

مجلس الصحة
لدول مجلس التعاون
Gulf Health Council



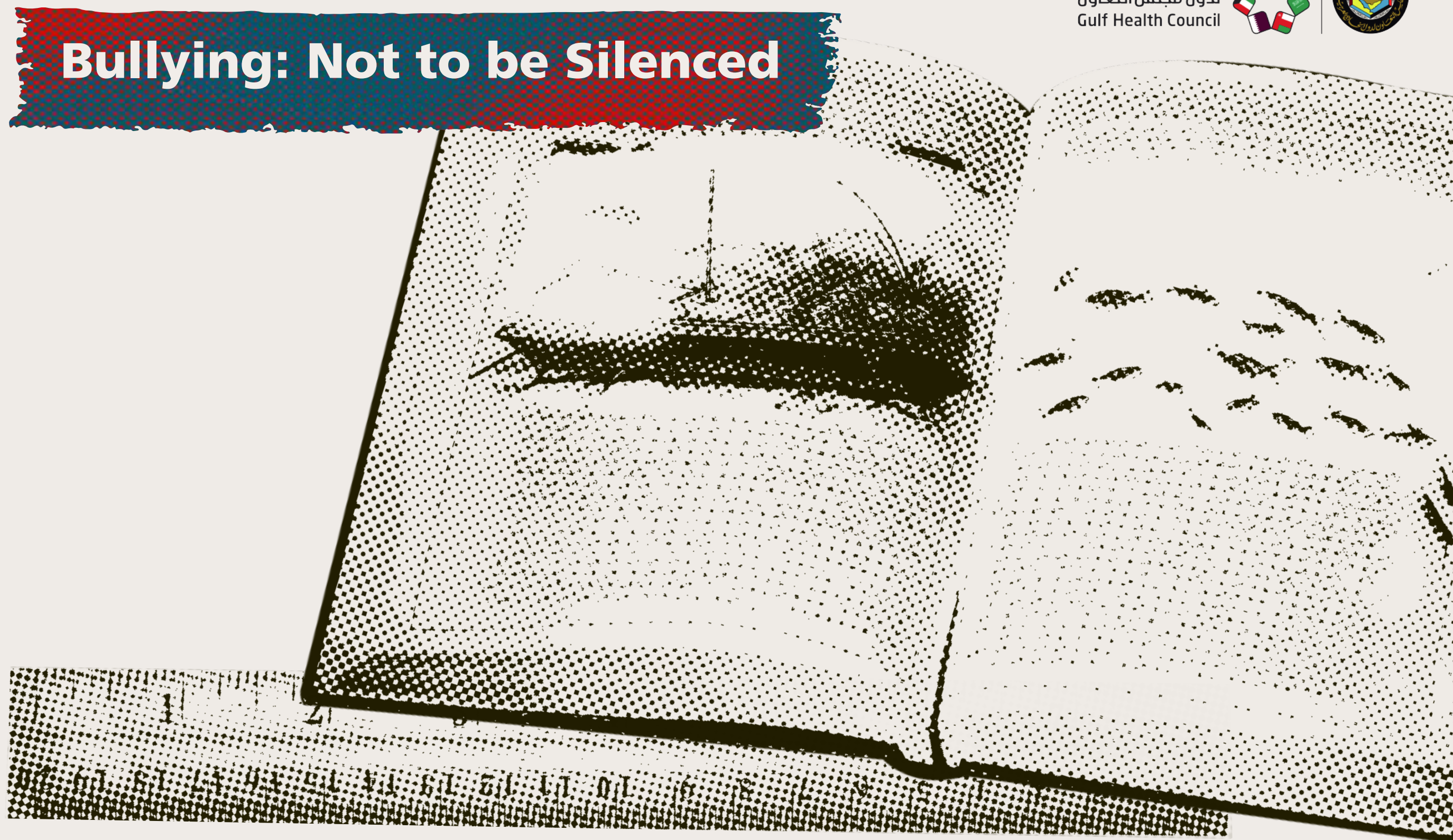
Bullying

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Not to be Silenced

A Guide to the
Anti-Bullying
Initiative

Bullying: Not to be Silenced



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- Bullying is a sign of your child's strong personality.

This is the first initiative of its kind in the region to address sensitive issues for children in Gulf societies, such as:

Initiative

Not to be Silenced



Child sexual
harassment

Child cyber
extortion

bullying

Due to the sensitivity of these issues, they are not discussed sufficiently, leading to many problems and harms at the individual and societal levels.

Therefore, the Gulf Health Council was keen to launch this unique initiative to raise awareness in areas that indirectly harm children's health and to promote a safe environment for them.





