

# YOUNG PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES OF BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING IN SCOTLAND

HEALTH BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN 2022 SURVEY

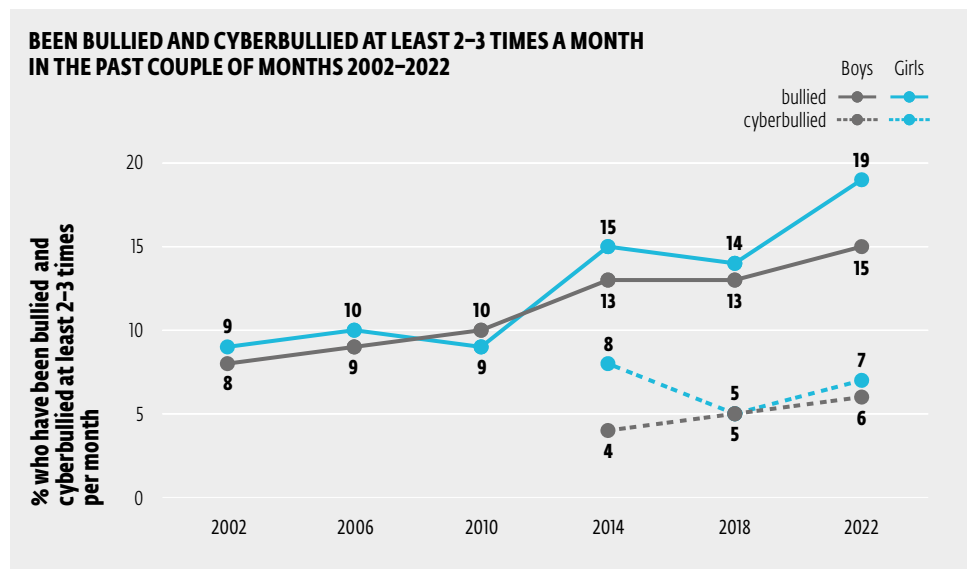


**Bullying is deliberate behaviour to hurt someone else, it can be physical, verbal or psychological.** It is usually repeated behaviour and can happen either in person or online. Being bullied can be a horrible experience and can negatively affect how a person feels about themselves as well as their health and wellbeing. Sometimes this negative impact can last for a long time.

In the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study in Scotland, we ask young people about their experiences of being bullied and bullying others, both in person and online.

In 2022, 18% of young people said they had been bullied at school and 7% had been cyberbullied at least 2-3 times a month in the past couple of months. There were no major differences in experiences of bullying between boys and girls or different age groups.

Using HBSC data, we can look at trends in bullying over the last 20 years. The figure shows that 8% of pupils reported being bullied in 2002 compared with 18% in 2022. Rates of cyberbullying between 2014 and 2022 have remained more stable.



**Why do you think bullying at school has increased?**

**Levels of bullying in Scotland are high compared to other countries.** For example, at ages 13 and 15, Scotland has the **5th highest level of bullying** out of 43 countries in Europe.

**We asked young people about the type of bullying they experienced and in 2022, the three most common types of bullying were:**

Being called mean names or made fun of



**23%**

Spreading lies or false rumours to make others dislike me



**16%**

Being purposefully excluded



**15%**

## Bullying others

Six percent of young people reported bullying others and 5% reported cyberbullying others at least 2-3 times per month in the past couple of months. **15-year-old boys were the most likely to bully or cyberbully others.**



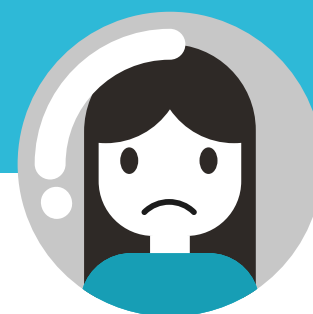
## How is bullying linked to other aspects of life?

This table shows the relationship between being bullied and other aspects of life. Pupils who had been bullied at school in the past couple of months were more likely to feel anxious, be at risk of depression, have less support from their friends, and feel lonely or left out. They were also less likely to feel confident.

	HAS BEEN BULLIED	HAS NOT BEEN BULLIED
Feels anxious	59%	27%
Is at risk of depression	31%	11%
Reports low friend support	67%	47%
Feels lonely all or most of the time	44%	14%
Feels always or often left out	50%	18%
Feels often or always confident	21%	47%

**Pupils who had bullied others** were also more likely to be at risk of depression, have low support from their friends, and feel lonely.

This means that 59% of young people who had been bullied **reported feeling anxious** compared with 27% of those who had not been bullied.



## For further help:

If you are being bullied, it can be difficult to know what to do or how to make it stop, but there is help available. Please speak to an adult you trust, such as a family member or teacher. There is also information available online.

The RespectMe website presents some options to help stop bullying:

<https://respectme.org.uk/>

You can also contact Childline either by freephone 0800 1111 or chat online:

<https://www.childline.org.uk>

Childline also have webpages on dealing with bullying and a tool to help young people recover from being bullied: <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying/>

## About the Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC study)

HBSC is an international school-based survey that is conducted every four years. It asks young people aged 11-, 13- and 15-years old questions about their health and health behaviours. Scotland has taken part since 1990. In 2022, 4,388 young people from 137 schools across Scotland took part in the survey. For more information, visit: [gla.ac.uk/hbsscotland](https://gla.ac.uk/hbsscotland).

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