

Why Do People Bully?

There are a variety of reasons why people bully.

Cultural Causes of Bullying In a culture that is fascinated with winning, power, and violence, some experts suggest that it is unrealistic to expect that people will not be influenced to seek power through violence in their own lives. Researchers point to the World Wrestling Federation (WWF) as glorification of bullies in the name of entertainment and point out that the high rate of domestic violence means that many young people grow up expecting that violence is an acceptable way to get what one wants.

Institutional Causes If the institution at which the bullying takes place - whether the home, the school, or the [workplace](#) - does not have high standards for the way people treat each other, then bullying may be more likely and/or prevalent and have an influence on why people bully.

Social Issues The fact that one gets more social recognition for negative behaviors than for positive ones can also contribute to reasons why people bully. Situation comedies and reality television, as well as real life situations in schools, for example, show that acting out is more likely to get noticed than behaving oneself civilly and courteously. Jealousy or envy and a lack of personal and social skills to deal with such feelings can also be reasons why people bully.

Family Issues Families that are not warm and loving and in which feelings are not shared are more likely to have children who bully, either within the family home or in other locations in which the children meet others. Another home environment that is prone to producing bullies is one in which discipline and monitoring are inconsistent and/or a punitive atmosphere exists.

The Bully's Personal History Children who experience social rejection themselves are more likely to "pass it on" to others. Children who experience academic failure are also more likely to bully others.

Having Power Some research indicates that the very fact of having power may make some people wish to wield it in a noticeable way, but it is also true that people may be given power without being trained in the leadership skills that will help them wield it wisely. Either situation can contribute to why people bully others.

Provocative Victims People who are annoying and condescending to others and/or aggressive verbally, or in other ways that are not picked up by those in authority, may contribute to the dynamic that can be characterized as bullying by one individual but actually grows out of provocation by another individual.

Unreliable Reports

According to Ståle Einarsen of the University of Bergen in Norway in "The nature and causes of bullying at work," because most reports of bullying come from a victim, in cases in which there is a provocative victim or the so-called bullying stems from a dispute between the parties or other pre-existing interpersonal conflict, outside evidence should be gathered before it is concluded that bullying has taken place.

So, why do people bully? There are many reasons. But, one thing is clear. Regardless of why people bully, any type of bullying needs to come to an end.