

BULLYING: How to take action



Bullying can be hard to address, especially if it's happening to your child. Knowing how to deal with bullying can help you support your child and stay calm about it. This is important because bullying can happen more than once.

Dealing with bullying in the right way can help you (and your child) put a stop to it. If your child is being bullied, take the following steps:

- Talk to your child about what happened. Without interrupting or giving your opinion, let your child openly talk about what was said or done in the bullying situation. Be sure you understand the whole story. Support them as they talk by telling them you want to help, and by keeping your actions as calm as possible.
- Tell the child that bullying is not their fault. No one deserves to be bullied.
- When giving advice, use clear examples. Role playing can be very helpful in teaching a child what to do. Never tell them to fight back or use violence. This doesn't help the situation and can get your child in trouble or hurt.
- Ask your child how you can help them feel safe again. Try not to single him or her out by making changes in their routine, such as switching classes or buses. Instead, try taking other steps, such as changing seating arrangements in school or on the bus.
- Talk with the school or organization. State your concerns and ask them how they feel it can be addressed. Remember that the school staff cannot "discipline" other kids. Even if you want to, avoid talking with the bullying child's parents. School officials can talk with them and be a neutral moderator.
- Consider getting professional support for your child. Sometimes a school counselor or mental health expert can help a child who has been bullied.

Bullying should never be ignored. Kids who are bullied may be at higher risk for health problems like:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Sleep problems
- Loss of interest in activities

Their grades may also suffer. Kids who are bullied are more likely to miss school or drop out.

Source: Stopbullying.gov