

1.

Let's Put An End To Bullying

Bullying is a national problem that effects thousands of children and youths each day. Research indicates that children who are bullied are more likely to be: school phobic, anxious, suicidal, depressed, suffer from low self-esteem, poor health and feel isolated and hopeless. Bystanders to bullying are also effected by a climate of fear and danger which negatively impacts learning. Contrary to folk wisdom, bullies do not “grow out of it” but rather continue to engage in antisocial behaviors if there is no intervention. Children who bully are four times more likely to have one or more criminal convictions by the time they reach adulthood.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is when an individual or group with more power, - either in terms of physical strength or social standing, repetitively pick on an individual. Bullying can take many forms such as: verbal (which is the most common form of bullying), physical, social isolation/shunning and cyber.

2.

Help Your Child Build Emotional Strength And Resiliency By:

*Encouraging active participation in hobbies and interests. Involvement in pro-social behaviors can counteract negative effects of peer behavior.

*Helping children understand that some individuals may say and do mean things. Poor behavior is a choice of the bully and not the fault of the person who gets bullied.

*Encouraging community service. We all need to know that we can make a positive difference by helping others.

*Encouraging positive and stable relationships.

*Increasing meaningful family time.

*Teaching your child problem solving skills that can be practiced in the home.

1. Self-calming strategies such as deep breathing, counting to 10, exercise, writing...
2. Thinking about 2-3 possible next steps to solve any problem. Children benefit from considering consequences and following a plan.
3. Asking for help

*Practicing fairness.

*Being mindful of any biased speech used in the home. Use it as a teaching moment to discuss stereotyping and bias.

3.

*Praising children for following the rules of fair play.

*Knowing your child's friends and how they spend their time together.

What To Do If Your Child Is Bullied

*Praise h/her for having the courage to tell you. Reinforce that they are not only helping themselves but they are helping others who may be targeted in the future.

*Actively listen and suspend all judgment.

*Do not force a meeting between the bully and your child – forced apologies don't solve problems. Your child's school should have consequences and a set plan in place.

*Contact your child's teacher, counselor and/or administrator to discuss steps to resolve the issue.

Bullying Survival Tips For Students:

*Practice confidence- even if you have to fake it. Be aware of your body language (keep your head up and your shoulders back), facial expressions and tone of voice.

*Don't reveal your fear or anger to a bully. Bullies like to exert power and control. Don't give yours away.

*Remember that it is O.K. to walk away. It is also O.K. to ignore hurtful E-mails and instant messages. Take the time to consider consequences and options.

4.

*Don't get physical. Aggressive behavior can lead to more violence. Get adults involved.

*Be active and practice the things you enjoy. Join a club or sports team, play music and dance, make art, write a poem or story.

*Surround yourself with positive people.

*Don't bottle up your feelings. Express them to trusted friends, family, teachers and counselors.

How To Be An Ally To Someone Getting Bullied

*Do not join in the teasing. Send a clear message that it is not cool.

*Support the person being bullied by leading them away.

*Be a good reporter. Provide an adult with accurate details of the incident.

*If you feel safe – tell the bully to STOP. If you do not feel safe encourage the other bystanders to walk away with the person being targeted. Bullies love an audience so refuse to be a passive onlooker.

*Tell a trusted adult.

Most instances of bullying involve between 1-3 bullies, 0-1 allies and a majority of bystanders. Bystanders clearly outnumber the amount of bullies in any given situation. Practice the steps for assisting a target of bullying and become an ally. Bullying can be stopped!

To learn more check out the resources below:

5.

WEB Resources

www.Stopbullying.gov (this site has webisodes)

www.nmsa.org – The National Middle Schools Association – go to Research, then Site Search For Safe Environment

<http://www.operationrespect.org/> Operation Respect – free curriculum guides, etc.

www.tolerance.org Type in *bullying* in the site search. Free ABCs of Bullying, lessons, tips, articles, etc.

<http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/antibullying/index.html> GLSEN anti-bullying resources: lesson plans, research on bullying, No Name Calling Week, etc.

<http://www.adl.org/bibliography/> ADL's Children's Bibliography

