

POLICY TITLE: Anti-Bullying Policy	Policy Number: 4
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It is the responsibility of all the staff/volunteers working for Healing Health to help develop a caring and supportive atmosphere, where bullying in any form is unacceptable. Staff/volunteers in Healing Health should:

- Be aware of the potential problems bullying may cause
- Be alert to signs of bullying, harassment or discrimination
- Make action to deal with such behaviour when it occurs, following organisations policy guidelines
- Provide access for young people to talk about any concerns they may have
- Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- Ensure that their and group therapy has an anti-bullying participant agreement.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Healing Health’s Child Protection Policy. Bullying affects everyone, not just the bully and the victim. It also affects bystanders and those who are drawn in somehow. No one person, group or staff should have to accept this type of behaviour.

Healing Health believes that every person has the right to receive therapy or work in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without the fear of being bullied. We seek to promote good citizenship and make it clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour, which is always unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It is important that staff and Healing Health users, are fully aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with fairly, promptly and firmly.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

□ It is generally persistent. □ It involves manipulation and the abuse of power. □ It causes distress to another. □ It is usually premeditated and calculated rather than thoughtless or accidental.

□ It can involve an individual or become part of a group activity. □ It can vary in intensity from banter and horseplay to serious physical assault.

Healing Health will not accept any low-level disruption or the use of offensive language. These will not be dismissed as banter or horseplay. Early intervention sets clear expectations of behaviour that is or isn't acceptable and will help to stop negative behaviours developing.

Peer on Peer abuse: Children can abuse other children. This is known as peer on peer abuse. It can include bullying, cyberbullying, sexual violence and harassment, physical abuse, sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals. Healing Health will take all steps to stop any signs of this type of abuse.

Possible Signs

Those who are being bullied may show changes in their behaviour, such as feigning illness and not wanting to attend the service. They may lose self-confidence and self-esteem and blame themselves for inviting the bullying behaviour. Stress related symptoms such as headaches, nightmares and anxiety attacks may occur and their unhappiness may affect their concentration and treatment.

What can you do if you are being bullied?

Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon. Tell a member of staff or volunteer straight away. If you find this difficult tell your parents or loved one. · Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is wrong. Healing Health staff will take you seriously and respond immediately, they will inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will lead on actions required.

If you know someone is being bullied

Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own. If you feel able, tell the bully that they are in the wrong and walk away with the person being bullied. · If you feel that you cannot get involved, tell an adult immediately.

Staff or volunteers working for Healing Health should report any experiences of bullying to the Designated Safeguarding Officer Anna Hopkins.

Encouragement to tell

It is vital that we create an atmosphere within Healing Health where those who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed and that action taken will be swift and sensitive to their concerns. We need to be vigilant at all times and if we suspect bullying is occurring, we must speak to the parties involved. It is our responsibility to make time to listen to victims and then deal with their concerns if they come to us, no matter how insignificant the problem may seem to us.

Bullying incidents can be ambiguous and we should not automatically accept one version of events.

Racist Incidents

Any form of racist incident should be logged in the racism incident file, which is maintained by Anna Hopkins (Designated Safeguarding Officer) and stored in her office. Individual who have experienced racism have the right to report the incident to the police if necessary.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED

Stage One: Investigation

All the parties involved, the victim, bully or bullies and any witnesses should be seen, listened to and asked to write a statement regarding the incident/s. · The Safeguarding Officer should be informed immediately. · Unless there is an exceptional reason otherwise, the parents of the victim and the bully should be informed by the Safeguarding Officer. · If there is clear evidence of bullying, Healing Health must respond. · Statements taken should be dated and witnessed.

Section Two: Response

In the first instance, it is important to make it clear to the victim that revenge is not appropriate but that the situation will be dealt with firmly and fairly with the aim of stopping the bullying. It must be made clear to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable and has caused distress. Every effort should be made to resolve the problem through counselling of both parties. If the victim is comfortable with the idea it may be appropriate to speak to the two parties together.

2. Clear, specific action must be taken to make the victim feel safe. They must be clear about how the matter has been dealt with, what has been said to the bully and any sanctions that have been applied.

3. Appropriate sanctions may have to be affected against the offender/s, using one or more of the following:

- a. a verbal warning
- b. a written contract not to re-offend or take reprisals
- c. financial recompense if damage to property is involved
- d. exclude from further therapy groups
- e. refuse further treatment of any kind
- f. make clear the criminal nature of the offence and the possibility of police involvement (if head injury occurs and the hospital is involved, then the hospital by law must inform the police)

At this stage, if children, parents of both parties should be informed about what has happened, and the actions being taken

5. It is vital that everything is recorded on file.

It is intended that the steps above should be completed within fifteen working days of the initial notification. It must also be recognised that this procedure will only be used when the circumstances are complex and not clear cut. During the period of investigation, Healing Health will do its best to provide support for all those involved.

