

Bully Prevention Kit

What is Bullying?

Bullying is any unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. This behavior is repetitive, or has the potential to be. Both parties involved may develop serious, lasting problems. Bullies use their power, whether if be physical, social status, or embarrassing information, to control or harm others. There are four types of bullying: verbal, social, physical and cyber bullying.

Verbal Bullying:

This type of bullying can involve spoken attacks. Some examples include: teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting, or threatening to cause any type of harm.

Social Bullying:

This type of bullying can involve damage to an individual's reputation or relationships. Examples include, purposeful exclusion (not inviting someone to join in plans), telling others to isolate another, spreading rumors, or public embarrassment.

Physical Bullying:

This form of bullying entails damaging a person's body or possessions. Examples of this include, hitting, kicking, punching, spitting, tripping, pushing, taking/breaking/hiding of possessions, or making inappropriate hand gestures.

Cyber Bullying:

Cyber bullying is similar to verbal bullying in the types of attacks made, but takes place through social outlets like texting or Facebook. Cyber Bullying is a growing issue with the constant introduction of new technology. Bullies are hiding by their computer screens or their cell phones, which often leads to more hurtful actions. Cyber bullying can be anonymous and cause heightened distress for the victim. It can happen at any time day or night, leaving victims constantly stressed and even scared. Cyber bullying has a permanence never seen on the playground, as words or pictures posted can exist on the Internet forever. Some examples of where cyber bullying can take place are: text messages, Facebook, Twitter, email, or any form of Instant Messaging.

Tips To Help Interfere with Bullying:

At Home:

1. Talk to your child about bullying. Make sure they are aware of the different forms and understand that the behavior is unacceptable.

2. Openly communicate about the topic. Check-in with your child often and get to know their friends!
3. Encourage your child to activities they love. This will help with their self-esteem and may serve as a tool to build friendships with others who enjoy the same activities.
4. Be a good example! Children learn behaviors from home and other environments like school. Treat others with respect, especially in your child's presence. They are listening and learning!
5. Stay aware and involved with what is happening at school. It is impossible to be at your child's side at every moment, especially when they are at school. Staying involved gives you the opportunity to have a better understanding of your child's life in school!

At School:

1. Get everyone involved. Having meetings with teachers that include your child will ensure that every individual is on the same page and aware of what goes on. This also allows you to work with everyone towards bully prevention and other activities.
2. Know the school's policies and rules. Students and parents need to know what behaviors are acceptable and which ones are not. This also provides the opportunity to address rules or regulations that are ineffective or need to be better implemented and addressed.
3. Reinforce positive social interactions and inclusiveness. This can be done through student workshops that educate and allow students to address issues with one another in a healthy and aggression free environment.
4. Stay educated! Make sure everyone is aware of problems and the progression of bullying in their school.

How to Respond to Bullying:

1. Don't wait! Intervene IMMEDIATELY! Ask for additional help if necessary.
2. NEVER ignore a bullying situation.
3. Separate the parties involved.
4. Make sure everyone is okay.
5. Seek medical assistance if necessary.
6. Stay CALM and remember you are the ROLE MODEL! Be sure to RESPECT everyone.
7. Do not publicly question bystanders or the children involved. Speak to each separately.
8. Do not try and find out what happened right away! Wait until every individual is calm and ready.
9. Once everyone is calm, get the story from those involved SEPARATELY, including witnesses. You want to make sure you are getting all the details and understand the different points of view. In addition, it will make it difficult for individuals to change stories.
10. Listen without blaming and make no accusations. Try and understand the whole situation, there are some cases where it may not be bullying.
11. If bullying is the case, be sure to SUPPORT the victim and ensure them that it is not their fault. In addition, make sure you address and educate the bully about why they are wrong and how to act appropriately. Remember, consequences are a learning tool: ENFORCE THEM!