

Fact sheet

How to be an Upstander

An Upstander is someone who notices bullying behaviour and uses words and/or actions to help someone who is being bullied. This is different from being a bystander – someone who notices bullying behaviour but does not or cannot help.

Upstanders can be an important part of the solution to stopping bullying. We all have a choice as to whether we can tautoko/support the person being bullied or stand by and watch.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to being an Upstander. Being an Upstander can be tough. Sometimes it's not easy to work out how to help safely.

These Five Steps can help you be an Upstander and take safe and effective action. Every bullying situation is different, so think about which option will work best for you:

1. Tautoko/support the person experiencing bullying

- Tautoko the person being bullied, even if you just stand beside them and let them know you've got their back
- Let the person doing the bullying know you've noticed the behaviour and that it's not acceptable
- Encourage them to ask for help, go with them to get help or provide them with information about where to go for help
- Show them our '[Getting help and advice](#)' fact sheet
- Let them know they're not alone and you're there for them

2. Don't support the behaviour

- Make it clear to your colleagues that you won't be involved in the behaviour
- Don't encourage bullying behaviour by harassing, teasing or spreading gossip about others, verbally or on social networking sites
- Don't acknowledge, reply or forward messages or photos that could be hurtful or embarrassing to a colleague

3. Call it!

- If you feel safe, step in and call the person out on their bullying behaviour
- Be direct, calm and confident, and let the person know their behaviour isn't okay
- Use your words to show aroha and kindness to those involved
- Don't stand by and watch. It can be hard in the moment but it can make a huge difference

4. Leave and act

- If you don't feel safe to step in and stop the bullying while it's happening, it's best to walk away and think about what you *can* do to help
- Later you might let the person experiencing the bullying know that you saw and ask what might help, or have a quiet word with the person doing the bullying behaviour

5. Get tautoko/support or help

- Support the person who is experiencing the bullying to ask for help
- You could offer to go with them to HR or a manager, or provide them with information about where to go for help
- If your organisation has a policy related to bullying, it will help you know what to do next and who to talk to
- There are people who care and want to help

Clear policies and practices, known and shared values and expected behaviours, plus leaders who role model these values/behaviours, will help people feel confident to be an Upstander.

If Upstanders are confident to take safe and effective action to support the person experiencing bullying, there is a greater possibility that bullying can stop and the target of the bullying behaviour can recover.



This fact sheet has been developed based on content from the [Australian Human Rights Commission](#), [ReachOUT](#) and [Worklogic](#).