

It's never too early to talk to your child about bullying.
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WHAT IS BULLYING AND WHY SHOULD PARENTS BE CONCERNED ABOUT IT?

- Bullying is repeated, unwanted aggressive behaviour that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance. It can result in serious physical, social, psychological, or educational harm and distress for those who are bullied (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018).
- Bullying is deliberate and purposeful. The goal is to cause distress to another person or gain a social or material reward.
- Bullying can be physical (e.g., pushing), verbal (e.g., name calling), or social (e.g., excluding). Bullying that occurs online is called cyberbullying.
- Bullying is often directed at children who are perceived as different, such as based on race, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression, appearance, body type, ability, popularity, and so forth.
- Bullying is a relationship problem. Over time, the person who is bullying feels more powerful and the person who is bullied feel more and more helpless, shamed and trapped.
- Bullying teaches children that aggression can be used to control and distress others. This may carry into adulthood unless they learn constructive ways to interact positively with others.
- Children who bully or are being bullied are at greater risk of academic and health problems.

Adults need to help children deal with bullying problems. With adult support, children can learn from their social experiences and develop healthy relationships.

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT BULLYING

- Be proactive. Start discussions about bullying often, especially during transitional periods like a change of school. For example, "What would you do if you saw someone being left out on purpose? How would it make you feel?"
- Listen to what children say about bullying and take it seriously.
- Make it clear that bullying is wrong.
- Recognize that it takes courage to report bullying. Let children know that asking an adult for help is not the same as tattling to get someone in trouble.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND OUT YOUR CHILD IS INVOLVED IN BULLYING

- Reassure your child that you will help solve the problem.
- Whether your child is bullying others, being bullied, or a bystander, it is important to stay calm and take time to process your emotions and thoughts before taking action.

Bullying requires solutions that create safety and positive social and emotional growth for those who bully, who are bullied, and those who witness bullying (bystanders).

Children who are being bullied need adult support and ongoing follow-up to ensure they are protected. Develop a safety plan in collaboration with adults at the school or place where the bullying happened. Older children who are being bullied may want to try handling the situation on their own first. Offer them support and guidance.

Children who are bullying others need adult support and ongoing follow-up to ensure they have stopped the bullying behaviour. Help them understand the harm they have done and develop a plan to make up for it. Discuss healthy and positive ways they can use their influence going forward. Develop these plans in collaboration with other important adults in your child's life.

Children who are bystanders to bullying: If children are bystanders to bullying, encourage them to Stand UP! for children who are being bullied. There are many ways to Stand UP! They can reach out and support the child who was bullied, or tell the child who did the bullying to stop, or seek help from an adult. They should choose an action they're comfortable with.