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Bullying

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**What is
Bullying?**

Bullying is unwanted aggressive behavior directed at an individual by another person with the intent to cause harm or exclusion. It is deliberate, repeated, and can take various forms. Bullying is defined based on three main factors:

Aggressive behavior causing harm

Involves an imbalance of power

Repeated and intentional

Studies have shown that everyone is susceptible to bullying. However, males are more prone to physical bullying and threats, while females are more susceptible to psychological bullying.



What is Bullying?

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**Types of
Bullying**

01 | Verbal Bullying

This involves saying or writing hurtful words with the intent to insult and diminish the bullied person, such as:

- Name-calling or giving offensive nicknames.
- Threatening to cause harm.
- Making inappropriate sexual comments.

Types of Bullying

There are four types of bullying:

02 | Social Bullying

This involves harming a person's reputation or relationships with others, such as:

- Deliberately trying to exclude someone.
- Telling others not to be friends with the person.
- Embarrassing them in public or on social media.
- Spreading rumors about them.

Types of Bullying

03 | Physical Bullying

This involves physically harming a person or damaging their belongings, such as:

- Spitting.
- Hitting or pushing.
- Taking or breaking personal belongings.

04 | Cyberbullying

This is bullying that uses digital technologies on social media or through online games:

- Spreading rumors, embarrassing or threatening photos, or videos of the bullied person online.
- Impersonating the bullied person and sending offensive messages to others or through fake accounts.



Causes of Bullying

Causes of Bullying

There are many reasons that lead to bullying behavior towards others, including:

Learned Behavior

Some children may act as bullies because they have acquired this behavior at home from family members or those around them. This is reflected in their personalities and behaviors. For example: When an older brother calls a younger one by a nickname or name with the intent to belittle and mock him.

Seeking Attention

A bully seeks to attract attention by bullying others. This is often due to not receiving enough attention at home; therefore, they try to get it negatively by harming others.

Feeling Insecure

When a child feels insecure or lacks self-confidence, this may cause them to criticize and bully others. For example: if a child feels they are not intelligent, they might mock smarter students.



Effects of Bullying

Bullying is a behavior that affects all members of society and has many negative consequences, such as impacting mental, physical, and social health. It can even lead to substance abuse or self-harm.

Effects of Bullying on:

The Bullied

Children who are bullied may suffer from health, physical, psychological, social, or even academic problems that can persist into later stages of life. They are also more susceptible to:

Declining academic performance or avoiding school.

Losing interest in activities they once enjoyed.

Feeling sad and lonely.

Sleep and eating disorders.

Anxiety and depression.

Effects of Bullying on:

The Bully

Bullies are exposed to and engage in dangerous and aggressive behaviors in later stages of their lives. They are also susceptible to:

Drug and alcohol abuse during adolescence and young adulthood.

Being involved in traffic accidents or crimes in the future.

Practicing domestic violence against their family in the future.

Getting into conflicts, vandalizing property, and dropping out of school.

Effects of Bullying on:

[The Bullying Bystander]

Children who witness bullying are more susceptible to:

Absenteeism from school, which can contribute to poor academic performance.

Increased risk of psychological and health problems such as anxiety and stress.

Increased involvement in behaviors such as:

- Smoking
- Drug use
- Drinking alcohol

Therefore, it is crucial to have continuous and effective communication with the child to work on reducing bullying.

Bullying



Signs of
Bullying

Signs That May Indicate Your Child is Being Bullied

Some children who are subjected to bullying may display warning signs or symptoms. Watch out for:

Changes in eating habits,
such as: Sudden skipping of meals or overeating.

01

Sleep disturbances,
such as: Difficulty sleeping, frequent nightmares, or sleeping for long periods.

02

Lack of self-confidence.

03

Sudden loss of friends
or avoidance of social activities with family or friends.

