

Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum

The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) was established in 2004 by Save the Children, and brings together over 20 statutory and non-statutory organisations into one network with the aim of reducing bullying and creating a safer environment for children and young people at school.

The Forum is chaired by Save the Children and is represented on the British and Irish Anti-Bullying Forum, a Departmental and NGO body comprising representatives from England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland North and South.

The Forum published its three-year strategy in 2005 which outlines how it will coordinate regional approaches to combat bullying, raise awareness of the issues, share good practice between schools, and strengthen a culture that listens to and safeguards children. The full strategy document and other useful resources can be downloaded from Save the Children's [website](#).

The Forum's plans include the development of a comprehensive and dedicated anti-bullying website during 2007, providing a wide range of practical resources, research and policy information.

NIABF includes representatives from Save the Children, area Education Boards, teachers' representatives, and many other statutory and voluntary groups. It is planned that other groups – and young people themselves - will come on board as the work continues.

Research unveiled by the North of Ireland's Department of Education in 2002 showed that 40 per cent of primary school pupils and 30 per cent of post-primary school pupils fell victim to bullies. The Department is currently carrying out additional research to update the situation.

School bullying can have devastating consequences for children. It can lead to academic underachievement and truancy, physical and emotional distress, loss of self-esteem and eating disorders. In a small number of cases, it can be the cause of children taking their own lives.

A more co-ordinated approach among the agencies should ensure greater consistency of policy and practice, including intervention and prevention strategies. This new approach should ensure greater help not just for children who are bullied but also for those children who bully.

The theme chosen for Anti-Bullying Week 2006 was 'Don't just stand there' – highlighting the role of the bystander, and the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum produced and distributed an information pack to all schools in Northern Ireland.

If you would like to find out more about the work of the Forum, contact:

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To request a hard copy of NIABF's 3 year strategy, contact:

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