

EMOTIONAL BULLYING

Bullying behaviors can hurt others' feelings and cause a lot of pain. Some bullying behaviors are even designed to sabotage (or damage) a person or make them feel ignored and excluded. This is called **emotional bullying**. Emotional bullying is when a person makes another feel afraid or sad in order to get his or her way. It can involve spreading rumors and gossip to destroy the person's friendships and social life or leaving them out on purpose. Check out the following example.



IMAGINE THIS: Diane is a new friend you've made this school year. Madison is a popular girl in your school who has invited you to hang out with her sometimes, but she never invites Diane. One day you and Diane plan to eat lunch together. Madison tells you that Diane is "lame" and invites you to eat lunch with her instead. She says she'll stop inviting you if you don't cancel with Diane. So you do what Madison says. The next day, Madison tells you to do the same thing, but you tell her that Diane will feel bad if you keep canceling on her. This time, Madison threatens to tell people a personal and embarrassing story you told her last week. You don't want to let Diane down, but you really don't want anyone to know about your personal business.

Can you see how this adds up to emotional bullying?

Emotional bullying can also include putting someone down because they are different. Think of something that makes you unique. Now imagine if you were always excluded or made fun of because of it. As you can imagine, it would really hurt. If emotional bullying happens for long enough, targets can become very sad and depressed, so it's important to put a stop to this bullying behavior.