

**DITCH THE  
LABEL**

**YOUR WORLD, PREJUDICE FREE .**

# **THE ANNUAL BULLYING SURVEY 2018.**

**THE ANNUAL BENCHMARK OF BULLYING  
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.**

**Visit [DitchtheLabel.org](https://DitchtheLabel.org) for the largest anti-bullying support hub in the world.**

*First published in June 2018 by Ditch the Label. You are free to distribute this report but it may not be reproduced without prior written consent. Any information from this report used in external documents must be adequately referenced. All graphs and charts are hand illustrated and therefore may not be to scale, always refer to the percentages and frequencies shown.*

*Copyright 2018 Ditch the Label®. All rights reserved. Registered charity number 1156329.*

# CONTENTS

**DITCH THE  
LABEL** YOUR WORLD. PREJUDICE FREE.

## THE ANNUAL BULLYING SURVEY 2018.

THE ANNUAL BENCHMARK OF BULLYING  
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

### INTRODUCTION 04

04: About Ditch the Label  
05: About this research  
06: Executive Summary  
07: Honorary Preface from Lord Rumi Verjee  
08: Methodology  
10: Experiences of bullying

---

### PART 1: VICTIMISATION TO BULLYING 11

12: The frequency of bullying  
13: The nature of bullying  
14: Perceived motives  
15: About the perpetrators  
16: Personal anecdotes  
17: The impact of bullying  
20: Reporting it

---

### PART 2: PERPETRATION OF BULLYING 22


23: The frequency and nature of perpetration  
24: The impact of perpetration  
25: Understanding the motives

---

### PART 3: WITNESSING BULLYING 26

27: Preface  
28: Frequency and nature  
29: The impact of witnessing bullying  
30: Interventions

---



**We believe in a world that is  
fair, equal and free from  
all types of bullying.**

**Are you with us?**

# WELCOME TO DITCH THE LABEL

## **LEADING THE WAY WHEN IT COMES TO TACKLING BULLYING.**

It is estimated that every 3-minutes, at least one young person benefits from our anti-bullying support. We are one of the largest anti-bullying charities in the world helping thousands of people, aged 12-25 each week to overcome bullying and the impact it has on their health, esteem, studies and social lives.

We work primarily online through our pioneering website and in partnership with online games and social networks. Innovation is at the core of all that we do and we believe that we can, and will beat bullying.

Within the past year, approximately 1.5 million young people in the United Kingdom experienced bullying, with half

of them never telling anybody through fear, embarrassment or a lack of faith in support systems.

Through our work with schools, colleges and online communities, we conduct world-leading research on an ongoing basis to help us better understand the dynamics of bullying so that we can tackle it with interventions that work.

Bullying is a societal issue and we advocate that everybody has a role to play in reducing the effect and prominence of bullying. This is why we work hard through partnerships with celebrities, brands and the media to shift societal attitudes and to generate awareness of the issues affecting young people.

Our focus is not only on those who experience bullying, but also on those

who are doing the bullying. Bullying is a learnt behaviour and we won't stop until it's over.

## **Please help us take a stand against bullying.**

We are entirely reliant on voluntary donations to fund our vital anti-bullying work. It is only thanks to our generous supporters and partners that we are able to reach thousands of young people each month. We are extremely grateful but there is still so much more we need to do to achieve a world that fair, equal and free from all types of bullying. Please consider making a donation to support our work at [www.ditchthelabel.org/donate](http://www.ditchthelabel.org/donate).

**For support, resources and ways to get involved, visit [www.DitchtheLabel.org](http://www.DitchtheLabel.org).**

# ABOUT THIS RESEARCH

**DITCH THE LABEL** YOUR WORLD. PREJUDICE FREE.

## THE ANNUAL BULLYING SURVEY 2018.

THE ANNUAL BENCHMARK OF BULLYING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

### WELCOME TO THE ANNUAL BULLYING SURVEY 2018: THE LARGEST BENCHMARK OF BULLYING BEHAVIOURS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

This year, we are celebrating our sixth annual edition of this crucial body of evidence; documenting the true extent and nature of bullying behaviours from the real and often unheard voices of the young people who experience it.

Our research continues to influence policy and innovation within the anti-bullying sector; whilst empowering educators and various other stakeholders to make more informed decisions in the prevention of bullying.

We continue to utilise this vital research in our own work; powering the development of innovative new support interventions, ultimately aiding our mission to combat bullying.

As always, 50% of the report benchmarks bullying behaviours, with the remainder of the survey this year exploring the bystanders to bullying. We wanted to measure the impact that bullying has on those who witness it, along with tracking if, how and why people intervene, along with a measurement of what happened as a result of intervention. This research enables us to bridge the gap when it comes to empowering bystanders to intervene in safe and impactful ways.

In 2017, we explored the real impact that social media and technology is having on the lives of young people, including the consequences on bullying, relationships and identity.

In addition to The Annual Bullying Survey, we also produce a range of other related reports, all of which are freely available at [DitchtheLabel.org](http://DitchtheLabel.org).

### A special thank you

We would like to thank everyone who has helped produce The Annual Bullying Survey 2018.

- **Lord Rumi Verjee and the Rumi Foundation**
- **Dr. Liam Hackett**, Founder and CEO of Ditch the Label
- **Sue Jones**, Deputy CEO of Ditch the Label
- **Professor Sheri Bauman**, Ditch the Label Research Advisor and Trustee (USA)
- **Jonathan Porrino**, Ditch the Label Researcher
- **Anne Longfield**, the Children's Commissioner for England
- **Vicki Shotbolt**, CEO of The ParentZone
- **Dr. Christian Jessen**, Chairperson of Ditch the Label
- **Rebecca Barrie**, Trustee of Ditch the Label
- **PHA Media**
- **Plus all of the schools and colleges who participated.**



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

**Dr. Liam Hackett, Chief Executive Officer**

It is my pleasure to welcome you to The Annual Bullying Survey 2018 and to mark the launch of our sixth annual benchmark of bullying behaviours in the United Kingdom. This year, we have tracked the lived experiences of the young people victimised to bullying, whilst also delving deeper into the psyche and motives of those who perpetrate. Our theme this year was to uncover the experiences of those who witness bullying; exploring how we can better equip and empower young people to safely and effectively intervene in cases of bullying.

1-in-5 of all young people have witnessed bullying within the past 12-months, with 50% of them witnessing it at least once a month. The experience proves to have serious impacts upon their own mental health, with 59% saying they felt bad and 39% reporting that it made them feel upset. Only 17% told us that they always intervene when they witness bullying. Most commonly young people were scared of being victimised or felt like they didn't have the right skills to interject. From those who did intervene, the response is largely positive and a statistic that I particularly found reassuring was 1-in-4 interventions resulted in them gaining a new friend.

This research continues to uncover the

devastating and very real impacts that bullying is having on young people. 60% told us that it had impacted their mental health, with 1-in-2 telling us it made them feel depressed and 11% attempting to take their own lives as a result. This report does not make for easy reading.

Our research unearths a new reality about perpetrators – finding that they too are experiencing adverse mental health and are equally, if not, more so, in desperate need of our help. 44% of perpetrators felt guilty when they bullied somebody, which shows a huge degree of remorse. Worryingly 1-in-3 felt in control and 29% felt powerful when they perpetrated; highlighting a huge opportunity to aid them in developing better ways of catering to this driver.

It is my hope that this research will continue to spark societal conversation, whilst creating a positive influence on policy and innovation within the sector. As a leading and innovative global anti-bullying organisation, it is our continued mission to work both proactively and reactively to combat bullying within society. These insights will influence the creation and delivery of pioneering new interventions to better support all stakeholders in the complex dynamic of bullying.

# THE RUMI FOUNDATION

## HONORARY PREFACE

---

### Lord Rumi Verjee, the Rumi Foundation

If one of your friends was verbally abused because of their sexuality, race or background, how would you react? We can all agree that such prejudice has no place in our world today, but knowing how to intervene to stop this behaviour can be difficult, intimidating or even simply awkward for many of us.

This year's edition of The Annual Bullying Survey includes a focus on the witnesses to bullying. This vital research will help build new resources, designed to empower people to

of such behaviour.

The Annual Bullying Survey is a vital weapon in Ditch the Label's scientific armoury. The survey seeks to address key trends in our society, including school place bullying, body dysmorphia and the impact of social media.

Bullying ruins lives. It damages self-esteem, disempowers people and sews the seeds of prejudice. Last year's survey revealed that 1 in 2 people have experienced bullying in some form during their lives. This shocking statistic shows just how much more needs to be done.

The Rumi Foundation was set up to provide a space to reflect about why trends like bullying still exist in our society. We support a range of initiatives with the broad aim of nurturing innovation, sparking new ideas and sharing knowledge, with a reach that stretches from disadvantaged classrooms in the UK to communities in Africa who lack vital resources. I want to build a society that espouses the values of compassion, inclusion and tolerance, and backing initiatives such as the Annual Bullying Survey is a great way for us to do this.

I am proud that the Foundation continues to support the work of Ditch the Label. The charity has grown into one of the world's largest anti-bullying charities, while The Annual Bullying Survey has become a key resource for policy makers, charities, educators and people wishing to make the world a better place.

The Rumi Foundation stands alongside Ditch the Label in shaping a world that is fair, equal and free from all types of bullying. Only by creating a space for these conversations and research, and by empowering people to intervene will we create a world free from bullying, and free from prejudice.



*Lord Verjee is the founder of the Rumi Foundation, which was set up to serve as the vehicle for the Verjee family's charitable interests. He is the Chairman of WE UK and co-hosts their annual signature event, WE Day UK, alongside Holly Branson.*

interject safely to stop bullying and to identify behaviours which may be perceived as bullying.

This is the sixth edition of The Annual Bullying Survey, and the Rumi Foundation is proud to support this vital initiative. Ditch the Label continues to grow as an organisation, offering not just support for those bullied, but conducting research into why bullying happens in the first place.

Their pioneering scientific research has already helped so many other organisations understand the changing nature of bullying and the root causes

The Annual Bullying Survey is conducted annually in partnership with secondary schools and colleges across the United Kingdom.

The survey was available for student participation online between 1st November 2017 and 28th February 2018. Students were each allocated time during registration and PSHE periods to complete the compulsory survey.

A total of 14,786 young people completed the survey. The data was cleansed to remove incomplete and low quality responses, leaving us with a sample of 9,150.

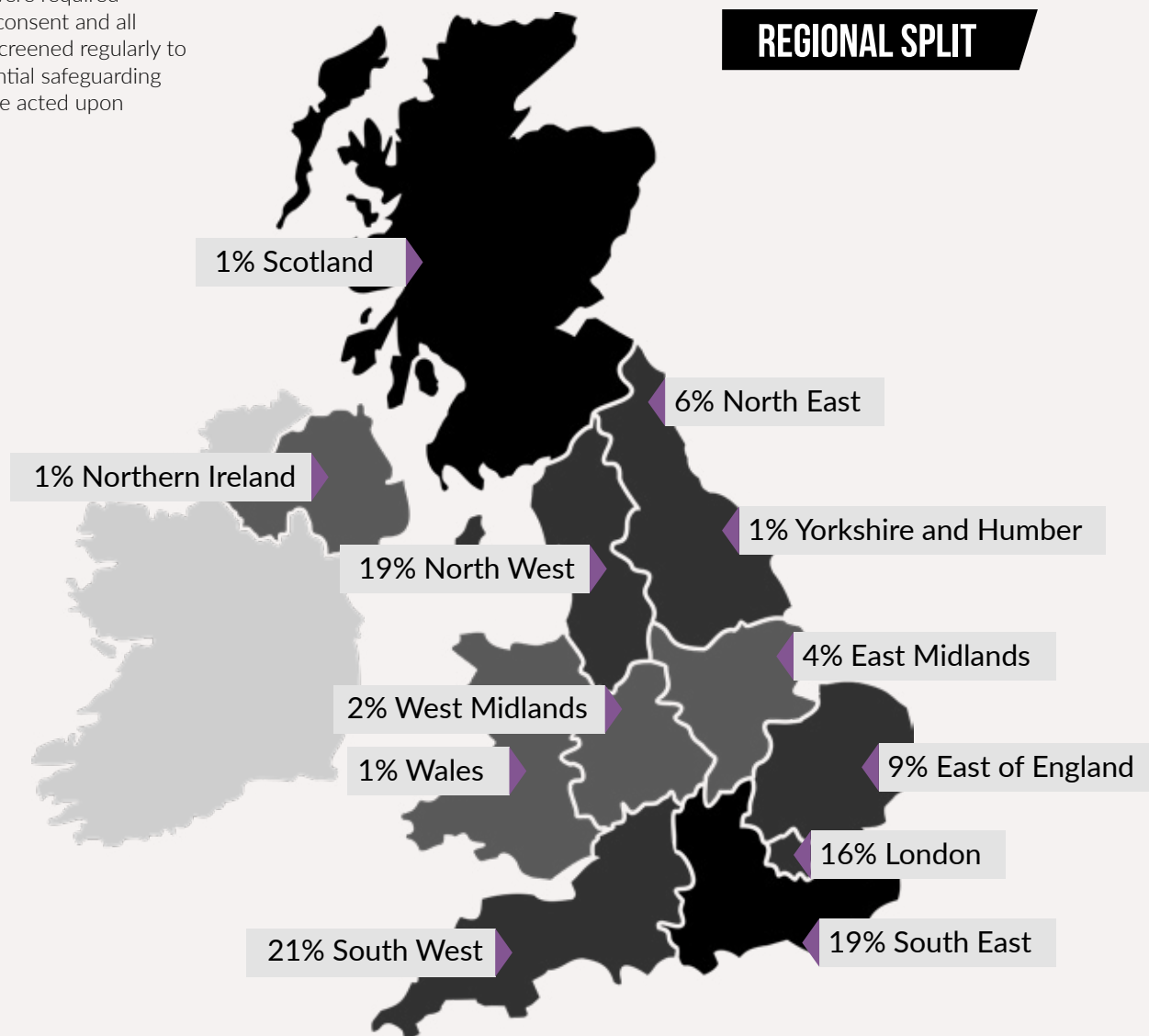
The data was cleaned and analysed using SPSS, enabling us to identify hidden relationships within the data.

All respondents were required to have parental consent and all responses were screened regularly to identify any potential safeguarding issues, which were acted upon promptly.

**9,150 people aged  
12-20 participated  
in the survey.**

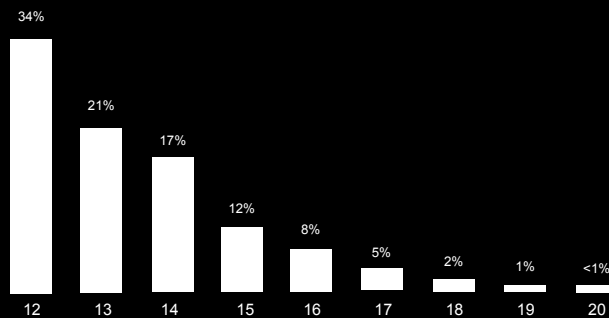
////////////////////////////////////

## REGIONAL SPLIT



# OUR SAMPLE

## HOW OLD ARE YOU?



## WHAT IS YOUR GENDER?

- 57% Female
- 41% Male
- 1% Transgender
- 1% Non-binary
- 1% Other

## WHAT IS YOUR ETHNICITY?

- 1% Arab
  - 2% Asian
  - 1% Asian other
  - <1% Bangladeshi
  - 4% Black African
  - 1% Black Caribbean
  - <1% Gypsy/Irish Traveller
  - 2% Indian
  - 4% Mixed race
  - 1% Pakistani
  - 76% White British
  - 1% White Irish
  - 5% White other
  - 1% Prefer not to say
- Marginal data for 'Black other' and 'Chinese'.

## WHAT IS YOUR SEXUALITY?

- 83% Straight
- 4% Bisexual
  - 1% Gay
- 2% Curious / unsure
  - 1% Lesbian
  - 1% Asexual
- 7% Prefer not to say
  - 1% Other

## DO YOU HAVE A DISABILITY?

- 7% have a learning disability
- 3% have Autism/Asperger's
- 2% have a physical disability

Overall, 10% reported having at least 1 disability with 90% reporting no disability.

**In the past 12-months and based on your own definition, what have been your experiences of bullying?**

In previous editions of the survey, students were asked about their experiences of bullying in general and not within a timeframe of 12-months. This causes data variation but also makes our insights more relevant and time-sensitive. In advance to this question, respondents were asked to define what bullying meant to them.



## **ANNE LONGFIELD, THE CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER FOR ENGLAND**

It is worrying that one in five children are experiencing some form of bullying. The impact bullying has on children can be enormous, affecting a child's confidence, self-esteem and their mental health.

Ditch the Label's survey shows how bullying is blighting the lives of hundreds of thousands of children.

More needs to be done at home and in schools to help those who are the victims of bullying and also, crucially, to prevent children from bullying in the first place. Children who are experiencing bullying need to know that they can approach their parents, teachers or Ditch the Label

to talk about what they are experiencing.

We also know that much of the bullying that takes place is happening online, and I want to see the social media companies do more to make sure that under-13s are not using their platforms and to tackle problems quickly when they do occur online.

There should be simple and speedy ways of reporting and taking down bullying content. It is also really important that children are taught how to be responsible online. Digital citizenship classes are an effective way of teaching children the impact of their behaviour online and helps children to build the resilience they need, and should be a part of every child's education.

**PART 1**

# **VICTIMISATION**

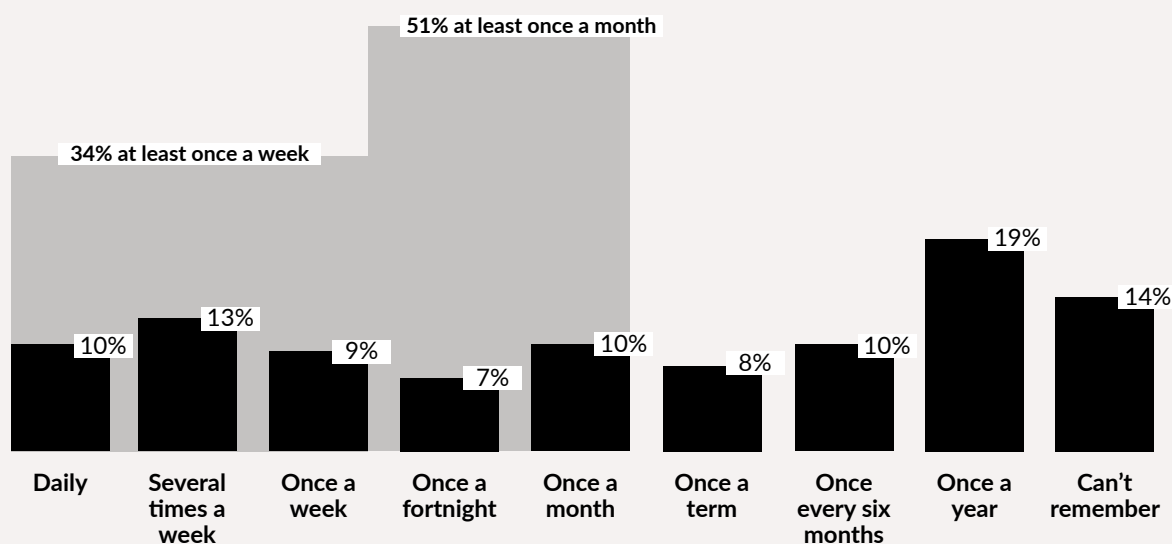
**The experiences of young people  
who have been victimised to bullying  
behaviour within the past 12-months.**

# BEING BULLIED

## FREQUENCY

From those who have been bullied within the past 12-months:

### How frequently were you bullied?



#### MY STORY

Male, aged 14, South East.

“

I was really upset to see my little sister to get bullied. I went to pick her up with my dad and while he was speaking to her teacher about her getting picked on, I turned around to talk to her and I saw her getting pushed on the floor and getting verbal abuse from other pupils at her school. When I saw this, my heart dropped to my stomach, I ran over to her as fast as I could, I separated everyone and shouted at the people who were picking on her. I picked her up onto my shoulder and stormed off and told my dad about it. To this day I make sure she is safe and that nothing bad ever happens to her.

”

#### MY STORY

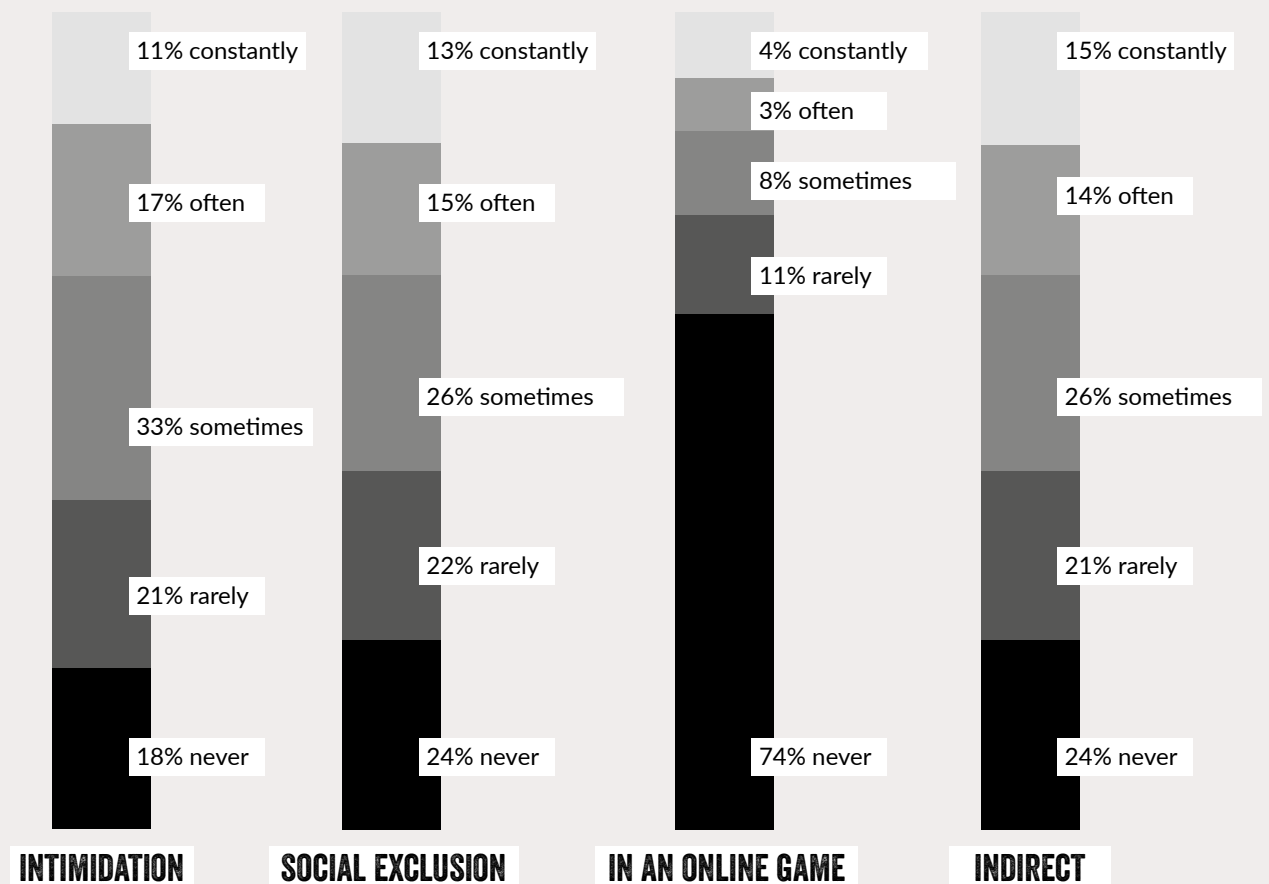
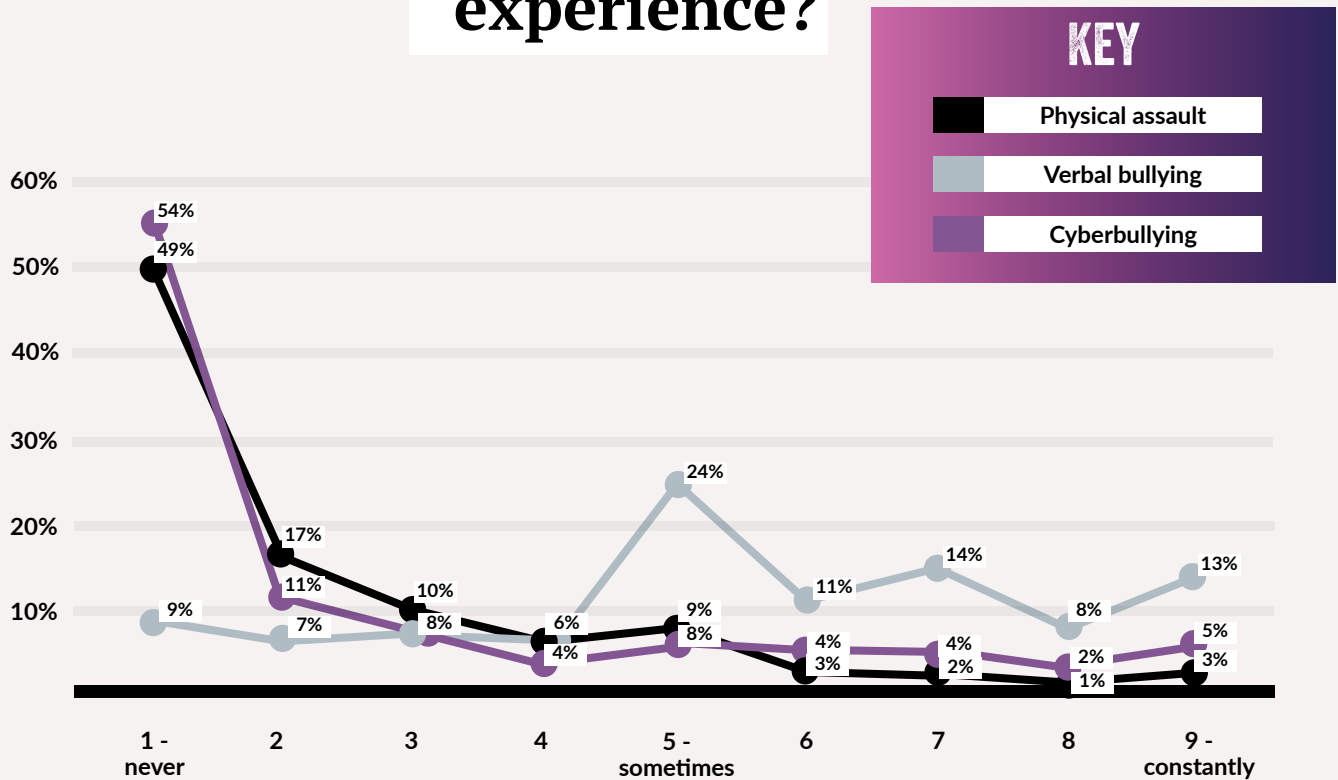
Female, aged 13, London.

“

I used to bully someone because my friends pulled me to do it with them. so I just joined in... I felt really guilty so I decided to stop and they stopped too and then we told our teachers and got 1 week without break or lunch time.

”

### What kind of bullying did you experience?

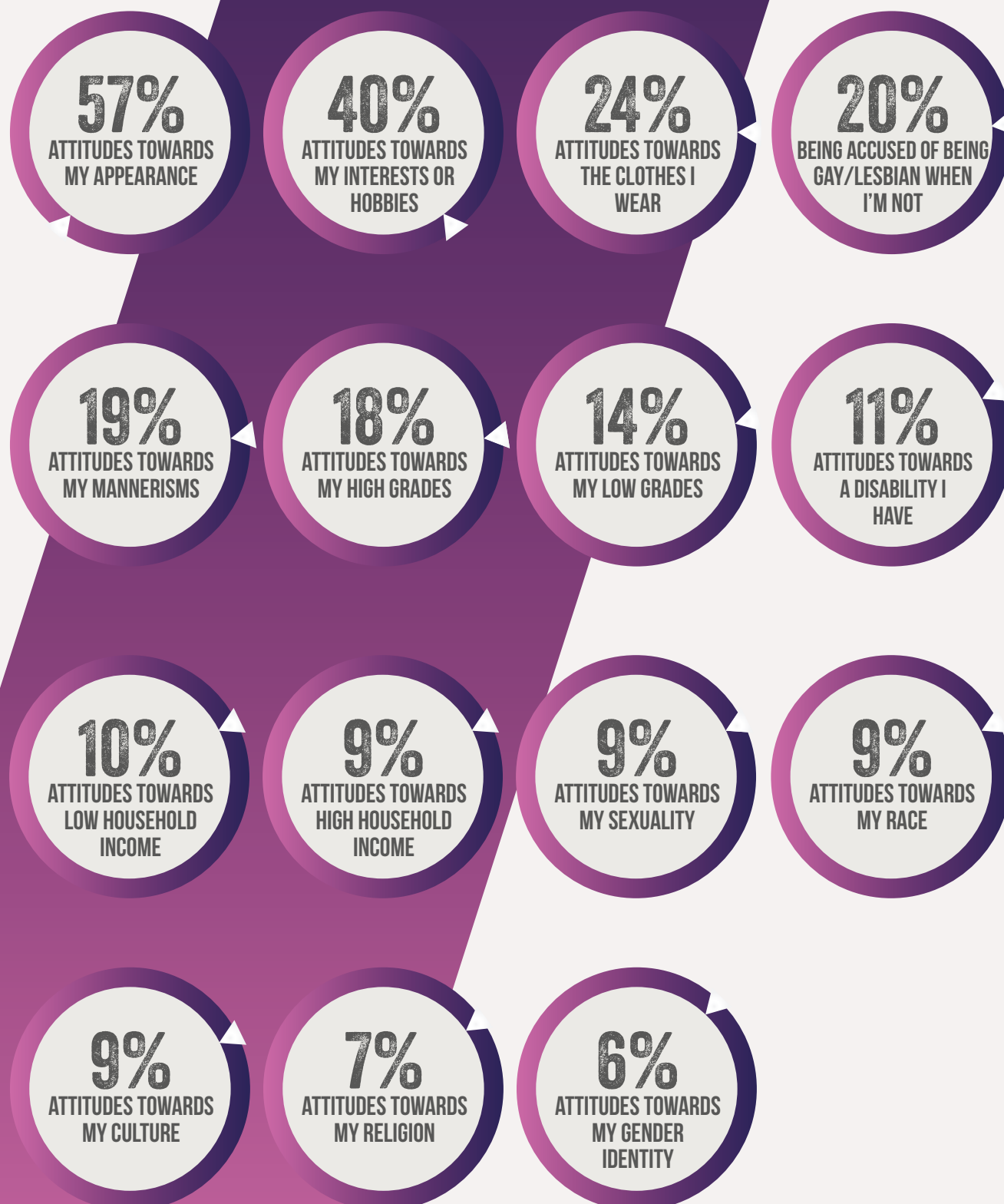


# BEING BULLIED

## PERCEIVED MOTIVE

From those who have been bullied within the past 12-months:

### Why do you think you were bullied?

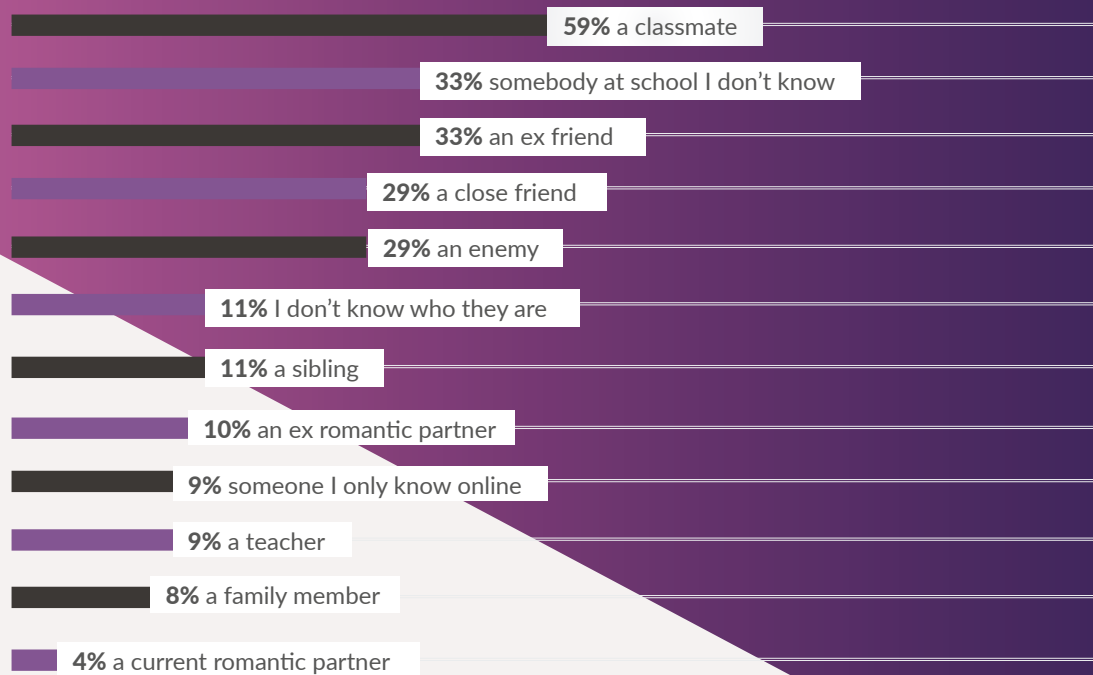


# BEING BULLIED

## PERPETRATORS

From those who have been bullied within the past 12-months:

