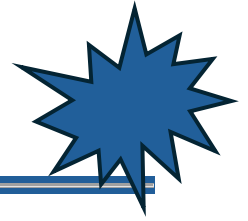


Know the Signs: Bullying Warning Flags

A quick-reference guide for parents, educators, and carers



Why This Matters

Bullying can manifest differently in children, teens, and adults — and it’s not always loud or visible. This guide highlights lesser-known warning signs across emotional, behavioural, physical, and digital spaces to help you take early action.

Emotional & Psychological Signs

- Mood swings or uncharacteristic irritability
 - Sudden anxiety or panic attacks
 - Low self-worth or increased self-criticism
 - Emotional flatness or numbness
 - Intense fear of making mistakes or displeasing others
 - “I hate school/work” with no clear explanation
 - Talking about feeling trapped, hopeless, or unwanted
-
-

Behavioural Signs

- Avoiding certain places, people, or activities
 - Refusal to participate in group work or social events
 - New or worsening school refusal or tardiness
 - Frequent “illnesses” (e.g., stomach aches) with no medical cause
 - Drastic changes in eating or sleeping patterns
 - Isolating themselves at lunch or breaks
 - Acting out aggressively at home or becoming uncharacteristically passive
-
-

Physical Signs

- Unexplained bruises, cuts, or injuries
 - Lost or destroyed personal items (books, electronics, jewellery)
 - Frequent headaches or gastrointestinal issues
 - Decline in personal hygiene or appearance
 - Changes in posture — hunched, shoulders down, avoiding eye contact
-
-

Digital/Online Signs

- Anxiety when receiving messages or notifications
 - Quickly closing screens when someone enters the room
 - Avoiding previously enjoyed online spaces
 - Unusual secrecy or emotional responses after screen time
 - Sudden deletion of social media accounts
 - Loss of interest in using devices they once enjoyed
-
-

What to Do Next

If you've noticed multiple signs, trust your instincts. Gently open a conversation, offer non-judgemental support, and seek help from professionals if needed.
