who are only bullied or who are only bullies.
What The Science Says

Research studies show that anyone involved with bullying—those who bully others, those who are bullied, and those who bully and are bullied—are at increased risk for depression.

Studies have also found that unlike traditional forms of bullying, youth who are bullied electronically—such as by computer or cell phone—are at higher risk for depression than the youth who bully them. Moreover, cyber victims are at higher risk for depression than cyberbullies or bully-victims (i.e., those who both bully others and are bullied themselves), which was not found in any other form of bullying.

What Makes You A Bully?

To be considered bullying, the behavior in question must be aggressive. The behavior must also involve an imbalance of power (e.g., physical strength, popularity, access to embarrassing details about a person) and be repetitive, meaning that it happens more than once or is highly likely to be repeated.

Bullying also includes cyberbullying and workplace bullying:

» Cyberbullying has increased with the increased use of the social media sites, the Internet, e-mail, and mobile devices. Unlike more traditional bullying, cyberbullying can be more anonymous and can occur nearly constantly. A person can be cyberbullied day or night, such as when they are checking their e-mail, using Facebook or another social network site, or even when they are using a mobile phone.

» Workplace bullying refers to adult behavior that is repeatedly aggressive and involves the use of power over another person at the workplace. Certain laws apply to adults in the workplace to help prevent such violence.

Know The Symptoms

Signs Of Bullying Include:

» Depression, loneliness, or anxiety
» Low self-esteem
» Headaches, stomachaches, tiredness, or poor eating habits
» Missing school, disliking school, or having poorer school performance
» Self-destructive behaviors, such as running away from home or inflicting harm on oneself
» Thinking about suicide or attempting to commit suicide
» Unexplained injuries
» Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewelry
» Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
» Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations