

## Coping with Bullying and Harassment

Bullying may occur at work, at home, or in personal relationships. These tips may help you cope with either in-person or online harassment:

- **Speak up.** Whether you are the target of a bully or witness it happening to someone else, it's important to say "Please stop" or "This behavior is not okay." While saying something may not stop the bully, it sets a clear boundary about what you find acceptable. In addition, speaking up will help others recognize when you are uncomfortable or in need of assistance.
- **Don't engage.** If you respond to a bully with insults or anger, it is likely to escalate their behavior. In addition, the bully could turn things around by accusing you of harassment.
- **Retreat.** The best way to deal with a bully is to walk away. If the person follows you, say "Please leave me alone." If removing yourself from the situation isn't an option, put as much physical space as possible between you and the bully.
- **Ask for help.** At work, reach out to your supervisor, manager, or Human Resources. If the bully is part of your personal life, ask friends or family members for support and access domestic violence resources, including LifeMatters, if needed. Report physical threats or property damage to local law enforcement.



- **Report social media harassment.** Most social media apps have built-in processes for reporting bullying, harassment, or threats. Keep in mind that "troll" accounts, which often exist only to harass others, actually benefit from all forms of engagement. Simply block and move on.
- **Document.** Often, bullies will engage in a pattern of harassment that escalates over time. If the behavior is occurring in person, keep a list of what was said or done, including dates and times. If online, take screen shots of harassing behavior. Keeping track of these incidents may be helpful if you need to seek help with addressing persistent harassment.
- **Educate children.** Provide guidance about how to handle a bully. If your child is being bullied at school, speak with their teacher or a school administrator.

If you are experiencing bullying, harassment, or domestic violence, or if it is happening to someone you care about, LifeMatters can help. Practical resources and emotional support are available 24/7/365. Please reach out.