### Who bullied you?



*It's because of my physical appearance and because I'm Asian that I am bullied. Sometimes people make fun of me and ruin my belongings but I don't tell my parents.*

*When I got bullied, I would have breakdowns and try to ditch classes. I would try to ignore it but it seemed to make the situations worse, I would feel stressed and paranoid and I was hoping I would survive another day of school and wear a smiley mask.*

*It was horrible, I got bullied and turned away because I had different thoughts and opinions on things. Even the way I dress and how I like to talk such as my make-up and hair. My closest friends turned me away so they didn't get bullied.*



# BEING BULLIED

## MY STORY

### MY STORY

Female, aged 16, East.

“

In year 7-10 I was in a school where I live and the people were horrible. I was called a slag every day, I got into fights at least 3 times a week. I was called fat, I was called ugly, I was always told to kill myself. When I began self harming I was involved in drugs. I was seeing a guy who was 3 years older than me and I was 12/13 years old, I began self harming because I fell in love with him and for 2 years it carried on, I still saw him but he didn't love me back. I thought that meant i was worthless and ugly.”

”

### MY STORY

Female, aged 16, Scotland.

“

Throughout school I have had a tough time with making friends and being socially accepted.

I feel like I am being excluded all the time and sometimes I even feel invisible. I get sent messages online telling me to kill myself and that the world would be better without me and one day I did try to kill myself because I just felt so unhappy and just didn't see what the point was anymore.

Now I am getting help with CAMHS and they are helping to deal and cope with my depression and anxiety due to bullying.

”



### MY STORY

Female, aged 13 South East.

“

I didn't have any friends, people made fun of how I looked, the amount of food I ate, my grades/levels and my terrible English.

At first I didn't really think of it but then it started ringing in my head that I didn't look like the popular girls and I thought that maybe if I was skinny they would be my friends.

This later led me into developing an eating disorder and I also started to self-harm.

I couldn't stand the way I looked and I still can't. I hate looking in the mirror - it kills me when I see myself.

”

### MY STORY

Male, aged 12, South East.

Physically punched and kicked and pushed for no reason at all. I didn't tell anyone because I thought it would go away but as it kept going and it was affecting me slightly, I told my form tutor and he sorted it out. This didn't happen again afterwards but he hasn't owned up to it yet.”

”

### MY STORY

Male, aged 12, South East.

I was called really horrible names at school by someone it stopped me wanting to go outside at lunch times it made me really annoyed with my self. I would unintentionally get angry and annoyed with people for no reason as well, I also got quite down as well.

”

# BEING BULLIED

## IMPACT

From those who have been bullied within the past 12-months:

### How did it impact you?



#### WHAT ABOUT PERPETRATORS?

There is a growing bank of evidence to show commonalities between the mental health and wellbeing of those who are victimised to bullying and those who perpetrate bullying behaviours.

Our analysis also uncovered the heightened impacts of bullying on those who have both been subjected to and perpetrated bullying behaviour. In this

research we found the following:

- 59% felt depressed
- 58% felt socially anxious
- 56% had suicidal thoughts
- 50% engaged in anti-social behaviour
- 41% self-harmed
- 38% truanted from school or college
- 34% developed an eating disorder
- 33% had a suicide attempt

- 29% abused drugs and/or alcohol
- 20% ran away from home
- 20% engaged in risky sexual behaviour.

At Ditch the Label, we recognise that working with and supporting perpetrators is a strong and positive strategy for the prevention of bullying.

# BEING BULLIED

## IMPACT

What  
impact  
did being  
bullied  
have on  
your **mental**  
**health?**

47% MODERATE TO EXTREME IMPACT

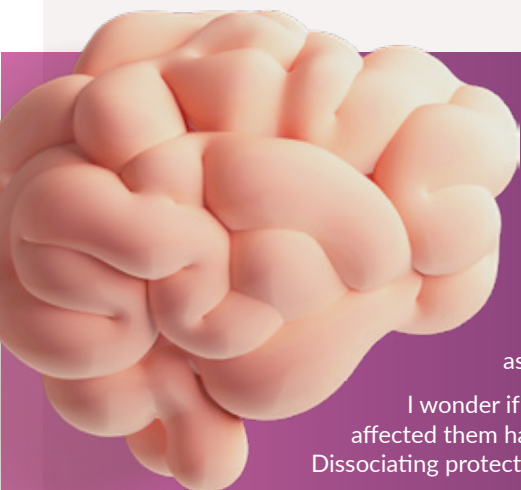
16% EXTREME IMPACT

12% SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

19% MODERATE IMPACT

13% MARGINAL IMPACT

40% NO IMPACT



### REBECCA BARRIE, PSYCHOTHERAPIST

The idea that 40% of people recognise no effect of bullying concerns me. Bullying is traumatic and when we are in trauma, sometimes we cut our feelings off and dissociate – as a way of coping.

I wonder if the 40% who say it hasn't affected them have dissociated from the events. Dissociating protects us from feeling too much and

allows us to cope, to a point where we trick ourselves into believing that we are fine and that the bullying is having no effect on us. Dissociating is a good short-term solution, in protecting us from trauma, but the problem is that the feelings that we are cutting away from, tend to come back to bite us, later on. Very often I see people who are suffering with panic attacks and don't understand why.

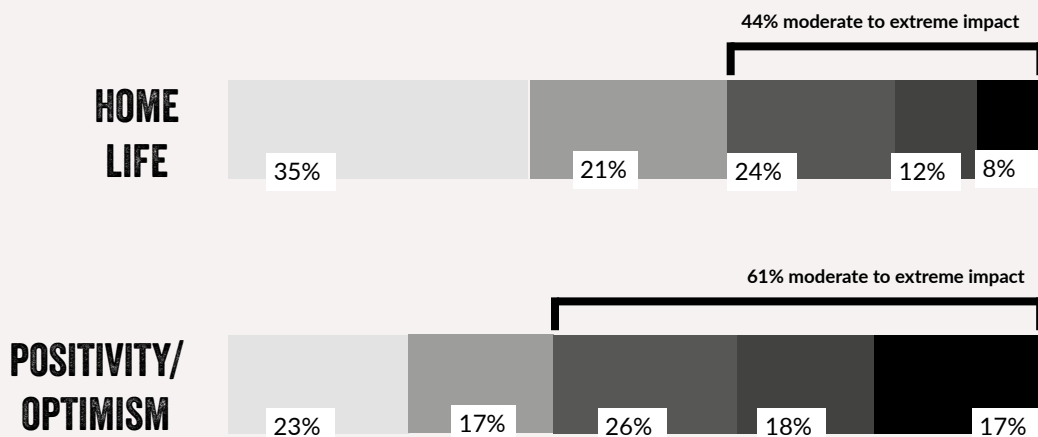
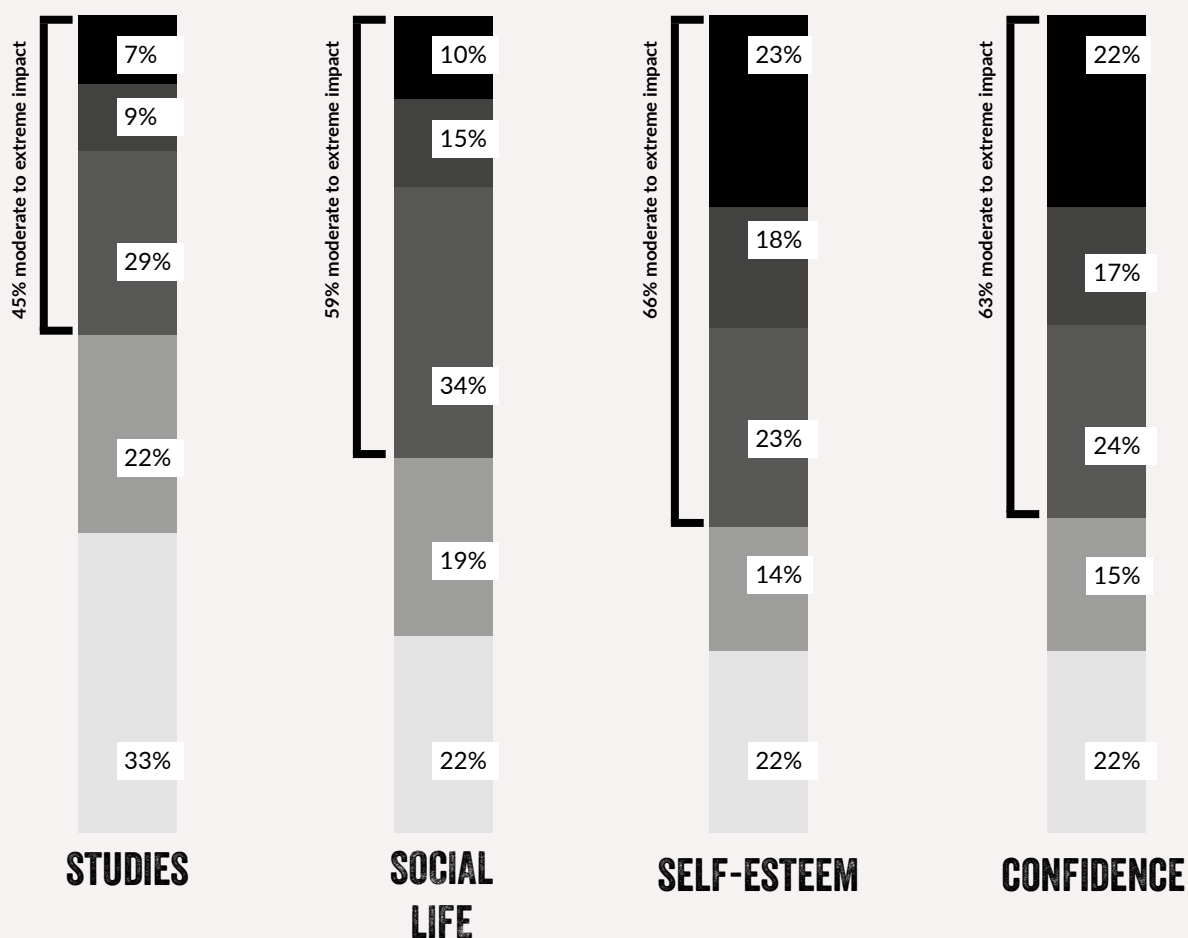
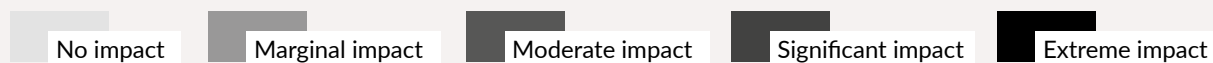
With a little digging, we can usually find the cause – someone, for example, who was bullied at school, and has started a new job may come across someone in the office who reminds them of a bullying perpetrator. A memory is triggered and the anxiety kicks in.

