

Peer-On-Peer Information Sheet for School Staff



Information
Sheet

We can define peer-on-peer abuse as physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse or coercive control that happens between young people.

It can include bullying (prejudice-based, discriminatory and cyber), sexual violence and harmful sexual behaviours (harassment, sexting, upskirting, making someone engage in sexual activity, and sharing consensual and non-consensual nude and semi nudes images or videos), physical harm (hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling), abuse in intimate personal relationships, domestic violence, child sexual exploitation, encouraging participation in hazardous initiations and rituals, and gender-based violence. Such behaviour is potentially harmful to both perpetrator and victim.

The signs of peer-on-peer-abuse

Poor punctuality or lateness to school

Attendance issues

Disengaging from extracurricular activities

Physical injuries

Loss of weight

Health issues — mental, emotional and physical

Becoming withdrawn

Growing lack of self-esteem

Sleep issues

Misuse of alcohol or substances

Behavioural changes

Inappropriate behaviour for someone's age

Abusiveness towards others

What you can do

1. Make sure equality and informed choice are embedded within the school environment.
2. Ensure young people know their rights and understand what true consent means so they know what they can do if they are not happy.
3. Avoid complacency. Don't think this can't happen in your school. Just because you aren't aware of it, doesn't mean it's not there.
4. Take the time to understand your local community so you are aware of the culture and context in which your young people are growing up.
5. Educate young people about potential risks through talks by professionals in assemblies, parent webinars and a good PSHE and pastoral curriculum.
6. Always talk about peer-on-peer abuse in an age-appropriate way.
7. Create opportunities for young people to assess risk so they come to understand that everyone's appetite for risk is different. As teachers, our role is not to proscribe what young people can and cannot do but to encourage them to make sensible, thought-through choices that keep them safe from harm.
8. Help young people to feel more comfortable talking about their relationships with family, peers and staff, even if this touches upon difficult topics.

DO'S AND DONT'S

- ✓ **DO** listen and reassure them that they will be supported and kept safe.
- ✓ **DO** stay calm. Be encouraging. Ensure they know you are there to help and that they are doing the right thing by talking to you.
- ✓ **DO** record in writing what they have said to you as soon as possible. State only the facts.
- ✓ **DO** tell your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.

**What to do
if a young
person makes
a disclosure**

- ✗ **DO NOT** dismiss an incident by characterising it as just 'banter', or 'part of growing up' or 'someone having a laugh'.
- ✗ **DO NOT** ask leading questions or promise total confidentiality. Explain who you will have to tell and why you will need to tell them.
- ✗ **DO NOT** share any information with colleagues or contact anyone at the young person's home without approval from your DSL or someone in the Senior Leadership Team.
- ✗ **DO NOT** view photos or videos of a sexual nature. Talk to your DSL if you do so accidentally or think it necessary to deal with the situation satisfactorily.
- ✗ **DO NOT** take notes when a young person is talking, unless absolutely necessary.
- ✗ **DO NOT** tell anyone about a disclosure other than those who need to know.

We offer:

- ✓ [Level 1 Accredited Safeguarding Training](#)
- ✓ [Safer Recruitment Training \(adapted for International Schools\)](#)
- ✓ [Accredited Designated Safeguarding Lead Training \(Level 3\)](#)
- ✓ [School Inspection Safeguarding Audits](#)
- ✓ [Mental Health Training](#)
- ✓ [Accredited Safeguarding and Child Protection INSET Packs for International Schools](#)
- ✓ [DSL Supervision Support Packages](#)

Anti-Bullying Week, England - 15 to 19 November 2021

This year's theme from the [Anti-bullying Alliance](#) is 'One Kind Word' and there are excellent free resources available to use with students. Find out how your school can get involved.

Some additional documents to read are:

1. [Review of sexual abuse in schools](#)
2. [Guidance for Safer Working Practices 2019](#)
3. [Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021](#)
4. [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused March 2015](#)
5. 'Lessons will be learned: Transforming Safeguarding in Education' by Martin Baker and Mike Glanville

Click [here](#) to access our webinar 'What every DSL needs to know about Safeguarding from Sep 2021'

For more information about our Safeguarding offering to schools please contact us at cpd@veema.co.uk.

Contact us by

