



# Staying Safe.. out and about



An easy read guide for people  
with learning disabilities



foundation for  
people with  
learning disabilities



# What this guide is about



Being safe and feeling safe are important.



We wrote some **top tips** to help you think about how to keep safe.



The tips are in three parts:



**1. How to stay safe**



**2. What to do when something happens**



**3. What to do after something happens**



# What these words mean



## **Bullying**

Bullying is when a person or a group of people say or do unkind things to someone else. Bullies are often trying to make themselves feel better by being mean to someone else.



## **Harassment**

Harassment is when someone does something on purpose to upset someone else. It happens more than once and the person does it because they want the other person to feel bad.



## **Hate crime**

Hate crime is when someone does something mean to someone because of who they are. For example, being mean to someone because they have a learning disability.



## **Mate crime**

Mate crime is when someone makes you think they are your friend but they are really just wanting to use you for something, for example stealing your money.



# What's in this guide

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# Keeping safe from bullying, harassment and hate crime when you're out and about



This page tells you about the next part of this booklet.



Most of the time people are safe and don't have any problems when they are out and about.



But if something does happen to you it can be very scary and stressful.



Follow these tips to help you stay safe when you are out and about.



These tips will help you plan what to do if something does happen to you.



## How to keep safe when you are out and about



### Do



Do plan your journey, so you know where you're going and how you'll get there. Keep to well lit and busy areas.



Do have a plan of what you'll do if something goes wrong and you need help. You could ask a friend or supporter to help make a plan.



Do trust how you feel. If you don't feel safe, ask for help or go to a safe place.



## How to keep safe when you are out and about

### **X** Don't



Don't try to look threatening or scary. People might think that you're looking for a fight.



Don't show people your valuables like your phone or money, keep them hidden.



Don't carry a weapon. You might end up getting hurt or arrested yourself.



## What to do if something happens to you when you are out and about



### Do



Do give them whatever they are asking for if they are trying to steal from you.



Do keep your head down, and avoid eye-contact if they are saying or shouting things at you.



Do walk away quickly to the nearest safe place as soon as you can.





## What NOT to do if something happens to you when you are out and about



### Don't



Don't try to fight back or act scary.



Don't try to run away, unless they get violent, they may chase you.



Don't panic. Stay calm and take deep breaths. This will help you think clearly.



## What to do after something happens to you when you are out and about



### Do



Do phone the police or go to the police station straight away and tell them what has happened.



Do try to remember any details about **what** happened, **when** it happened, **where** it happened and what the attacker looked like.



Do speak to your bank to cancel your bankcards if your wallet has been taken.



## What NOT to do after something happens to you when you are out and about

### **X** Don't



Don't keep it to yourself. What has happened is a crime. Tell the police.



Don't try and look for the people who did it. Leave this to the police.



Don't let it stop you from enjoying your life. Ask for help if you are feeling worried.

## Case study - How Richard dealt with hate crime



“I was out with my fiancée when a gang of school kids started calling us names and throwing stones at us.

I called the police and I told them what had happened. I also told the staff at the day centre I go to. The day staff set up a meeting with a mediator who asked to meet with the school kids. The school kids listened to me and they haven’t done anything to us since.

It’s important that everyone who works with people with a learning disability are there to support them if they go through something like I did.”



# Keeping safe inside your home from bullying, harassment and hate crime



This page tells you about the next part of this booklet.



Most of the time we are safe in our homes.



But sometimes other people can make us feel unsafe in our homes.



Follow our tips to help you keep safe in your home.



We have also written some tips of what to do if someone does make you feel unsafe in your own home.



## How to keep safe at home from bullying, harassment and hate crime

### ✓ Do



Do talk to your neighbours, and agree to keep an eye on each other's houses.



Do lock your doors, and keep windows closed unless you're in the room.



Do hide anything valuable in a safe place so people cannot see it through a window or when they come to visit.



## How to keep safe at home from bullying, harassment and hate crime

### **X Don't**



Don't let people you don't know into your home. You can ask them to come back when someone else will be there with you.



Don't make it easy for people to tell if you're not home. Some people leave a light on when they go out.



Don't tell people where you live until you know them well. For example don't tell people you meet on the internet where you live.



Don't give money or your personal details to anyone who phones you or knocks on your door.



## What to do when someone is threatening you at home

### ✓ Do



Do phone the police if someone is making you feel unsafe.



Do ask people to leave if you don't want them to be there.



Do ask a neighbour or friend who lives close by to come and help you.



Do lock the doors and stay inside until help arrives.





## What NOT to do when someone is threatening you at home



### Don't



Don't talk to anyone who is making you feel unsafe. It is your right to close the door or hang up the phone if you want to.



Do not threaten them as you could get into trouble too.



## What to do after someone has threatened you at home



### Do



Do write down exactly what has happened to help you remember or tell someone about it.



Do ask someone you trust to come to your home to support you.



Do call the police and ask about how you can make your home safer.