# BEING BULLIED

## IMPACT

From those who have been bullied within the past 12-months:

### How did it impact you?



# BEING BULLIED

## REPORTING IT

65% SPOKE ABOUT IT

-and-

35% NEVER TOLD ANYBODY

of those who reported...

91% TOLD A  
TEACHER

57% were satisfied with the support

of those who reported...

91% TOLD A  
FAMILY MEMBER

86% were satisfied with the support

of those who reported...

78% TOLD A  
FRIEND

76% were satisfied with the support

of those who reported...

34% TOLD A  
COUNSELLOR

56% were satisfied with the support

of those who reported...

23% TOLD A HEALTH  
PROFESSIONAL

47% were satisfied with the support

of those who reported...

21% TOLD  
THE POLICE

56% were satisfied with the support

of those who reported...

16% CALLED A  
HELPLINE

49% were satisfied with the support

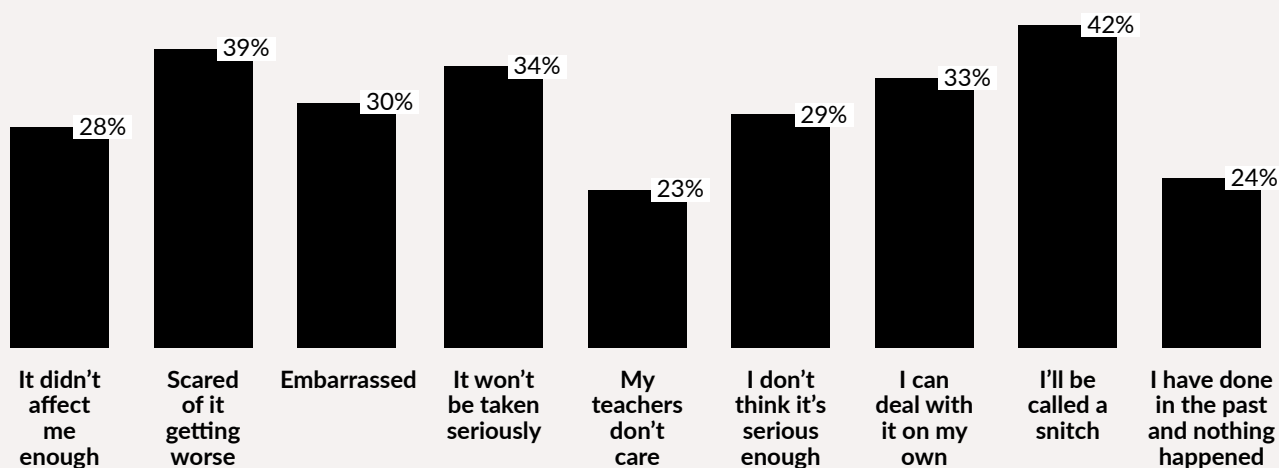
of those who reported...

21% TURNED TO  
SOCIAL MEDIA

47% were satisfied with the support

From those who didn't report the bullying:

## Why didn't you tell anybody?



**Do your  
parents or  
guardians  
know  
about your  
experiences  
of being  
bullied?**

**YES, THEY KNOW  
ABOUT ALL OF IT  
54%**

**THEY KNOW  
ABOUT SOME OF IT  
32%**

**THEY DON'T  
KNOW ABOUT  
ANY OF IT  
14%**



### **VICKI SHOTBOLT, CEO PARENTZONE**

**At Parent Zone we hear from parents all the time about how powerless they feel when their children are being bullied.**

Finding the right language to talk to children about sensitive topics is always difficult and it is a two way challenge. Children sometimes find it difficult to talk to their parents and parents find it difficult to know how to respond.

What's important is that the conversation is calm, even when the initial response might be to want to step in. Parents need to put listening, supporting and reassuring first and reactions and interventions second. Helping young people to identify their own solutions is

far more effective than imposing a plan that might make a child feel more anxious or vulnerable.

Creating the space young people need to explore problems knowing that they won't face any judgement is crucial.

A child who is already feeling disempowered needs warmth and support – parents are uniquely placed to offer that and to guide a plan that not only deals with the problem at hand but also builds resilience and self esteem.

**Find out more at [parentzone.org.uk](https://parentzone.org.uk).**

## **PART 2**

# **PERPETRATION**

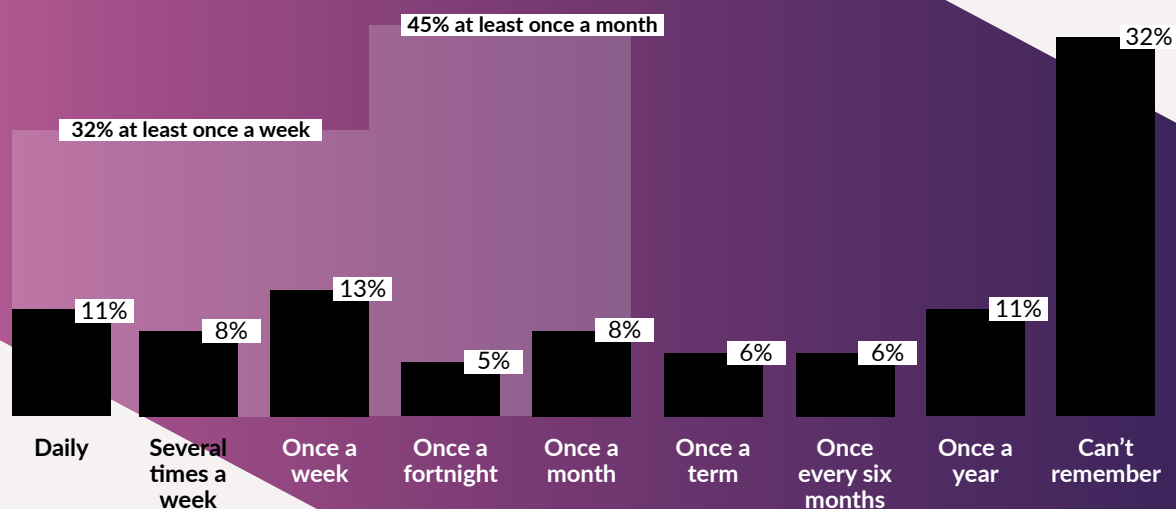
**The experiences of young people who  
have perpetrated bullying behaviour  
within the past 12-months.**

# BULLYING OTHERS

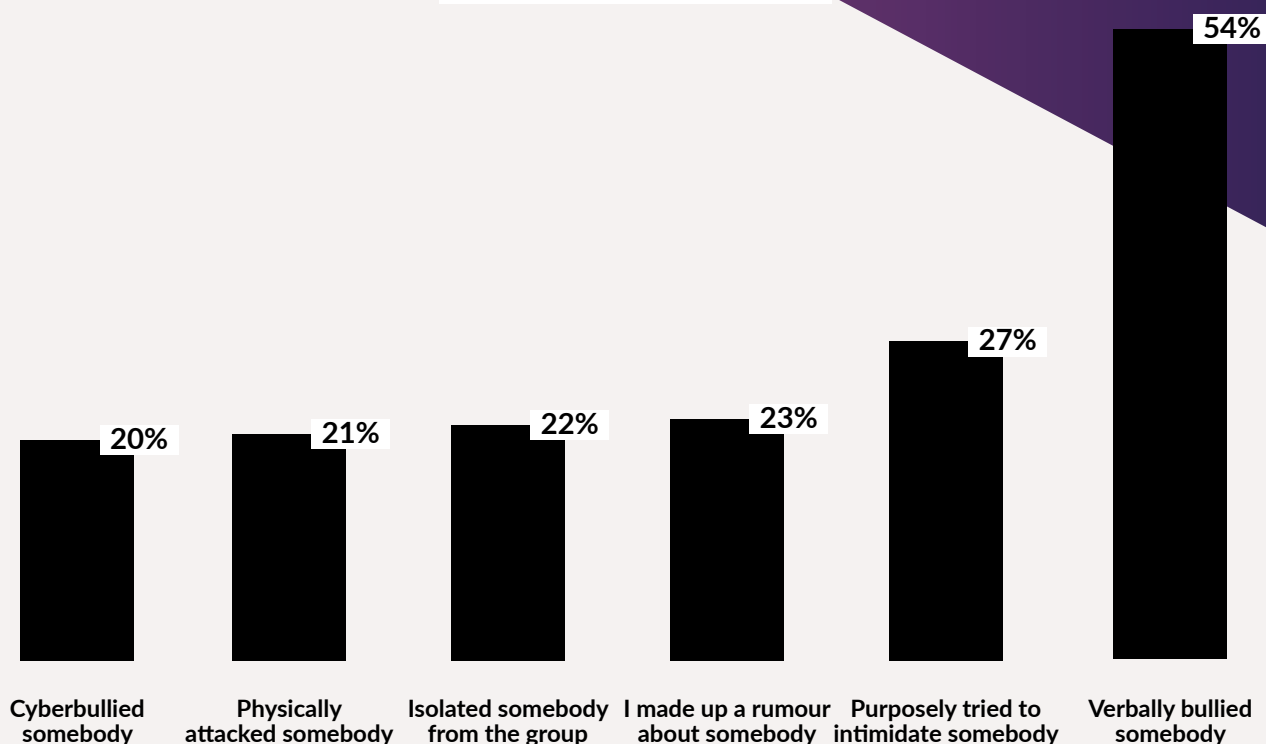
## FREQUENCY & NATURE

From those who have bullied others within the past 12-months:

