

is it
BULLYING?

When someone says or does something
unintentionally hurtful
and they do it once, that's

RUDE.

When someone says or does something
intentionally hurtful
and they do it once, that's

MEAN.

When someone says or does something
intentionally hurtful and they *keep doing it*—
even when you tell them to stop or show
them that you're upset—that's

BULLYING.

After reviewing the distinctions between rude, mean, and bullying behavior, read the following scenarios aloud to kids. Challenge kids to move to a designated section in the room if the behavior represents bullying, to a different section if the behavior demonstrates meanness, and to a third section if the behavior is considered rude. Allow kids time to discuss why they chose to stand in a particular section, encouraging personal examples and reflection, as appropriate.

1. Kayla tells MacKenzie that she can't sit with her on the bus today because she is saving the seat for a girl from her Social Studies class.
1. Lucas tells Damien that he can't play with the Legos because he is the worst builder in the whole first grade.
1. Talia makes plans to go to the school dance with her new friend, Gwen. Katie tells Talia that if she hangs out at the dance with Gwen that everyone will think she is a total weirdo and no one will like her anymore. At lunch that day, Katie convinces everyone that it would be a really funny joke to all laugh out loud when Talia approached the lunch table.
1. Devin and David are friends. In school, they had an argument. Devin called David a name and David shoved him out of his way.
1. Maggie is making fun of the fact that Jessie hangs out with the boys at recess and wears long basketball shorts to school every day. In gym class, Maggie told her to go play on the boys' team and the day before in homeroom, she wrote the words "You're so gay" on Jessie's desk.
1. Brady told JP he would beat him up if he touched his cars, then shoved JP out of his way. During math class, he threw a spitball at JP and kicked his chair out from under him. He threatened to punch JP if JP told the teacher.

1. Emma and Brit play on the same field hockey team and are normally best friends, but have been in an argument for three days. Emma called Brit a mean name after practice and Brit send Emma a mean text.

ANSWER KEY

1. Kayla & MacKenzie: Kayla is being rude, but here is no evidence of intentional meanness, repetitive behavior or a power imbalance.
1. Lucas & Damien: Lucas is being mean. It appears that his words are intended to hurt Damien. There is no evidence of repetitive behavior or a power imbalance, however.
1. Talia & Katie: Katie is acting like a bully. She has creating an unfair balance of power by getting all of the girls at the lunch table to laugh at Talia. She is also using words like “everyone” and “no one” to threaten Talia about how she will be socially excluded if she does not do what Katie wants her to do.
1. Devin & David: Devin and David are engaging in rough play, or rude behavior. This is not bullying because the boys are usually friends, the power balance is relatively equal and the boys are not intending to harm each other.
1. Maggie & Jessie: Maggie is acting like a bully. She is making fun of Jessie repeatedly, with intention to cause harm. Slurs based on sexual orientation are particularly cruel for young people and should be taken seriously by adults wishing to create a positive school culture.

1. Brady & JP: Brady is acting like a bully. He is engaging in repetitive cruel behavior, designed to hurt JP. He is using intimidation and threats to create a power imbalance.

1. Emma & Brit: Emma and Brit are being mean to each other. They are intending to hurt each other with their words and texts. The girls are normally friends, though, and at this point, this appears to be a mutual argument rather than a repetitive pattern of one-sided cruelty.