



No one deserves to be **BULLIED**

All children sometimes find themselves the butt of jokes or teasing by their classmates. But bullying is different. It is generally relentless and can include physical violence, coercion, name calling, social shunning, social isolation, or verbal or written threats. In extreme causes, death or sexual assaults have resulted from bullying.

Bullying can be in person or online through email or social networking sites, according to Dr. Earlene Strayhorn, a child and adolescent psychiatrist at Loyola University Medical Center. "Being the target of a bully involves real suffering," she said.

Bullying can involve one child against another or also a group of kids united against a single child or another group. Boys are more likely to be the initiators and targets of bullying. Their victims can include both boys and girls.

Bullied boys are more likely to be hit, slapped, kicked, or pushed. Girls often engage in verbal bullying. Their targets are often other girls.

"Let your child know that he or she is not alone and is not at fault. Tell your child that no one deserves to be bullied for any reason, and then take action," Dr. Strayhorn said.

If the bullying is occurring at school, meet with a teacher, principal, sports coach or school counselor and demand someone intervene to defuse the situation. Frequently, the problem can be solved by an authority figure without the bully ever learning who reported it.

If the bullying is occurring outside of the school, tell your child to seek safety in numbers by sticking close to friends or other classmates when walking home or while in places where the bullying happens. Sometimes you'll have to get law enforcement involved.