

*For immediate release*

## **New research ahead of Anti-Bullying Week reveals devastating scope of UK bullying**

[www.thestudentroom.co.uk](http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk)

- Three quarters (76%) of students have experienced bullying
- A quarter of students have felt suicidal as result of bullying
- Male students are more than twice as likely to be bullied for their sexuality
- One in 10 boys have taken drugs to fit in

New research has revealed that more than three quarters of the UK's students have been victims of bullying, with a quarter experiencing suicidal thoughts as a result.

The findings are part of a new study produced by The Student Room, the world's largest online student community, ahead of Anti-Bullying Week (13 November).

Verbal abuse remains the most common experience amongst students (90%), followed by humiliation (62%), exclusion (56%), online harassment (34%) or physical abuse (27%).

When asked what they were bullied about, 70% said they felt it was their appearance. Weight (33%), dress sense (31%), family circumstances (18%) and sexuality (12%) also factored highly.

Almost a quarter of students (23%) are in no way comfortable in their own skin, and have felt suicidal as a result of bullying (26%).

Male students are more than twice as likely to be bullied for their sexuality (20%) compared to their female counterparts (8%). Male students are also twice as likely to be mocked for their religion (15%) or a disability (14%) compared to females. Physical violence is also a bigger threat for male students - for 42% experiencing it compared to a fifth of females (20%).

When it comes to coping strategies, almost three quarters of students (71%) claimed to feel more comfortable 'blending in' with the crowd.

In order to fit in, pretending to like something that everyone else does was top of students' lists (66%). Almost half had lied about the amount of work they did for school (49%) or had dumbed themselves down to fit in (47%). Almost double the amount of boys (10%) have taken drugs to fit in, compared to girls (6%).

Mhairi Underwood, community manager at The Student Room, commented: "What we're hearing is that students feel a huge amount of pressure to conform to what's expected in their social groups. They would rather sacrifice who they are than risk being bullied.

"Sadly, we know this affects the vast majority, and is becoming more complicated by things like social media. We have a chance here to really listen, involve young people in the conversation, and find solutions that work for them in their real lives.

“At The Student Room, we take bullying very seriously. In our Relationships and Mental health forums we see so many young people reaching out to talk about their individual experiences of bullying, and it’s incredible to see the support they receive from the community. We also have a dedicated Support Team of young people who keep an eye out for everyone on the site, as well as a well-established moderation process.”

*\*The Student Room polled 1,479 students, from 27 Oct to 8 Nov 2017.*

#### **ABOUT THE STUDENT ROOM**

*Founded in 2001, The Student Room is the world’s largest online student community and the UK’s no.1 education website according to ComScore data. The Student Room has over 3 million registered members, primarily aged between 14-24 and attracts over 8 million visitors a month. It provides student-to-student advice on studying, educational career choice and lifestyle issues. The Student Room works directly with most UK universities as well as a wide range of leading brands and companies.*

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION, INTERVIEWS OR CASE STUDIES, PLEASE CONTACT:**

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## **FACT SHEET**

### **What is your age?**

13 or below	3.65% (54)
14	6.63% (98)
15	16.70% (247)
16	19.47% (288)
17	22.79% (337)
18	14.54% (215)
19	6.83% (101)
20	3.18% (47)
21	2.37% (35)
22+	3.85% (57)

### **Which gender do you identify with?**

Male	27.59% (408)
Female	69.84% (1,033)
Other	2.57% (38)

### **Where do you live?**

South East	16.57% (245)
South West	9.33% (138)
London	20.35% (301)
West Midlands	10.07% (149)
East Midlands	6.15% (91)
Yorkshire	5.81% (86)
East Anglia	4.60% (68)
North West	7.71% (114)
North East	2.84% (42)
Scotland	3.45% (51)
Wales	2.91% (43)
Other	10.21% (151)

### **Have you ever been bullied?**

Yes	76.12% (1,106)
No	23.88% (347)

### **What form of bullying did you experience? (tick as many as apply)**

Verbal abuse	89.77% (930)
Humiliation	61.68% (639)
Exclusion	55.60% (576)
Online harassment or social media 'trolling'	33.59% (348)
Physical e.g. being beaten up or hurt	26.74% (277)
Damage to things you own	22.49% (233)
Other	6.18% (64)