
BULLYING

Bullying happens when someone hurts or scares another person on purpose. The person being bullied has a hard time defending himself or herself. Usually, bullying happens over and over.

Sometimes bullying is easy to notice, such as with **hitting**, **punching** and **shoving**. Other kinds of bullying are harder to see, for example:

- **Name-calling**
- **Spreading bad rumors about people**
- **Keeping certain people out of a "group"**
 - **Teasing people in a mean way**
- **Getting certain people to "gang up" on others**

Both boys and girls bully, and both boys and girls get bullied. Bullying is not fair, and it hurts.

Take a Stand. Lend a Hand. Stop Bullying Now!*

Think about how YOU might feel if the bullying were happening to you. You and other kids can lend a hand, even when you aren't close friends with the ones who are bullied. Your community will be a better place if you help stop bullying, and making your community a better place is EVERYONE's job!

What can I do if I see someone being bullied?

Lots of things! Think about what may work for you:

- ▶ Don't just stand there --SAY SOMETHING!
- ▶ Kids who bully may think they're being funny or "cool." If you feel safe, tell the person to STOP the bullying behavior. Say you don't like it and that it isn't funny.
- ▶ DON'T BULLY BACK! It won't help if you use mean names or actions, and it could make things worse.

What if I don't feel safe telling a bully to stop?

That's ok. No one should put themselves in an unsafe situation. You can still lend a hand:

- ▶ Say kind words to the person who is being bullied, such as "I'm sorry about what happened," and "I don't like it!" Help them understand that it's not his or her fault. Be a friend. Invite that person to do things with you, such as sit together at lunch or work together on a project. EVERYONE NEEDS A FRIEND!
- ▶ Tell the person who is being bullied to talk to someone about what happened. Offer to help by going along.
- ▶ Pay attention to the other kids who see the bullying. (These people are called "bystanders.") Are any of them laughing or joining in with the bullying? If yes, these kids are part of the problem. Let those students know that they're not helping! DON'T be one of them!

Telling about bullying is very important!

Tell an adult. (This is IMPORTANT!) Think about who you could tell:

- ▶ Parent (yours or a friend's)
- ▶ Teacher (which one would you talk to?)
- ▶ School counselor
- ▶ School nurse
- ▶ Principal
- ▶ Bus driver
- ▶ Other adults you feel comfortable telling

Telling about bullying is not "tattling." Chances are, the one who is being bullied needs help from an adult. The one who is doing the bullying probably does, too. If you need help telling, take a friend along. Explain to your friends that bullying is NOT FAIR and encourage them to join in helping.

What should I do if I'm bullied?

- ▶ Tell your parents or other trusted adults. They can help stop the bullying.
- ▶ If you are bullied at school, tell your teacher, school counselor, or principal. Telling is not tattling.
- ▶ Don't fight back. Don't try to bully those who bully you.
- ▶ Try not to show anger or fear. People who bully like to see if they can upset you.
- ▶ Calmly tell the person to stop... or say nothing and then walk away.
- ▶ Use humor, if this is easy for you to do. (For example, if a student makes fun of your clothing, laugh and say "Yeah, I think this shirt is kind of funny-looking, too.")

Try to avoid situations where bullying is likely to happen. For example, at school you might want to:

- ▶ Avoid areas where there are not many students or teachers around.
- ▶ Make sure you aren't alone in the bathroom or locker room.
- ▶ Don't bring expensive things or lots of money to school.
- ▶ Sit with a group of friends at lunch.
- ▶ Take a different route through hallways or walk with friends or a teacher to your classes.



For more information about ways to get along and prevent BULLYING, visit the **Department of Health and Human Services** website at: <http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov>.

For information about online bullying, log on to www.cyberbullying.org. See also: INTERNET SAFETY TIPS FOR TEENS, page 39, and SOCIAL NETWORKING, page 56.

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