



Secondary: But I didn't do it

If you see online bullying, it is important to do what you can to stop it.

What's the issue?

Sometimes it's tempting to think that if you aren't the person doing something wrong, you don't have a role to play in setting things right. If you know someone is deliberately causing problems for somebody else, you should do what you can to stop it—sometimes just a small action can prevent things getting worse. Passing on information isn't as innocent as it seems—you are being drawn in to becoming an active player in a nasty game.

Why does it matter?

- Bullies thrive on other people's silence. According to research by the Edith Cowan University (2009) frequent school bullying is highest among Year 5 (32%) and Year 8 (29%) students. The same research found that peers are present as onlookers in 87% of bullying incidents. By knowing about it and not saying anything you are allowing it to happen.
- You would want someone else to speak up for you if you were being bullied.
- Most people who bully online also bully offline: what might seem harmless ('it's just a website!') can have a negative impact on people's emotional and physical wellbeing, friendships and other relationships.

- When more people take positive action it creates a culture where bullying (online or offline) is not acceptable and encourages people to look for attention in more positive ways.

Advice

Be an active bystander

- If you know someone is causing problems, tell them why they should stop. If you don't feel safe to say something yourself, tell someone who can take action.
- Even if the person being treated badly isn't your friend, they don't deserve to be the victim of things like gossip and homophobia.

Create the world you want to live in—online and offline

- You have the power to short-circuit behaviour that you think is unfair—refuse to be part of the harassment, and tell people why.

Don't become an 'accessory' to bullying

- You may not be the one who has initiated some sort of campaign about another person, but even forwarding information you receive to others makes you complicit.