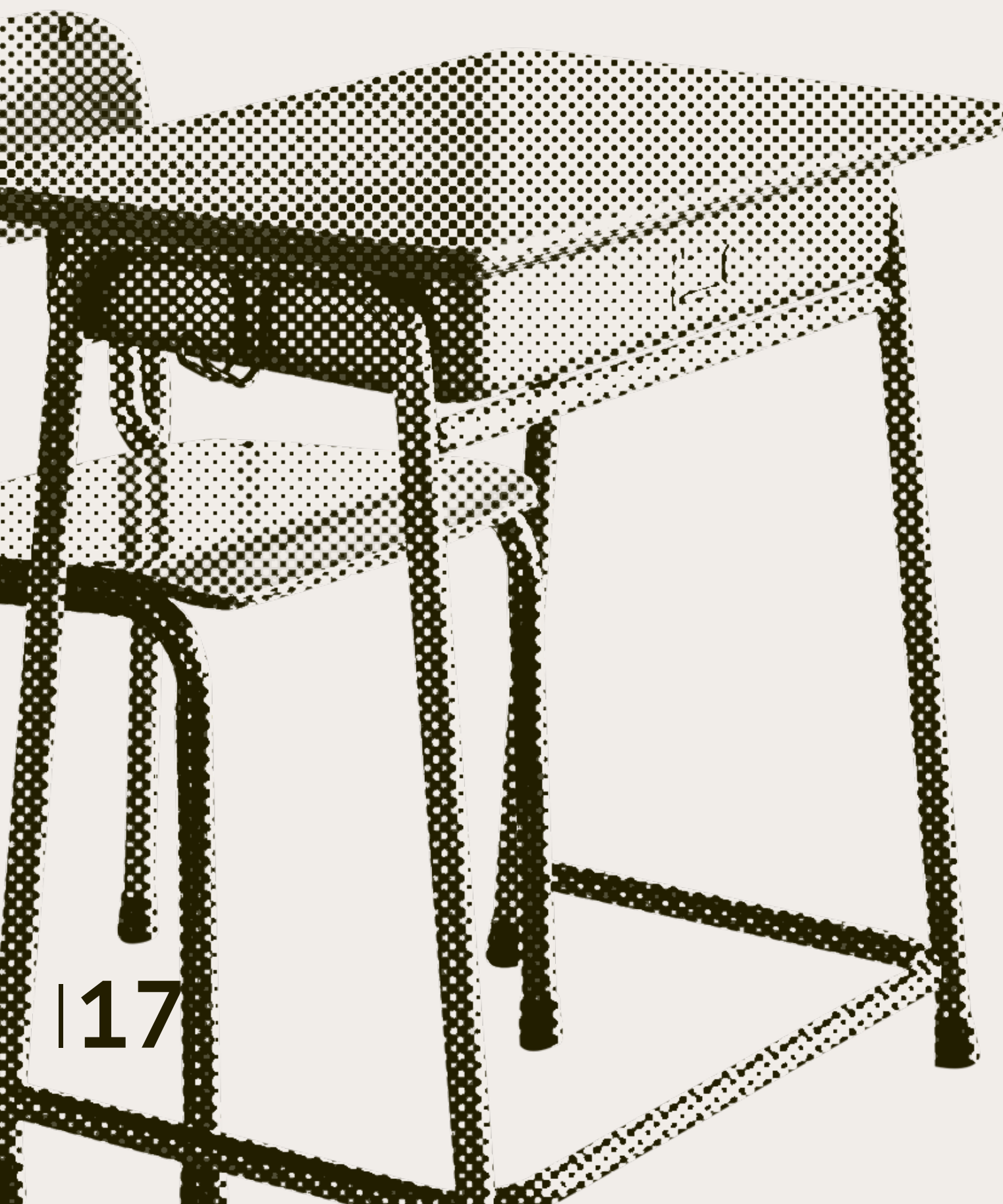
04

Hesitation or refusal to participate in activities they previously enjoyed.

05

Showing signs of depression, sadness, or anger.

06



Signs That May Indicate Your Child is Being Bullied

Some children who are subjected to bullying may display warning signs or symptoms. Watch out for:

Engaging in behaviors like running away from home, self-harm, or talking about these behaviors.

08

A decline in academic performance and reluctance to attend school.

07

Loss or damage of personal belongings such as clothes, books, or electronic devices.

09

Constantly feeling ill or complaining of symptoms to avoid school, such as stomach aches or headaches.

10

Unexplained injuries.

11

Your knowledge and awareness of the signs of bullying provide an opportunity to help the child deal with the situation quickly and correctly.



More than half of bullying incidents stop

within

10

seconds

of bystander intervention

Know Your Role in Confronting Bullying



Confronting bullying incidents and intervening correctly to stop and resolve them is everyone's responsibility. Therefore, there are well-thought-out, correct steps for each group to help deal with bullying in any situation.

For the Bullied

If you are subjected to any bullying, always remember that you have the right to feel safe and secure in your environment. Here is some advice:

Always think about what you post online, and do not contribute to sharing anything that harms or embarrasses others.

01

The problem of bullying is **caused by the bully themselves, not by any inadequacy in you.**

02

Ignore the bully and do not interact with them, as they might try to undermine your self-confidence, so do not allow them to.

03

Reporting the situation early helps resolve the problem you are facing and prevents it from escalating.

04

Ask for help and inform those around you, such as your parents or teachers, to assist you in stopping the bullying.

