

Context

Bullying is any intentional and repeated behaviour which causes physical, emotional or social harm to a person. 27% of Australian school aged children report they are frequently bullied.

Set-up

We propose that Australian school children, identified as bullies, will participate in programs that:

- educate parents, teachers and students to recognise bullying and why it is wrong
- encourage children to report bullying to their peers, parents or Kids Helpline
- equip schools with strategies to prevent bullying and support victims and bullies.

Summary

The stakeholders in this debate are schools, students, parents and education departments. We will prove that bullies have a right to attend school, where they can solve their problems and learn from their mistakes.

Substantive

1.1 That all Australian children have a right to an education

- The UN suggests education requires appropriate physical facilities and trained teachers.
<https://www.ag.gov.au/rights-and-protections/human-rights-and-anti-discrimination/human-rights-scrutiny/public-sector-guidance-sheets/right-education#what-is-the-right-to-education>
- Home-schooling is provided by parents, not teachers. No qualifications are required to be a home schoolteacher, so no measure of the quality of teaching provided.
- Home-schooling cannot provide facilities equivalent to school. Not all homes have the technical or financial means to provide appropriate facilities. Few homes have facilities for a variety of sports, artistic pursuits or opportunities for social interaction.
 - If the affirmative team's policy was adapted, then these children wouldn't have the opportunity to access these facilities (unfair)

1.2 That home-schooling doesn't help the bully

- Children bully others for varied reasons
 - Often stems from mental health issues eg anxiety or oppositional defiant disorder. These children need professional treatment for these conditions, which aren't provided by home-schooling.
 - Never recover/ deal with illness
 - Bullies often have homes characterised by
 - Lack of parental warmth and supervision
 - Overly permissive parenting
 - Chaos and conflict

These characteristics suggest that home-schooling wouldn't be successful, and bullies would suffer from decreased academic and social opportunities.

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/characteristics-of-a-bully-2609264>

- Adult role models who bully
 - Home-schooling with adult bullies won't change the behaviour of children and they will continue this behaviour in the future (more kids bullied)
<https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/bullying>
<https://www.stompoutbullying.org/understanding-why-kids-bully>
- Negative social consequences
 - Removal from school results in limited social skills being developed. Children need to socialise with other children and form close friendships for their emotional health.
 - Home-schooled children have limited exposure to adults and individuals of culturally and ethnically diverse groups. This may inhibit their ability to interact with such individuals in later life (conflict -> adult bullies)
<https://howtoadult.com/social-disadvantages-home-schooling-26526.html>

2.1 That home-schooling allows bullies to escape the consequences of their actions

- Home-schooling is used as a punishment, but it could be regarded as an easy escape from the bully's problems and unhappiness at school.
- Bullies often want attention, and home-schooling may provide the parental attention they desire.
- If bullies are taken out from school before they can be given the appropriate support they won't 'learn' and the behaviour continues.
- Bullying behaviour is not limited to childhood and there are many bullies in adult life. Unless childhood bullies are taught to modify their behaviour this will continue into adulthood (more bullies)
https://www.studiosity.com/blog/the-power-of-learning-from-your-mistakeshttps://www.huffpost.com/entry/dont-fear-failure-9-powerful-lessons-we-can-learn-from-our-mistakes_b_6058380
<https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-deal-with-adult-bullying-5187158>

2.2 That bullying can occur anywhere

- Bullying isn't limited to school. Children who are home-schooled can still bully others at sporting activities and clubs. Cyberbullying affects 20-30% of children and isn't addressed by excluding students from school.
<https://www.communications.gov.au>
- Children need the tools to deal with bullies at school and throughout life, instead of expecting bullies to just disappear, which sets unrealistic expectations of the future
 - More resilient by dealing with bullies via the information sessions in our model
https://www.rch.org.au/uploadedFiles/Main/Content/transition/Developing_Resilience.pdf

Pre-emptive Rebuttal

Students should feel safe at school

- Preventing and stopping bullying creates a safe school environment. Studies showed that reducing bullying was best achieved by programmes which involve parent meetings, firm disciplinary methods and improved playground supervision. Home-schooling won't create a safer environment for victims.
<https://www.apa.org/topics/bullying/prevent>
<https://theconversation.com/not-every-schools-anti-bullying-program-works-some-may-actually-make-bullying-worse-116163>
- School is safer for bullies than home. Parents aren't qualified teachers and lack the skills to manage bullying. Parents may be abusive, alcoholic or drug addicted. Parents may not have the financial capacity to cease employment to teach children. Some parents are too busy or lack the education to teach their children.

That bullying has long term physiological impacts on the victims

- Bullying impacts both the victim and bully. Bullies also have an increased risk of depression and anxiety. Home-schooling doesn't provide these students with the counselling, support and guidance needed.
- The social isolation of home-schooling deprives these children of social interaction with peers and the opportunity to form relationships.

Concluding Remarks

Forcing persistent bullies to be home-schooled deprives these children of their right to an appropriate education. It also adversely affects their socialization, health and mental wellbeing. These children must experience the consequences of their actions to avoid continuing this behavior. We must use education programs to prevent bullying rather than home-schooling persistent bullies.