

Scenarios: Is this bullying?

There are many different types of bullying. Bullying comes in many forms and certain types of bullying are less obvious than other types. Sometimes, it can be hard to figure out if you are being bullied. This section gives you practice figuring out whether a situation may or may not be bullying.

Instructions for this section:

1. Read each scenario.
2. Decide whether the scenario is an example of bullying or not.
3. Read each answer and explanation.
4. Review these examples with someone (i.e. parent, teacher, coach) for additional practice and discussion.

Scenario 1: Adam is a hard-working and responsible employee with autism. Adam has a difficult time dealing with certain sounds. These sounds make him feel very anxious, and he cannot focus on anything else when he hears these sounds. Two of Adam's co-workers have figured out that he is very sensitive to certain sounds. Whenever they go past Adam's work area, they make "shhhhhh" and "buzzzz" noises. **Is this bullying?**

Scenario 2: Adam is a hard-working and responsible employee with autism. Adam has a difficult time dealing with certain sounds. These sounds make him feel very anxious, and he cannot focus on anything else when he hears these sounds. One of Adam's co-workers listens to quiet music nearby while he is working. **Is this bullying?**

Scenario 3: Melinda works at a grocery store. She has to stock all of the shelves and clean the shopping areas. A co-worker named Kelly is supposed to complete these duties with her. But on many days, Kelly tells Melinda to finish all of the tasks while she just sits and watches her. **Is this bullying?**

Scenario 4: James works at a computer repair store. He sometimes forgets to record and file the service reports after he fixes a computer. His co-worker has to do it for him 2 or 3 times per week. He often reminds James to record and file the reports and he asks him things like, "Did you file the service report?" **Is this bullying?**

Scenario 5: James works at a computer repair store. On a few occasions, James has forgotten to record and file the service reports after he fixes a company. His co-worker regularly reminds everyone else of these mistakes and says things like, "Don't let James do this job, he will screw it up again." **Is this bullying?**

Scenario 6: Marcus is a smart, hardworking employee. Marcus is not very comfortable in social situations at work, and he tends to work alone. Marcus sometimes struggles to know what to say in conversations. He might say things that others view as strange or different. Marcus works near a guy named Ben. Almost every day, Ben asks Marcus lots of questions about his special interests and hobbies, and he won't stop asking. When Ben asks Marcus these questions, he is usually smirking or laughing. **Is this bullying?**

Scenario 7: Lauren works in a department store. Barney, a man who works at the store is pleasant to Lauren while they are at the job. However, Barney asked for Lauren's phone number and sends her inappropriate texts saying that she is beautiful and that he would like to marry her. Lauren is uncomfortable by these statements. She texts back to him saying that she is not interested in a romantic relationship and to please stop texting her. Barney continues to send her flirtatious texts. **Is this bullying?**

Scenario 8: Derrick works in an office setting. All of the other office assistants go to lunch together every day. Derrick packs his lunch and stays at the office to eat it. However, Derrick would like to go to lunch with them once in a while, but he doesn't know how to invite himself. The others have not invited him to go with them. **Is this bullying?**

Scenario 9: George is private about his diagnosis of autism and does not want others in his workplace knowing. However, he told his co-worker, Linda, because he trusted her. Linda then gossiped to the rest of their workplace, telling everyone that he has autism. When George became upset with her, Linda then spread rumors about him that he had an emotional breakdown. **Is this bullying?**

Scenario 10: Carter has autism and talks with an unusual tone of voice. Sometimes it can be hard to understand what he is saying. Jack asked Carter if he could speak more clearly because he was mumbling and sounded ridiculous. This hurt Carter's feelings because he cannot help the way he talks. Jack has never commented on his tone of voice again. **Is this bullying?**

Answer Key and Explanations

Scenario 1: Is this bullying? Yes.

This is bullying because Adam's co-workers make these noises when they come near Adam. They know that these noises make him feel upset and disrupt his work. They are repeatedly trying to aggravate Adam.

Scenario 2: Is this bullying? No.

This is probably not bullying because Adam's co-worker just enjoys listening to quiet music while he works. Many people listen to music at work. Adam's co-worker probably does not realize that his music bothers Adam.

Scenario 3: Is this bullying? Yes.

This is probably bullying because Kelly is taking advantage of Melinda. She is making Melinda feel like she is forced to do all of the work.

Scenario 4: Is this bullying? No.

His co-worker is probably frustrated because he has to keep doing this work for James. His co-worker probably wishes that James could remember to do it himself. So, he is trying to remind James to complete these tasks so that James will do his work the way he is supposed to. This is not an example of bullying.

Scenario 5: Is this bullying? Yes.

This is probably bullying because James' co-worker is saying rude things about James to other people. Even though James made mistakes, his co-worker is not handling the situation appropriately and is making James feel badly about himself.

Scenario 6: Is this bullying? Yes.

Ben keeps asking Marcus about his special interests and he laughs at Marcus' answers because Ben thinks that these interests are weird. Ben does not really care about Marcus' interests, he is just asking so that he can make fun of Marcus. This is bullying.

Scenario 7: Is this bullying? Yes.

This is cyber-bullying. Barney is repeatedly texting Lauren even after she asked him not to. This is also harassment, and illegal. Lauren should immediately report Barney's behavior to someone who she trusts.

Scenario 8: Is this bullying? No.

The other office assistants may not realize that Derrick wants to go to lunch with them since he brings his lunch and he has never asked to go with them. This sounds like more of a misunderstanding; perhaps if Derrick asked if he could join them, they would be welcoming.

Scenario 9: Is this bullying? Yes.

Linda was repeatedly spreading gossip about George, and that would be considered bullying.

Scenario 10: Is this bullying? No.

Jack's comment was rude, but it is not bullying. It only happened one time, rather than being a repeated action.