05

Sometimes the bully only stops when firm action is taken against their behavior. **Defend yourself and show the bully your courage and confidence.**

06

Always remember that **you have the right to feel safe and to be secure.**

07

**Bullying is unacceptable
behavior, so do not tolerate it**

For the Bullying Bystander

Bystanders play a very important role when bullying occurs, contributing in one of these ways:

The [Observer]

Some support bullying behavior by remaining silent and merely observing without objection or realizing that it is wrong behavior. They do not intervene due to fear of consequences or not knowing what to do.

The [Encourager]

Begins by laughing at the situation or encouraging the bully, or contributing to the spread of rumors and harmful messages about the bullied person.

The [Defender]

Recognizes that it is wrong behavior and stands against bullying, attempting to stop this behavior in a safe manner to protect the bullied person.

There is no single approach that suits everyone when defending others from bullying, but there are some safe and effective suggestions:

- **Help** inform relevant authorities or someone you trust about the bullying that is happening, such as teachers or parents.
- **Make** it clear to your friends and those around you that you will not participate in any behavior that involves bullying.
- **Do not stand by** and watch or encourage a bullying situation.
- **Do not contribute** to spreading any rumors or responding to offensive messages and photos about anyone.
- **Encourage** the bullied person to seek help and guide them so they know where to go.

Everyone must respect your rights, but you also have the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of others.





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Parents play a fundamental role in preventing and confronting bullying. If you suspect your child is involved in bullying, the following steps may help you curb it:

For Parents

Understand bullying, its characteristics, and types. Make sure your child knows it's bad behavior, as this is the first step to protecting your child and responding appropriately to the situation.

Provide a positive environment for your child, free from bullying behavior at home, to prevent them from acquiring such behavior.

When bullying occurs at school, **communicate directly with the responsible person (the teacher)** to work together on resolving the problem.

Your child may not ask for your help; therefore, **observe the warning signs that indicate your child might be experiencing bullying or bullying others.**

Provide an appropriate environment for easy communication with you, as this helps them reach out to you if they are being bullied or bullying others.

Inform your child about what should and shouldn't be shared online, such as their personal and family information, or not spreading rumors about others.



For Teachers

Students often approach teachers for help at an advanced stage of being bullied. Therefore, teachers must act appropriately and correctly, based on the school's established procedures.

Make them feel safe and assure them that you will help, and that the matter is absolutely unacceptable.

Ask questions to help you determine whether the situation qualifies as bullying.

Reassure them that appropriate measures will be taken to investigate the matter to stop the bullying and that their complaint will be taken seriously.

Commend their courage in speaking with you to resolve the problem.

Avoid downplaying the problem or saying anything that suggests the issue is unimportant.

Listen carefully to understand the problem in detail — when, how, and where the bullying occurred, including:

- **What words were said to you?**
- **Was anyone physically harmed? and how?**
- **Who was present during the incident?**
- **Whom did you tell?**
- **If the bullying was cyberbullying, ask the student for any evidence of the bullying.**

As a teacher, make sure to educate students about bullying and that it is undesirable behavior, and encourage them to seek help if it occurs.

**Your prompt and
appropriate response
to bullying incidents**

**significantly
contributes to
changing
possible
negative
outcomes**

Misconceptions

"Children don't bully"

Bullying is aggressive behavior that can occur across all age groups, including children. A child may bully classmates or others without realizing it is bullying. Therefore, make sure to clarify to your child what bullying behavior is and its effects, and avoid practicing it within the home.

"A child can only be either a bully or bullied"

It is not necessary for a child to be only a bully or only a victim of bullying; they might be susceptible to either.

"Bullying is a normal stage in your child's life"

Studies show that bullying is a learned behavior, acquired by the child from those around them at home or school. Therefore, condoning and tolerating bullying and considering it a normal part of childhood is incorrect.

"Bullying is a sign of a child's strong personality"

Bullying does not signify a strong personality. Studies have shown it often has the opposite effect, lowering the child's self-respect and self-esteem, while fostering fear and anxiety.

"The bullied should handle the bullying themselves"

Some children are confident and have the necessary skills to stand up to bullying when it occurs, but adults play an important and crucial role in helping to resolve and stop bullying.

"Cyberbullying is less harmful"

Cyberbullying is no less harmful than any other type of bullying, and it can contribute to others bullying the child, even if there is no personal acquaintance.

Feeling safe and being safe is one of your rights

If you
ever feel
otherwise:

**Seek
Help**



Bullying

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For more information, visit our accounts



Visit the "Your Health Guide"
platform to learn how to protect
your child from bullying:

ghc.sa/yourhealthguide

