

Who Should Use This Guide?

This guide provides tips for assisting your child in handling bullying.

Tips for Parents

Bullying is behavior that is done on purpose to hurt another person, it occurs more than once, and it is difficult for the victim to stop.

There are different kinds of bullying:

- Physical - hitting, pushing, knocking someone down
- Verbal - calling, teasing, mean remarks; the most common form of bullying
- Cyberbullying – Name-calling, harassing behavior done through social media sites
- Relational Aggression - excluding others from their friendship group, ignoring people when they are mad at them, etc.; more common among girls

Bullying becomes more problematic for children when they reach middle school.

Parents can look for the following warning signs that your child is being bullied:

- Sudden loss of friends or avoiding social situations
- Increases in refusing to go to school
- Complaining about physical symptoms (headaches, stomachaches) in an effort to avoid going to school
- Decreased self-esteem
- Declining grades or poor performance in school

The most effective way to decrease bullying is for the child to respond to the taunt in a casual, almost bored manner

- Ask about your child’s friends on a normal basis. If they mention teasing or bullying, ask how they are handling it.
- Help your child brainstorm ways to handle bullying, even if they are not currently being bullied.
- Help your child identify an adult at school whom they trust and would feel comfortable going to if they were being bullied during the school day.
- Monitor their social media sites.

- Many times children are told to tell bullies to "Stop" or tell them "I don't like it when....", however, this is often the reaction the bully is looking for and may increase the chances that the bullying will continue. Research has found that children who are not bullying targets usually respond to taunts in a bored way (e.g. by saying "Whatever" in a bored tone in response to being bullied). By not reacting in an emotional way, the bully does not get the reaction they are looking for.
- Practice this skill with your child. Have them practice responding to a general taunt from you with "Whatever" or "Is that supposed to be funny?" in a bored tone, and then turning away. They could even add a bored eye roll. Encourage them to sound as bored and not emotional as possible.
- To help your child avoid becoming a bully, encourage empathy. Encourage your child to think about problem situations from the other person's perspective. Ask your child how they think their behavior made another person feel.
- Bullying should not be tolerated. Become involved in your child's school and encourage the school to target bullying in a pro-active, organized manner, not on a reactive, case-by-case basis.

Books & Web Sites

www.Stopbullying.gov

www.bullyfree.com/free-resources/tips-for-parents

Local Resources

Contact your school/school district for their official bullying policy.

Contact your school counselor and your child's teacher to discuss how the bullying policy is implemented in the school. Also discuss how these individuals implement pro-active interventions to attempt to prevent bullying in school.

It is not uncommon for bullying to be an event that may lead to consistent depressed mood and even depression. If your child is consistently sad, angry, or irritable, these may be symptoms of depression. Call the agency listed below, or any other mental health agency to make an appointment for your child to speak with a mental health professional.

Daily Behavioral Health, 14538 Grapeland Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44111, 216-252-1399,
www.dailybh.com Offices in West Cleveland and Avon

This Guide Provided By:

