

## Here are the facts

- It is estimated that 160,000 children miss school every day due to fear of attack or intimidation by other students. Source: National Education Association.
- 15% of all school absenteeism is directly related to fears of being bullied at school.
- 71% of students report incidents of bullying as a problem at their school.
- Young bullies carry a one-in-four chance of having a criminal record by age 30.
- American schools harbor approximately 2.1 million bullies and 2.7 million of their victims.
- One in seven students is either a bully or victim.
- 56% of students have personally witnessed some type of bullying at school.
- One out of 20 students has seen a student with a gun at school.

Mean behavior among kids is a universal problem. In a poll of 232 kids in kindergarten through 8th grade at a Connecticut elementary school, every child claimed to have been the victim of at least one schoolmate's or sibling's meanness in the previous month.

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Our mission is to promote family involvement by providing information on topics of interest in early childhood education to the parent as the child's first and most important teacher.

# Bullying



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If you suspect your child may be the victim of bullying ask him or her to tell you what's going on. You can help by providing lots of opportunities to talk with you in an open and honest way.

It's also important to respond in a positive and accepting manner. Let your child know it's not his or her fault, and that he or she did the right thing by telling you. Other specific suggestions include the following:

- Ask your child what he or she thinks should be done. What's already been tried? What worked and what didn't?
- Don't encourage your child to fight back. Instead, suggest that he or she try walking away to avoid the bully, or that they seek help from a teacher, coach, or other adult.
- Help your child practice what to say to the bully so he or she will be prepared the next time.
- Seek help from your child's teacher or the school guidance counselor. Most bullying occurs on playgrounds, in lunchrooms, and bathrooms, on school buses or in unsupervised halls. Ask the school administrators to find out about programs other schools and communities have used to help combat bullying, such as peer mediation, conflict resolution, and anger management training, and increased adult supervision.

- Help your child practice being assertive. The simple act of insisting that the bully leave him alone may have a surprising effect. Explain to your child that the bully's true goal is to get a response.
- Encourage your child to be with friends when traveling back and forth from school, during shopping trips, or on other outings. Bullies are less likely to pick on a child in a group.

If your child becomes withdrawn, depressed or reluctant to go to school, or if you see a decline in school performance, additional consultation or intervention may be required. A child and adolescent psychiatrist or other mental health professional can help your child and family and the school develop a strategy to deal with the bullying. Seeking professional assistance earlier can lessen the risk of lasting emotional consequences for your child.



If you suspect your child is bullying others, it's important to seek help for him or her as soon as possible. Without intervention, bullying can lead to serious academic, social, emotional and legal difficulties. Talk to your child's pediatrician, teacher, principal, school counselor, or family physician. If the bullying continues, a comprehensive evaluation by a child and adolescent psychiatrist or other mental health professional should be arranged. The evaluation can help you and your child understand what is causing the bullying, and help you develop a plan to stop the destructive behavior.

#### RESOURCES:

[www.kidshealth.org/teen/your\\_mind/problems/bullies.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/problems/bullies.html)

[www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts\\_for\\_families/bullying](http://www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts_for_families/bullying)

[www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts\\_for\\_families/bullying](http://www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts_for_families/bullying)