

IS YOUR CHILD A BULLY?

Signs Your Child Might Be Bullying Others:



- ✓ Get into physical or verbal fights
- ✓ Have friends who bully others
- ✓ Are increasingly aggressive
- ✓ Get sent to the principal's office or to detention frequently
- ✓ Have unexplained extra money or new belongings
- ✓ Blame others for their problems
- ✓ Don't accept responsibility for their actions
- ✓ Are competitive and worry about their reputation or popularity

Help Your Child to Stop Bullying:

Talk with your child. Children may not always recognize their behavior as bullying. They may see it as "just having fun" and not realize the impact it has on another child. Help them understand what defines bullying and emphasize that negative behavior is not appropriate.

Explore reasons for the behavior. Find out why your child is behaving in a manner that is harmful to others through an open, non-judgmental discussion. You might ask your child how he or she is feeling, if he or she is being bullied by someone else, or if your child is experiencing peer pressure from friends who are also bullying.

Develop an action plan. Behavior can be changed, but it won't just happen. Your child is not likely to outgrow it. It's important to think through the steps that work for you, your child, and your situation. An important first step is to determine and understand the situation. Next, think through how it could be different and what needs to change. Then, determine who needs to be involved and the steps that need to be taken.

Teach empathy, respect, and compassion. Children who bully often lack awareness of how others feel. Try to understand your child's feelings and help your child appreciate how others feel when they are bullied. Let your child know that everyone has feelings and that feelings matter.

Make your expectations clear. Let your child know that bullying is not okay under any circumstances and that you will not tolerate it. Let them know that there will be consequences for their behavior. Take immediate action if you learn that he or she is involved in a bullying incident.

Provide positive feedback. When your child handles conflict well, shows compassion for others, or finds a positive way to deal with feelings, provide praise and recognition. Positive reinforcement can help improve behavior and is usually more effective than punishment.

Talk with school personnel. Reach out to those who work with your child at school and share information about your concerns. You may also want to talk with the school principal or social worker to determine if the school offers a bullying prevention program and how your child might be involved. Research ways for your child to be involved in groups that encourage cooperative relationships and focus on working with others.

Seek help from your community. Your child's doctor, faith-based professionals, coaches, or a psychologist can help you and your child learn how to understand and deal with bullying behavior. It's important to address bullying in both the school and community.



Contact us and find out how we can help.
FHF of Jefferson, part of a statewide FHF network.
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