
Bullying

— What it is and how you can help —

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Bullying

1. Intentional - doing it on purpose and targeting a specific person
2. Hurtful - hurts your body and/or your feelings
3. Repeated - happens over and over
4. Power Imbalance - “power” can mean the person bullying is older, bigger or stronger, more popular, or there’s a group of kids who gang up on someone.

Types of bullying includes: Verbal, physical, social, and cyber-bullying.

Mean vs. Rude Behaviors

Rude Behavior: Inadvertently saying or doing something that hurts someone else. Incidents of rudeness are usually spontaneous, unplanned, and based on thoughtlessness.

Mean Behavior: Aims to hurt or depreciate someone. This can include criticizing clothing, appearance, intelligence, coolness, and many other reasons. Very often, mean behavior is motivated by angry feelings and/or the misguided goal of propping themselves up in comparison to the person they are putting down.

Examples

Rude

- Jumping ahead in line
- Burping in someone's face
- Bragging about achieving the highest grade

Mean

- "I hate you!"
- "Your sweater is ugly"
- "You are so ugly"

Conflict

Conflict is a disagreement that happens when people want different things.

- Emotions may run high and when a conflict is badly managed, it may result in aggression.
- The people involved have equal power to solve the problem
- It's part of growing up and learning

Why it's important to distinguish behaviors

To help with distinguishing between bullying, rude, or mean behaviors, it's important to get context and identify feelings.

Questions to ask:

- What happened? How many times has this happened?
- How did you feel when it happened?
- Do you need help from anyone?

Roles

1. Kids who bully
2. Kids who are bullied
3. Bystanders: At times, bystanders can encourage or reinforce the bullying by laughing or providing an audience for the behavior.
4. Upstanders or kids who defend the person being bullied.

Warning signs your child is being bullied

1. Avoiding or fear of going to school.
2. Sudden academic drops
3. Withdrawing or losing interest in activities with friends.
4. Unexplained injuries
5. Frequent health complaints - headaches or stomach aches
6. Feeling sad, depressed, withdrawn, moody
7. Damaged or missing items
8. Trouble sleeping
9. Changes in eating habits
10. May become aggressive or disruptive
11. May begin to bully other kids or siblings

Who it should be reported to

Imagine your child as having a team at school. Some teams are bigger than others but every student has a team. Your child's teams consists of:

1. **Teacher(s)**
2. **School Counselor**
3. **Principal**
4. Speech therapist
5. I.E.P. case manager
6. Reading Specialist
7. School Psychologist
8. Coach

How you can help your child if they are being bullied

Communication

Talk with your child and cultivate open and candid communication - when children feel loved and supported, they are more likely to turn to their parent for help.

Conversation starters...

1. Do you know of any kids who are bullied at school?
2. Have you ever any problems with anyone of the internet?
3. How would you solve a conflict with a peer?
4. What qualities make a good friend? What qualities make a bad friend?

Observe and Listen

- Offer to drive your child and their friends to events
- Observe their interactions with friends
- Pay attention to changes
- Maintain a communication system with their classroom teacher
- Attend school events
- Volunteer in the classroom or during school events
- Chaperone on field trips

**Empathize with your
child. Help them
understand bullying is
wrong and it's not their
fault**

Empathetic phrases:

1. I can see that you are hurting.
 2. Thank you for sharing that with me.
 3. That would frustrate me too.
 4. This kind of thing is never easy.
 5. That sounds like a frightening experience.
 6. I hear you.
 7. How can I help?
 8. I am on your side.
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Teach your child to be an Upstander

Assertive Statements

- “Stop”
- “Leave her alone”
- “That’s not funny”

Power in numbers

- Your child can stand next to someone being bullied and they their friends along too. There is power in numbers!

Support

- Ask “Are you okay?”
- Go with him/her to report to an adult
- Be a friend or include them in the game you’re playing
- Report what was seen or heard to a trusted adult.

A.C.T.

- Approach
- Change the subject
- Take away - don’t give the bullying an audience.

More ways you can help

1. Document bullying incidents
2. Keep in contact with your child's teachers
3. Monitor online activities and learn more about safety settings
4. Encourage your child to pursue interests and activities to build positive friendships and boost confidence
5. Help your child develop skills and strategies on how to handle bullying
6. Be a role model

Phrases and strategies that are NOT helpful

Fighting back - this can be more dangerous for or child or may cause your child to get in trouble instead of the bully.

“Avoid them” or **“Don’t be their friend, anymore”** - this does not resolve conflicts nor does it heal emotional wounds.

Tell your teacher - This works more with younger students especially if they feel connected to their teacher. This doesn’t always work with older students because they don’t want to be viewed as “snitches”.

How you can help if your child is bullying others

Signs to look for

- Has difficulty fitting in
- May look/act differently and be bullied themselves
- Recent traumatic event? This can include divorce or death of a loved one
- Bullying behaviors witnessed at home

If your child is the bully...

- Don't ignore the behavior
- Establish a home-school connection: ask teacher, counselor, and principal about behaviors seen at school.
- Ask your child to tell you about what they wish their school day was like.
- Be direct about the behaviors but not accusatory.
- Decide whether you can work with the child to correct the behavior, or if outside help is needed.

Please write down or take a picture of this slide!

For more resources on bullying, please go to the following:

<http://tinyurl.com/CCEbullyingresources>

Contact Information

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