## What NOT to do after someone has threatened you at home

### **X** Don't



Don't touch anything if you think you've been burgled. Do wait for the police to get there.



Don't just hope that it doesn't happen again. Make sure you get support to help you keep safe.



# Tips for talking to the police



If someone physically hurts you, or says unkind things to you because of your disability it is important to tell the police. This is called hate crime.



1. Ask the police to speak in simple language that you can understand.
2. Make sure they take what happened seriously and they treat it as a hate crime.
3. Ask someone you know and trust to be there when you talk to the police.



4. If the police don't take it seriously, ask someone to help you find an advocate or mediator to help make the police take it seriously.



5. Mencap have a resource around reporting hate crime if you need some more help. *'What should you do if you are a victim of disability hate crime?'*  
[www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)





# Keeping safe at work from bullying, harassment and hate crime



This page tells you about the next part of this booklet.



Most people are happy and feel safe in their jobs.



Sometimes we meet people at work who we don't get on with and that's ok.



But sometimes this becomes bullying or harassment and this is not ok.



Follow these tips to help you keep safe at work.



## How to keep safe at work from bullying, harassment and hate crime



### Do



Do know your rights. Ask to read the bullying and harassment policy at work.



Do talk to the people you work with and get to know them.



Ask for a 'buddy' who you can talk to about things that are worrying you at work.



Do be polite and follow the rules at work.



## How to keep safe at work from bullying, harassment and hate crime

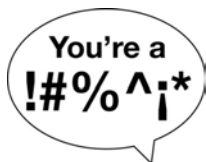
### **X Don't**



Don't stay quiet if something is going wrong or someone is upsetting you.



Don't let someone bully you into doing something you feel is wrong. Ask your 'buddy' if you aren't sure what to do.



Don't be mean or upset other people at work. Treat people how you would like to be treated.



Don't gossip about other people at work.



## What to do when someone bullies or harasses you at work



**Do**



Do tell the person to stop and say that they are upsetting you.



Do ignore them and walk away from whoever is making you upset.



Do take a deep breath and keep calm.





## What NOT to do when someone bullies or harasses you at work

### **X** Don't



Don't fight or say unkind things back.



Don't stay near them. Give them space.



## What to do after someone bullies or harasses you at work



### Do



Do tell other people at work like your manager or someone else you trust.



Do write down what happens straight away or ask someone to help you do this. This will help you to remember what was said.



Do think about who you can talk to outside of work if you are feeling sad about what's happened.



## What NOT to do after someone bullies or harasses you at work



### Don't



Don't keep quiet about it. It is not ok for people to say or do mean things to you at work.



Don't try to get revenge. There is a proper way of dealing with problems at work.



Don't tell everyone at work about what's happening as it can be confidential.



# Keeping safe from mate crime



This page tells you about the next part of this booklet.



Mate crime is when someone pretends to be your friend to use you.



For example stealing your money or using your things without asking you.



These people are not real friends. They pretend to be your friend because they want something from you.



Follow these tips to help you keep safe from mate crime and know what to do if it happens to you.



## How to keep safe from mate crime

### ✓ Do



Do trust your feelings. If you think something isn't right, walk away.



Do take time to get to know new people before you trust them. Always meet new people in public places.

### ✗ Don't



Don't ask people to come back to your house if you do not know them well.



Don't try to make new friends by being generous and giving people money or letting them use your house. Real friends wouldn't ask you to do this.



## What to do when someone is pretending to be your friend



### Do



Do ask them to stop if they are doing things you don't want them to do.



Do speak to someone else you trust, and share what has been happening.



Do write down **what** happens and **when** it happened so that you remember.



Do call someone like the police for help if someone is making you feel unsafe.



## What NOT to do when someone is pretending to be your friend

### **X** Don't



Don't keep it to yourself. A real friend would not treat you badly.



Don't let people try to tell you that what they are doing is ok. If it feels wrong to you then you should say so.



Don't fight back, or get into an argument.



## What to do after someone has pretended to be your friend



### Do



Do tell the police straight away if something has happened which you know is wrong.



Do ask for support. Ask neighbours, friends and family to help you to stop this from happening again.



Think about making your house safe - things like changing your locks if they have a key or change your phone number.





## What NOT to do after someone has pretended to be your friend

### **X** Don't



Don't try to get back at someone or get revenge. Let the police handle it.



Don't feel like it's your fault. These people look for people who they can do this to.



Don't trust the person again. Even if they say they are sorry and that they will change, do not try to be friends with them again.



This guide was written with the Voice and Community reference group.



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Lemos and Crane have made an easy read website called Action Against Cruelty with more information about hate crime, harassment and bullying:  
[www.lemosandcrane.co.uk/aac/bullying.pdf](http://www.lemosandcrane.co.uk/aac/bullying.pdf)



Two other resources are also available as part of this project:

**'Keeping safe out and about'**



**'We want to be seen!'**

Tips and a video for people in the media about how they should show people with learning disabilities in a more positive way.



See our website for more information  
[www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/hatecrime](http://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/hatecrime)





**foundation for  
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