

**INFORMATION SHEET**

**What is a victim?\***  
The victim is the person who is targeted by the bully or bullies. The key element of the victim role is submission. The bully corners the victim, usually in front of other students and bystanders, and exercises dominance in ways to humiliate the victim. The antidote is not to punish the bully, who can usually withstand the discipline, but to teach the victim assertiveness, and to educate the bystanders not to stand by and watch a fellow student being bullied. If the "bully play" is looked down on by the whole school, then the motivation to bully is greatly reduced.

The victim role is not fixed, but often weaker, quieter children who lack social confidence are targeted and often stay in that role for the academic year. Teachers can identify students who fall into the victim role and help teach them how to cope with bullies.

**Characteristics of a victim:**

* often looked down on by others
* sometimes are loners
* tend to be followers rather than leaders
* give in easily
* may complain or ’tattle’ a lot
* are nervous and insecure
* are cautious, sensitive (easily hurt), and quiet
* often react by crying
* look upon themselves as failures
* feel unattractive or not good looking
* have trouble standing up for themselves
* don't let others know what is wanted or needed

## Ways to keep from becoming a victim:

* use a strong, confident voice and don't act as though you're frightened
* walk and sit with confidence
* ignore the bully and walk away
* get someone to help: teacher, parent, police, etc
* try to talk to the bully
* agree with the bully, even if the bully is wrong
* make friends with the bully
* make the bully laugh: tell a joke
* trick the bully
* refuse to fight - no matter what happens
* use your voice: yell "STOP" or "Back Off!"

*\*These notes have been used with the generous permission of Professor Stuart Twemlow and Dr Frank Sacco. Professor Twemlow and Dr Sacco have been visionaries and leaders in working to find solutions to bullying in all areas of society.*

This resource and further information about Creating A Safe Supportive Environment is available to download at [**www.casse.org.au/resources**](http://www.casse.org.au/resources).

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