

# THE WHY BEHIND BULLYING BEHAVIORS

*“Hurt people hurt people.”*

All behavior is communication and bullying behavior is often someone’s way of expressing an unmet need. There are many reasons why someone bullies, not all will be in the list below; and it may be a combination of many reasons.

**Regardless of the reason it is never okay to bully someone else.**

## ALSO A VICTIM

they might be experiencing bullying at school or home. They want to overpower others because they feel helpless in another situation or location.

## LACK SOCIAL SKILLS

they act inappropriately because they don’t understand how to socialize or lack the skills to do so. They may not understand how their actions are making the other feel.

## LOW EMOTIONAL REGULATION SKILLS

they lack the coping skills to deal with uncomfortable emotions such as jealousy, fear, regret, loneliness, embarrassment, etc.

## POOR SELF-ESTEEM

they think it will make them feel stronger, smarter, more powerful, etc. However, bullying behaviors don’t improve someone’s self-esteem or lead to real happiness.

## ATTENTION SEEKING

They want to make others laugh or be part of a social group. They often plan their attacks to gain attention from others. Sometimes they are well liked by others not being bullied.

## TRAUMATIC EVENT

They may have experience or be experiencing a traumatic event such as divorce, abuse, substance misuse, etc.

## Common Student Responses: Why do you bully others?

- Because it makes me feel stronger, smarter, or popular.
- Because it makes me feel better than the person I'm bullying.
- Because I'm bullied at home/school/in the neighborhood, etc.
- Because it's what you do to fit in.
- Because I see others doing it.
- Because I'm jealous of the other person.
- Because it's one of the best ways to keep others from bullying me.

