



# Bullying Prevention

## How to tell if your child is a victim of bullying

The warning signs of bullying can be hard to catch. To make things more complicated, the internet has created a whole new cyber-world that is allowing bullying to not only take place face-to-face, but also through a screen. And although we can usually tell when something is wrong with our children, cyber bullying can be nearly undetectable at times. The best way to address bullying, in any form, is to start by talking to your child and look for the signs.

### Signs that a child may be bullied:

- **Difficulty sleeping**
- **Unexplained injuries/lost or destroyed property (books, toys, clothes)**
- **Noticeable and rapid fluctuation in cell phone use (including texting)**
- **Loss of confidence/increased feeling of helplessness**
- **Hiding phone screens or devices when others walk near**
- **Frequent headaches or stomachaches**
- **Changes in eating habits (children may be skipping lunch)**
- **Declining grades/sudden disinterest in schoolwork**
- **Sudden disinterest in attending school or visiting with friends**
- **Self-destructive behaviors (running away from home, self harm or suicidal thoughts)**

### Signs your child may be bullying:

- **Behavior that is increasingly aggressive**
- **Getting into physical or verbal fights**
- **Frequently sent to the Principal's office/receiving detention**
- **Does not take responsibility for their actions**
- **Are competitive and often worry about their popularity or reputation**



## **“I think my child is being bullied... Why haven't they asked me for help?”**

Bullying is a humiliating experience for children. Bullied children generally feel helpless and in attempt to regain control they try to handle it themselves. Children being bullied are also fearful that what they say will get back to the bully or friends. The last thing a child wants in this situation is to be made out as a tattletale by their peers when they are already feeling targeted. Additionally, your child may be embarrassed by what is being said about them (true or not). Lastly, children are often fearful of parent's telling them to stand up for themselves when they are already afraid. *Make it clear to your child you will listen without judgement and a plan of action will be something you will create together.*

### **Putting a STOP to the bullying**

- 1. Whether your child is bullying or being bullied, communicate with your child. Tell them you are here for them and you will tackle this together.**
- 2. Reach out to your child's teacher. Explain the events that are happening, as well as who is involved. Do not leave without having a course of action which you both agree on.** *Common places to start are asking them to watch your child and the bully more closely, keep phones out of the classroom, and watch the children in the lunchroom.*
- 3. Keep an open conversation about bullying with your child. Make sure that your child knows this is important, you believe them, and that it is not their fault.**
- 4. Educate yourself and stay up to date on why bullying happens, how bullying happens and how to stop it in its tracks.**

#### **HOT TIPS:**

- Although difficult in an emotional time, you do not want what you are saying to be overshadowed by how you are saying it when speaking with your child's teacher or other parents.**
- Document what your child shares with you including the day, time of day, and who was involved. This info may be needed as you climb up the chain of command when addressing the issue.**

### **RESOURCES:**

To learn more about the ins and outs of cyber bullying: [cyberwise.org](http://cyberwise.org)

To learn how you can be supportive as a parent: [beststrong.global/parent](http://beststrong.global/parent) and [stopbullying.gov/prevention/support-kids-involved](http://stopbullying.gov/prevention/support-kids-involved)

For interactive bullying workshops: [theevolveproject.org/workshop](http://theevolveproject.org/workshop)