### How frequently did you bully others?



### What kind of bullying did you perpetrate?

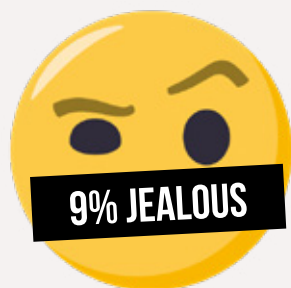
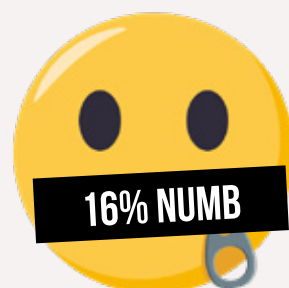
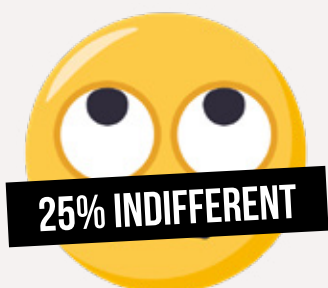
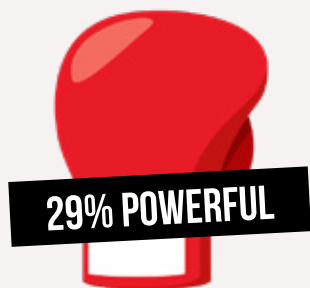
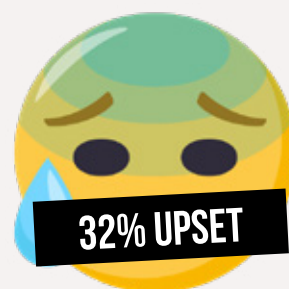
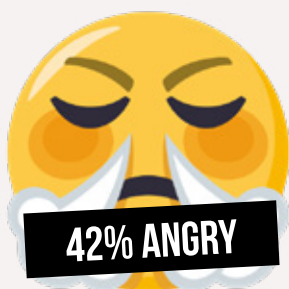
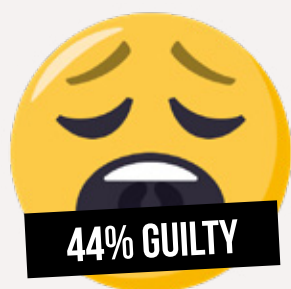


# BULLYING OTHERS

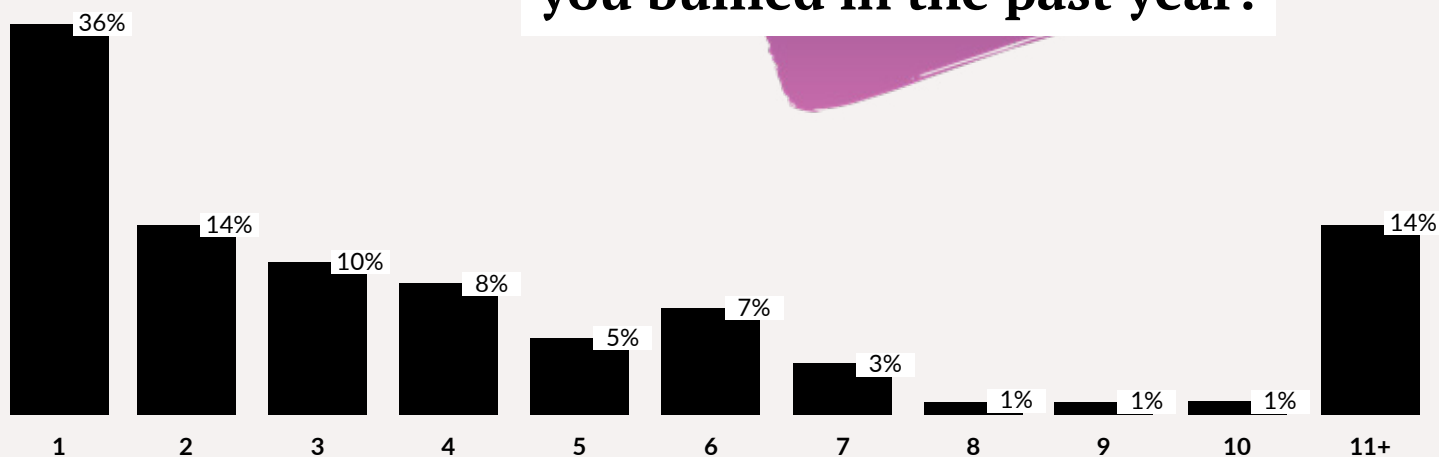
## IMPACT

From those who have bullied others within the past 12-months:

**How did it make you feel when you did it?**



**Approximately how many people have you bullied in the past year?**



# BULLYING OTHERS

## MOTIVE

### WHY DID YOU BULLY THEM?

- 56% THEY DESERVED IT
- 55% I DON'T LIKE THEM
- 34% IT'S FUNNY
- 32% IT HELPS ME DEAL WITH STRESS/ANGER
- 24% I'M NOT HAPPY
- 24% TO MAKE MY FRIENDS LAUGH
- 21% BECAUSE I'M BEING BULLIED
- 21% THEY ARE AN EASY TARGET
- 20% TO SCARE THEM
- 20% TO PREVENT OTHERS FROM BULLYING ME
- 14% IT MADE ME FEEL GOOD ABOUT MYSELF
- 12% I WANT WHAT THEY HAVE
- 11% TO BE NOTICED BY OTHERS

FROM THOSE WHO SELECTED 'I DON'T LIKE THEM'

### WHY DON'T YOU LIKE THEM?

- 66% THEY ARE ANNOYING
- 56% THEY BOTHER ME
- 38% THEY ARE WEIRD
- 34% THEY ARE UGLY
- 27% THEY PICKED ON ME WHEN I WAS YOUNGER
- 26% I DON'T LIKE ANYONE IN THEIR GROUP
- 14% THEY HAVE SOMETHING I WANT

FROM THOSE WHO SELECTED 'THEY ARE AN EASY TARGET'

### WHAT MAKES THEM AN EASY TARGET?

- 66% NOBODY LIKES THEM
- 62% THEY ARE SHY/NERVOUS
- 62% THEIR APPEARANCE
- 59% THEY HAVE NO FRIENDS
- 55% THEY ARE PHYSICALLY SMALL
- 48% THEY ARE A MINORITY AT SCHOOL/COLLEGE
- 48% THEY DON'T REACT
- 28% THEY ARE POPULAR



**DR. LIAM HACKETT, FOUNDER/CEO OF DITCH THE LABEL**

Understanding the motives and psychological profiles of young people who perpetrate bullying behaviour is essential if we are to proactively reduce the prominence of bullying both online and offline. At Ditch the Label, we are passionate about not only supporting those who are victimised to bullying, but also investing in the young people who perpetrate bullying behaviours to understand the root issues, enabling us to help them find more positive ways to react and cope with stress and trauma.

## **PART 3**

# **WITNESSING**

**The experiences of young people who  
have witnessed bullying behaviour within  
the past 12-months.**

# TURNING BYSTANDERS INTO UPSTANDERS

---



**Sue Jones, Global Deputy CEO of Ditch the Label**

**A**t Ditch the Label we take a huge amount of pride in our work supporting young people through bullying and the many associated issues that they are faced with. We understand the power behind our educational campaigns which are designed to challenge and to empower. However, underpinning all of our work is our pioneering research which asks young people directly about the myriad of issues affecting

digital lives and identities and what it is really like to grow up in a digital world.

We are delighted to continue this thought leadership and introduce the theme of the Annual Bullying Survey 2018 - Bystanders.

We have delved even deeper this year, looking at the experiences young people face when they witness bullying in both online and offline environments. Bystanders can be a powerful and often forgotten perspective in the dynamic of bullying.

We take our duty of care very seriously and we know that the knowledge that comes from these insights will be far reaching in making more strides forward towards a future that is free from bullying.

Are those very real fears that we often hear about true or unfounded - should we step in and get involved or not? Does it make you more of a 'target' or are you potentially stopping a cycle of bullying?

We also reveal the effects on those who have witnessed bullying; are they simply a passive witness or do they suffer any long term effects?

**It is the mission of Ditch the Label not only to support the millions of young people who experience bullying, but also to better understand the behaviour of bystanders and those that bully so we can work to proactively combat bullying with prevention. We are now working hard on these new insights which will enable us to significantly expand our resources and support materials and help even more young people.**

”  
**IT IS THE MISSION OF DITCH THE LABEL NOT ONLY TO SUPPORT THE MILLIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO EXPERIENCE BULLYING, BUT ALSO TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE ASSOCIATED BEHAVIOURS OF BYSTANDERS AND THOSE THAT BULLY.**

their lives. Whilst we never forget that people are more than statistics, this vital research leads and informs all of our work and has enabled us to reach thousands of people every month with innovative and effective resources, campaigns and support systems.

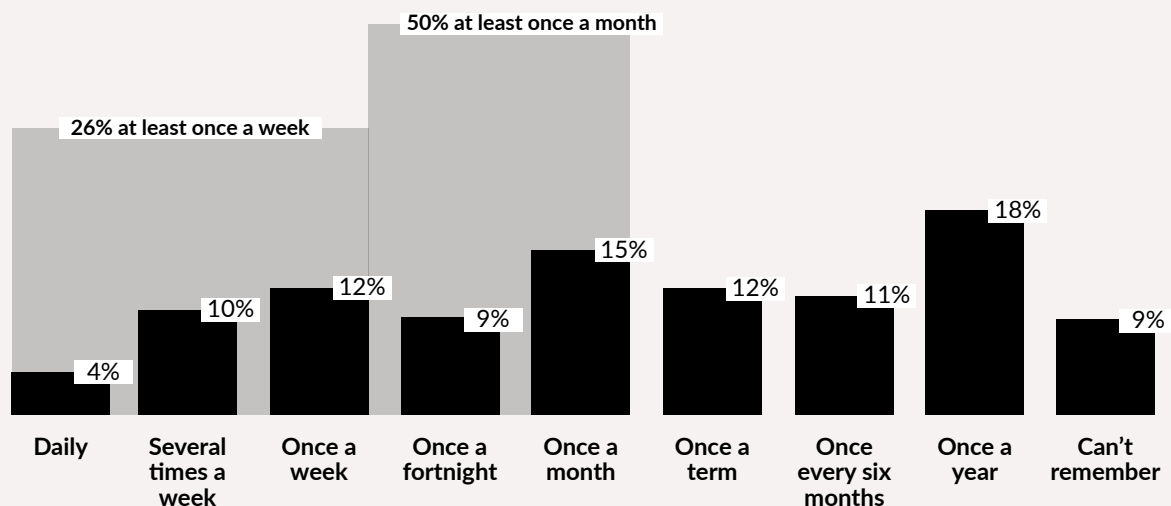
Further, our work goes on to enable real societal change. In 2016 we led the way with a groundbreaking report on the perpetrator perspective, calling for societal understanding of the reasons why people bully others and offering a unique insight into the stresses and traumas they face. In 2017 we looked at young people's

