

Safe and Inclusive Tennis

# Bullying



# Introductions

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## What is bullying?

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Bullying is hurtful behaviour, often repeated over a long period of time, which causes pain and distress.

It can include physical, emotional, sexual or discriminatory abuse.

With the advancement in technology, bullying now frequently takes place on-line through social media and mobile phones.

This means bullying can happen all the time, making it difficult to stop or prevent.



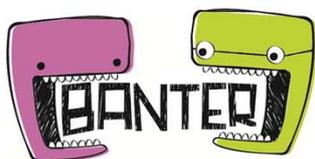
Bullying occurs in many different forms, with varying levels of severity. It may involve:

- Physical Bullying – poking, pushing, hitting, kicking, beating up
- Verbal Bullying – yelling, taunting, name-calling, insulting, threatening to harm
- Relational Bullying – involves damaging someone's relationships or social status, e.g. excluding someone or spreading rumours
- Cyber bullying – sending hurtful messages or images over the internet or mobile phones

## What is bullying?

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“Bullying is not the same as banter.”



“Cyber bullying has nothing to do with tennis clubs”



### **Bullying is not the same as banter**

The term banter is often used as an excuse for unacceptable behaviour, language and bullying. In sport there is a general view that banter can help develop a competitive edge or mental toughness however this could be detrimental to young person if left to continue.

Clubs should recognise that just because a person doesn't intend their comments or behaviours to be seen as bullying, it does not mean it cannot be received as that. Clubs also have a responsibility to ask their junior members how they are and checking in to see how they feel. This helps to create an open environment and culture.

### **Cyber bullying has nothing to do with tennis clubs**

Cyber bullying can happen to anyone at any time. It has been well documented that cyber bullying has resulted in tragic events including suicide and self-harm. Some signs and indicators of cyber bullying include children:

- not wanting to communicate with tennis clubs on social media
- seeming nervous or jumpy when an instant message, text message or email appears

- avoiding school, training or socialising in general
- being angry, depressed, or frustrated during or after using their mobile or computer
- becoming withdrawn from friends and family members

If a club becomes aware or suspects that a child is being cyber bullied, it is important to take steps to address this. Clubs may wish to contact the parents in the first instance to let them know about the concerns and see if they are happy to have a conversation with their child.

## The extent of the problem

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Half a million 10-12 year olds are physically bullied at school

38% of children surveyed have been hit by other children

Children who are bullied frequently are six times more likely to have a low sense of wellbeing

In 2014 ChildLine ran 26,000 counselling sessions that mentioned bullying

7296 counselling involved discussions about cyber bullying

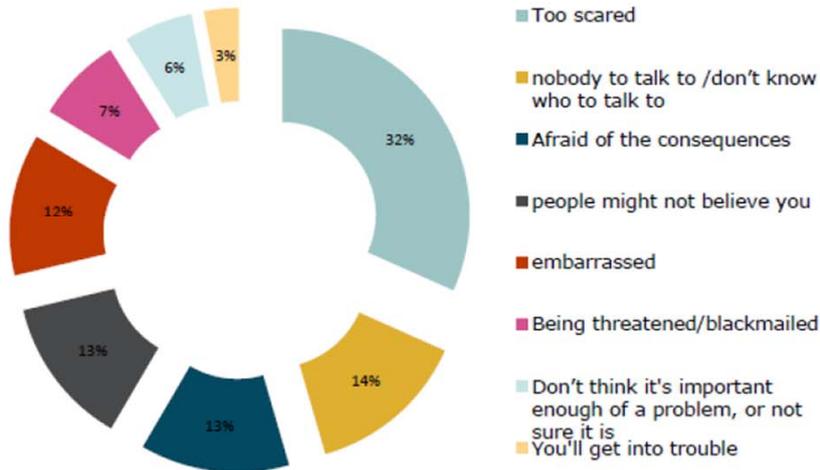


**46% of responses to an NSPCC survey ranked bullying as children's second most common worry within sport.**



In 2015 the NSPCC conducted a survey of over 100 children involved in various sports to see what worried children about their participation in sport. 46% of the responses ranked bullying as their most common worry – so nearly half. Children said they felt that the bullying was linked to their playing ability, whether that was because they were an elite player or because they were more social players. They also said that they thought bullying was disguised as banter that went too far.

## Why might young people not report their worries?



Feedback from children is that many don't know who their Welfare Officer is or if they know there is one, they don't always know what they do. Children also said they can feel that a Welfare Officer is there for the benefit of the club or adult members and don't know that they are necessarily there for them.

Clubs should be raising awareness amongst their junior members of who their Welfare Officer is, how they can contact them and that they are there to help children if they have any worries.

## How to spot bullying

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- Missing or damaged possessions
- Unwilling to go to the tennis venue or join in at sessions
- Says or is ill before sessions or camps
- Becomes withdrawn, nervous or lacks confidence
- Shows a change in performance
- Asks for or steals money
- Self-harms, attempts or threatens suicide
- Doesn't want to travel to the tennis venue alone
- Has no appetite
- Looks tired all the time
- Begins to bully others
- Refuses to say what's wrong, or gives improbable reasons for their behaviour
- Has physical injuries
- Runs away from home



## Real life scenario

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### **Jamie, aged 13**

There's these boys who always make fun of me – they throw rubbish at me in the changing rooms and rip my clothes which makes me look stupid.

When we go to warm up, they won't let me join in and when the coach arrives they act all normal. I hate it and don't want to join in at the session anymore, sometimes I cry but when that happens things get worse.

Even the coach seems frustrated that I don't join in or have fun. I hate going to the club now.

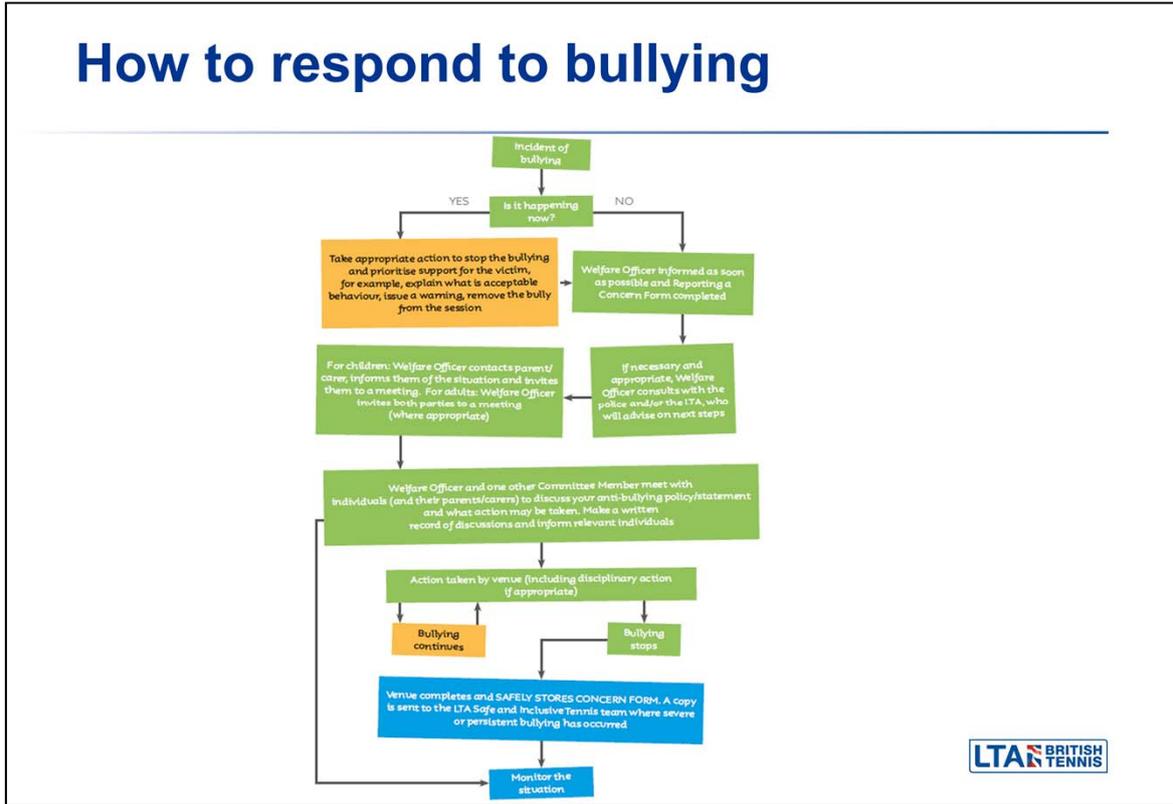


**Q: What were the early signals that could have suggested something was wrong?**

**Q: What do you think the club should do next?**



# How to respond to bullying



It is important that throughout this process, on-going support, including information about external agencies and helplines, should be offered to the victim, bully and their parent/carer.

## What else can clubs do

### Do you know if there is an issue with bullying and the possible extent of the issue?

Some proactive measures to help prevent bullying are:

- Organise awareness-raising workshops
- Anti-bullying policy/statement - promote to all your members
- Safe and Inclusive Code of Conduct
- Raise awareness of your Welfare Officer
- Install a 'worry box'
- Engage with parents and involve them in discussions about bullying.



Clubs should consider undertaking a survey with children and their members, to ask questions that will help generate a true picture of their club and highlight any areas that need to be addressed.

## Resources and support

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[www.lta.org.uk/safeguarding](http://www.lta.org.uk/safeguarding)

<http://www.bullying.co.uk/>

[www.stompoutbullying.org](http://www.stompoutbullying.org)

[www.staysafeonline.org](http://www.staysafeonline.org)

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

[www.noslang.com](http://www.noslang.com)



Bullying UK helpline 0808 800 222



# Thank you!

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