# WITNESSING BULLYING

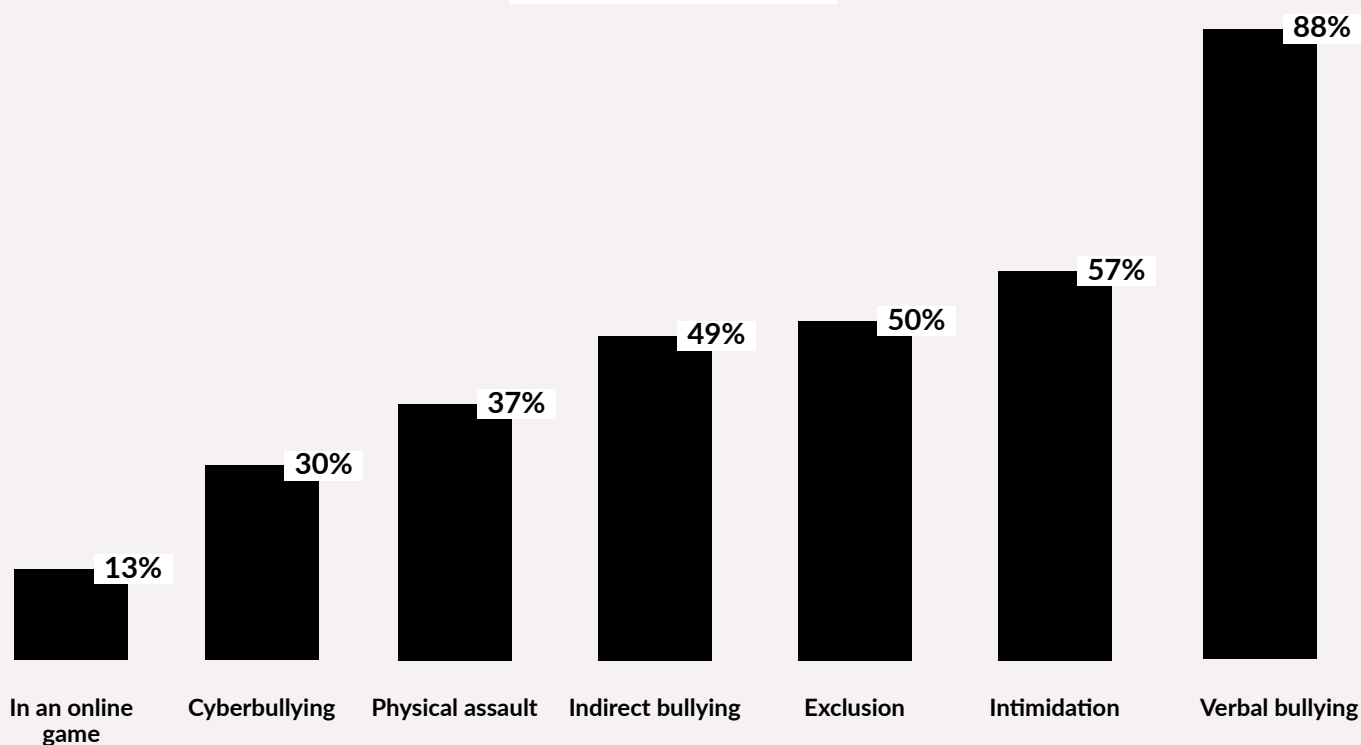
## FREQUENCY & NATURE

From those who have witnessed bullying within the past 12-months:

**How frequently did you witness it?**



**What kind of bullying did you witness?**



# WITNESSING BULLYING

## IMPACT

From those who have witnessed bullying within the past 12-months:

### How did it impact you?



#### DR. CHRISTIAN JESSEN, DITCH THE LABEL CHAIRPERSON

Much work has been done looking into the effects of bullying, both on the victims themselves, and on those who bully. Far less has focused on those who have witnessed the victimisation of others.

Superficially one can appreciate the internal conflict such an experience might create: 'Should I stand by and do nothing or should I try to intervene?'

But this survey reveals a far more nuanced range of sequelae, which can have a significant negative impact on many areas of mental

health. More interesting still is the possibility that those who observe bullying taking place may share some commonalities with those who engage in bullying behaviour.

As always, Ditch the Label are asking the questions that few others ask, which can then trigger discussions that can lead to solutions to help us all bring about change. We can only effectively reduce bullying in all its many nefarious forms by fully understanding all aspects that play a part. We can continue to support all involved; those who are bullied, the perpetrators, and the witnesses.

**In my eyes, they are all victims, and the future of their mental health is very much in our hands.**

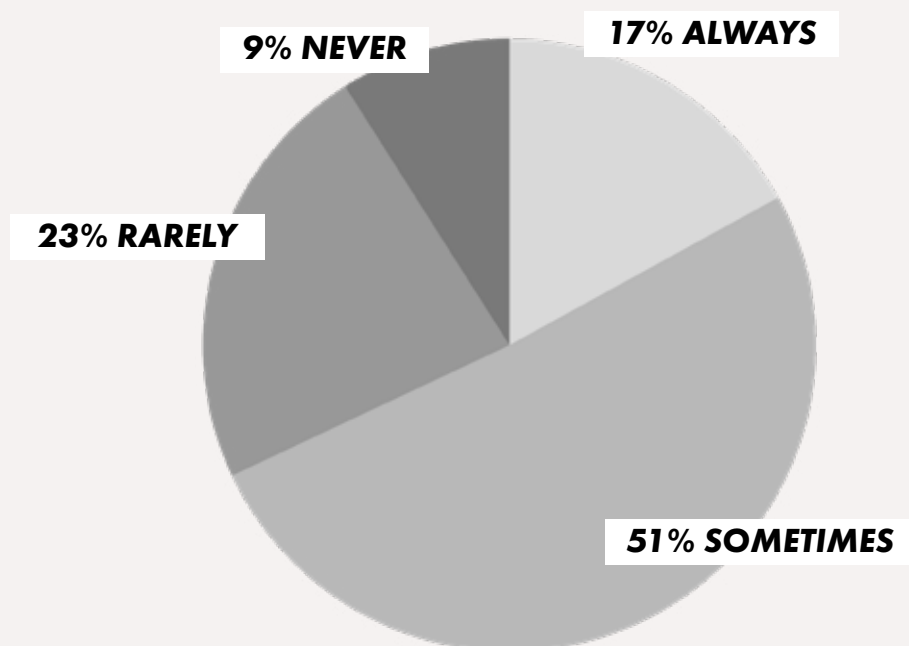


# WITNESSING BULLYING

## INTERVENTION

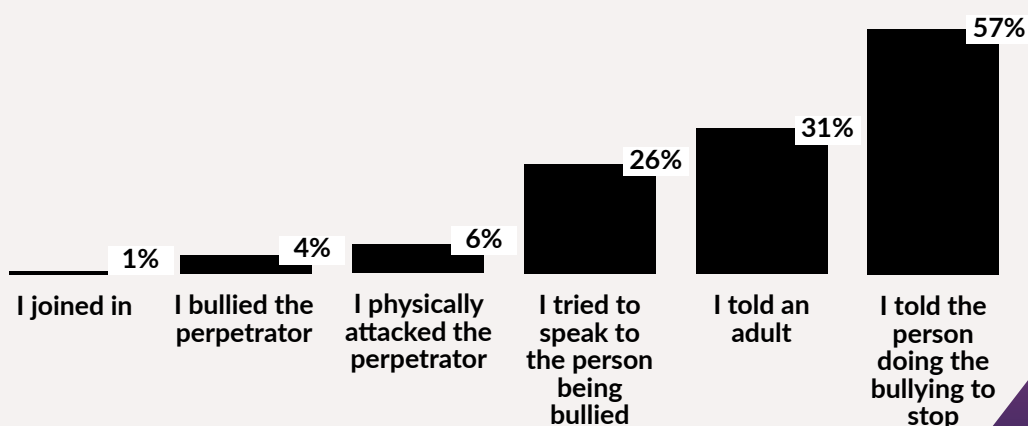
From those who have witnessed bullying within the past 12-months:

**Have you ever **intervened** to try and help the person being bullied?**



From those who have intervened:

**What did you do?**

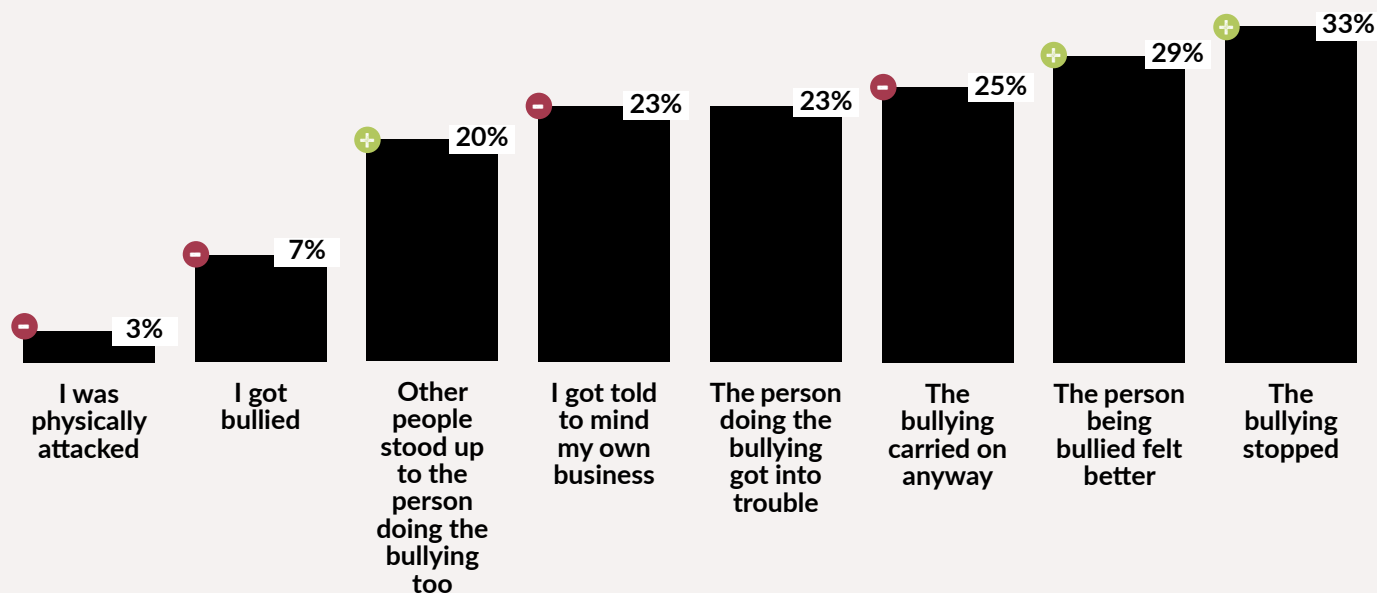


# WITNESSING BULLYING

## INTERVENTION

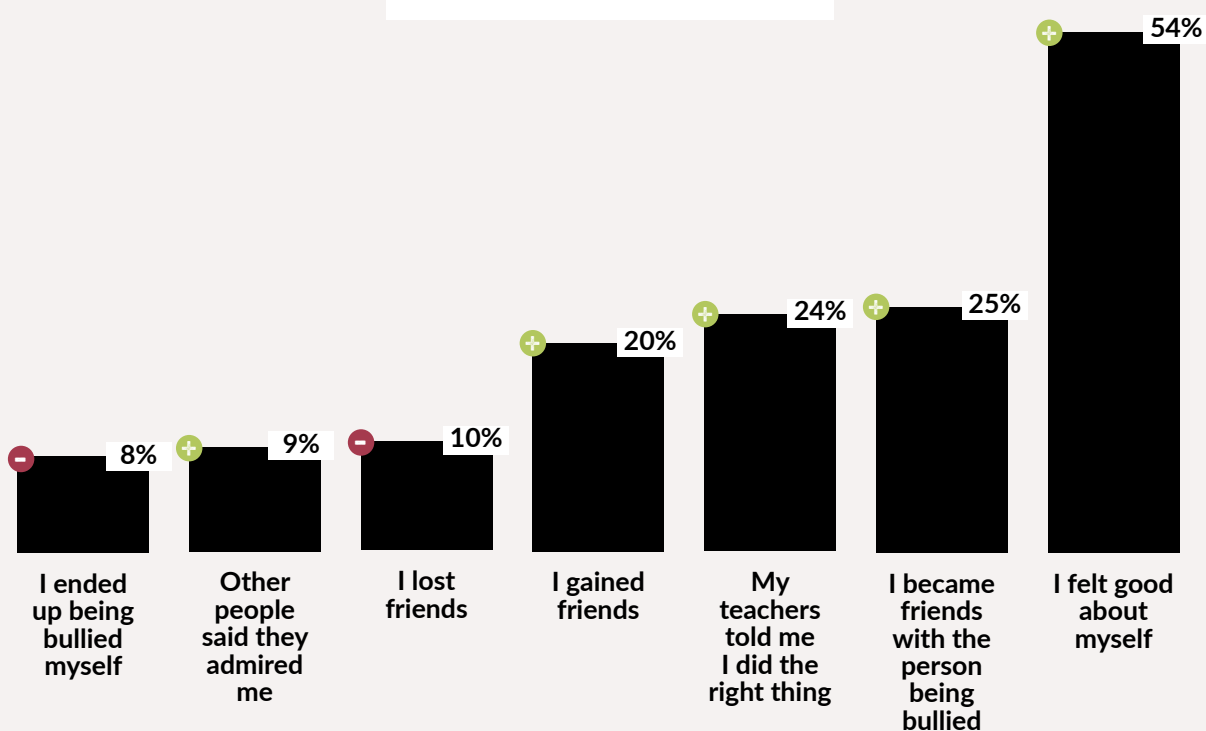
From those who intervened:

### What happened when you intervened?



From those who intervened:

### What happened to you when you intervened?



# WITNESSING BULLYING

## INTERVENTION

From those who intervened:

### Why did you intervene?



69%



59%



46%



32%



30%



27%



16%

#### PROFESSOR SHERI BEAUMAN

Recently, there has been increasing recognition that bystanders play an important role in the dynamic of bullying; we know that when bystanders intervene they can be effective at stopping the bullying.

The findings from this survey are unique in that we see both why youth do intervene, and what stops them from doing so. It is encouraging to see that most people who intervene do so for moral

reasons. The vast majority of those who intervened reported positive outcomes. Among those who do not intervene, the data confirms what many have suspected: they don't know what to do and they worry about becoming a target themselves.

The more witnesses who intervene, the stronger the message to perpetrators. For those who do not intervene because they believe it is not their business, we need to convey the message that bullying is everyone's business because even witnessing bullying causes distress and bullying pollutes our psychological and emotional environment.



# WITNESSING BULLYING

## INTERVENTION

From those who didn't intervene:

### Why didn't you intervene?

51%

I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO

38%

IT WASN'T ANY OF MY BUSINESS

34%

I'M TOO SHY

28%

I WAS AFRAID I'D GET BULLIED

28%

I DIDN'T WANT TO BE CALLED A SNITCH

16%

IT WASN'T THAT SERIOUS

16%

THE PERSON DOING THE BULLYING IS POPULAR

14%

I DON'T CARE

12%

I THOUGHT THE PERSON BEING BULLIED COULD DEAL WITH IT

11%

I DON'T LIKE THE PERSON BEING BULLIED

11%

NOBODY ELSE DID ANYTHING, WHY SHOULD I?

8%

THE PERPETRATOR IS MY FRIEND

## SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE

With a dedicated online support community, a team of trained mentors and over 1,000 support guides - the Ditch the Label website is the ultimate support resource for anybody impacted by bullying.

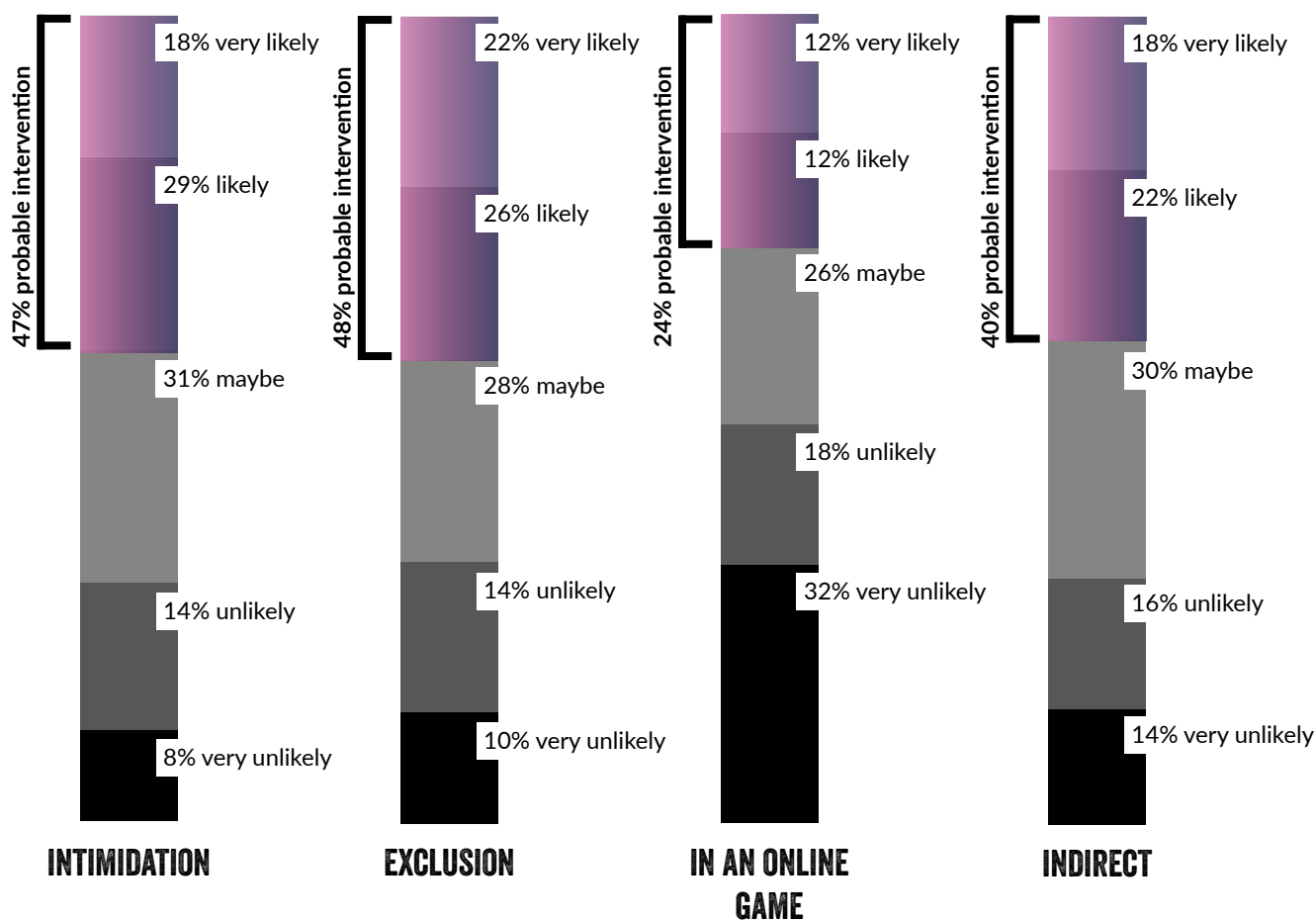
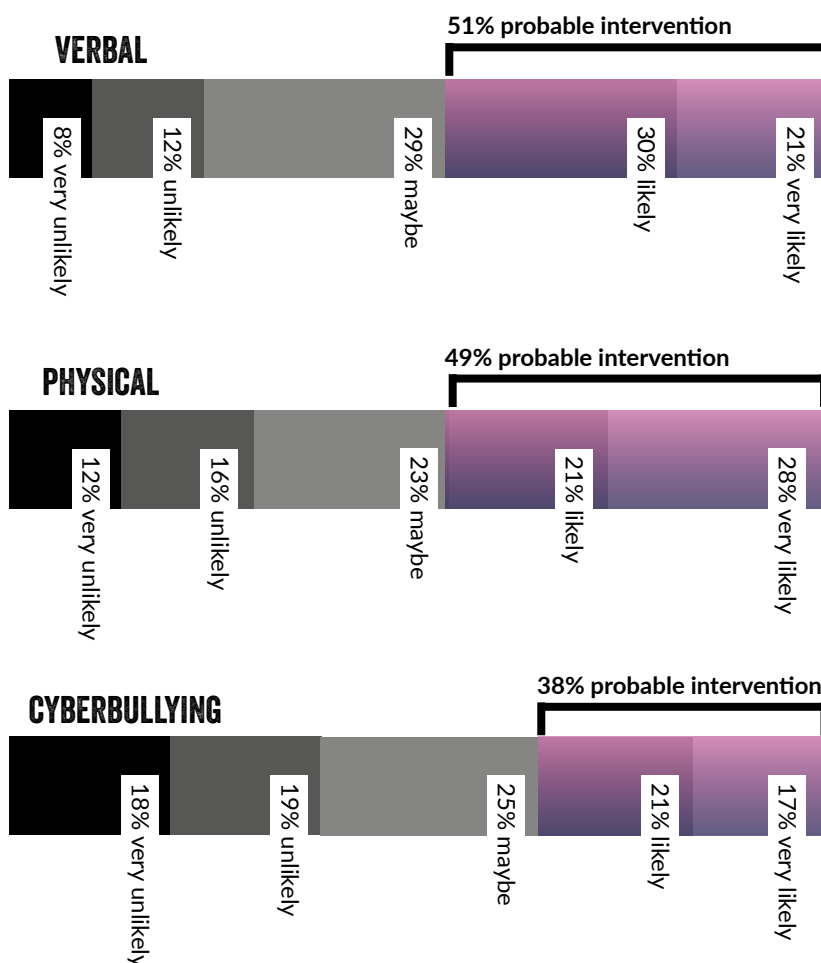
> Visit [DitchtheLabel.org](https://DitchtheLabel.org)



# WITNESSING BULLYING

## INTERVENTION

If you witnessed any of the following, how likely are you to intervene?



# **WANT MORE?**

## **HEAR FROM OUR EXPERTS**

**Want to know what you can do to  
combat bullying in your community?**

**View our recommendations for educators, policy makers,  
parents/guardians and safeguarding professionals.**

**Visit [DitchtheLabel.org/abs18](https://DitchtheLabel.org/abs18)**

**DITCH THE  
LABEL** YOUR WORLD, PREJUDICE FREE .