

WHAT IS BULLYING?

HERE'S HOW WE DEFINE IT

Bullying is the use of power - either physical or mental - to harass, hurt, coerce, intimidate, or ridicule others. This behavior is usually repeated over time, having an addictive effect on both the bully and the victim.

Because every adult, teen, and child is wired differently, you can never underestimate the negative effects of bullying. Not only is the act of bullying detrimental, but also the fear of it happening again is equally as horrifying. It can occupy every waking moment of a child's life. It can thrust a teen into total isolation. It can depress the happiest of adults.



Approximately
350,000
school children are
bullied every week,
and 16 to 20 kids
will take their
own life.

SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING

Bullying causes unhappiness, loneliness, anguish, intense or mild fear, anxiety, and in some cases, more violence. We should all take time to learn what to look for when bullying might be happening around us. If you or someone you know is experiencing any of these symptoms, tell someone you trust.



THE MANY FACES OF BULLYING

A bully can be one individual or group, where the bully may have one or more friends willing to back them up. Bullying in the workplace is more commonly referred to as peer abuse and involves rankism.

THE FOUR TYPES OF BULLYING + WAYS TO COPE

Bullying has many different forms. Recently, bullying has been divided into four basic types of abuse - **emotional, verbal, physical, and cyber**. All of these groups involve intimidation and fear.

Any form of bullying should not be tolerated and should be discussed with a parent, friend, or appropriate authority. Most bullying, however, goes unreported. Herein lies the problem. Discussion is the first and most important step. Most people want to push the memory deep down inside and never think about it again, but doing just the opposite is the best way to truly deal with the effects of bullying. Below are a series of steps that are useful in dealing with bullying.

TIPS + TRICKS FOR COPING WITH BULLYING

TALK

HAVE A DISCUSSION

This applies to all children, teens, and adults. Find someone whom you can trust and tell them exactly what has happened - and how it makes you feel. If you have anyone else that you want to tell your story to, write it down. The idea is to familiarize yourself and others with the situation so you can form a strategy to deal with it.

PLAN

HAVE A STRATEGY

This doesn't have mean "plot to get even." Instead, have a plan of action ready if the bullying occurs again. Most bullies thrive on the reaction and confusion of their victim. Strategies can range from a catch phrase that is repeated, an exit plan, or an

immediate phone call to a friend or parent. The point is, have a plan figured out ahead of time and practice it so you'll know what to do when faced with bullying again.

KNOW

KEEP IN MIND

First and foremost, try to remember the nature of bullying. Wrong is such a vague term, so we are going to add some specificity to WHY it's wrong. Bullying is immoral, dishonest, deceitful, and hateful, and people who bully others tend to have a low self-image and self esteem. They try to make themselves feel better by cutting other people down.

THINGS WE SHOULD KEEP IN MIND

THE POWER OF KNOWLEDGE

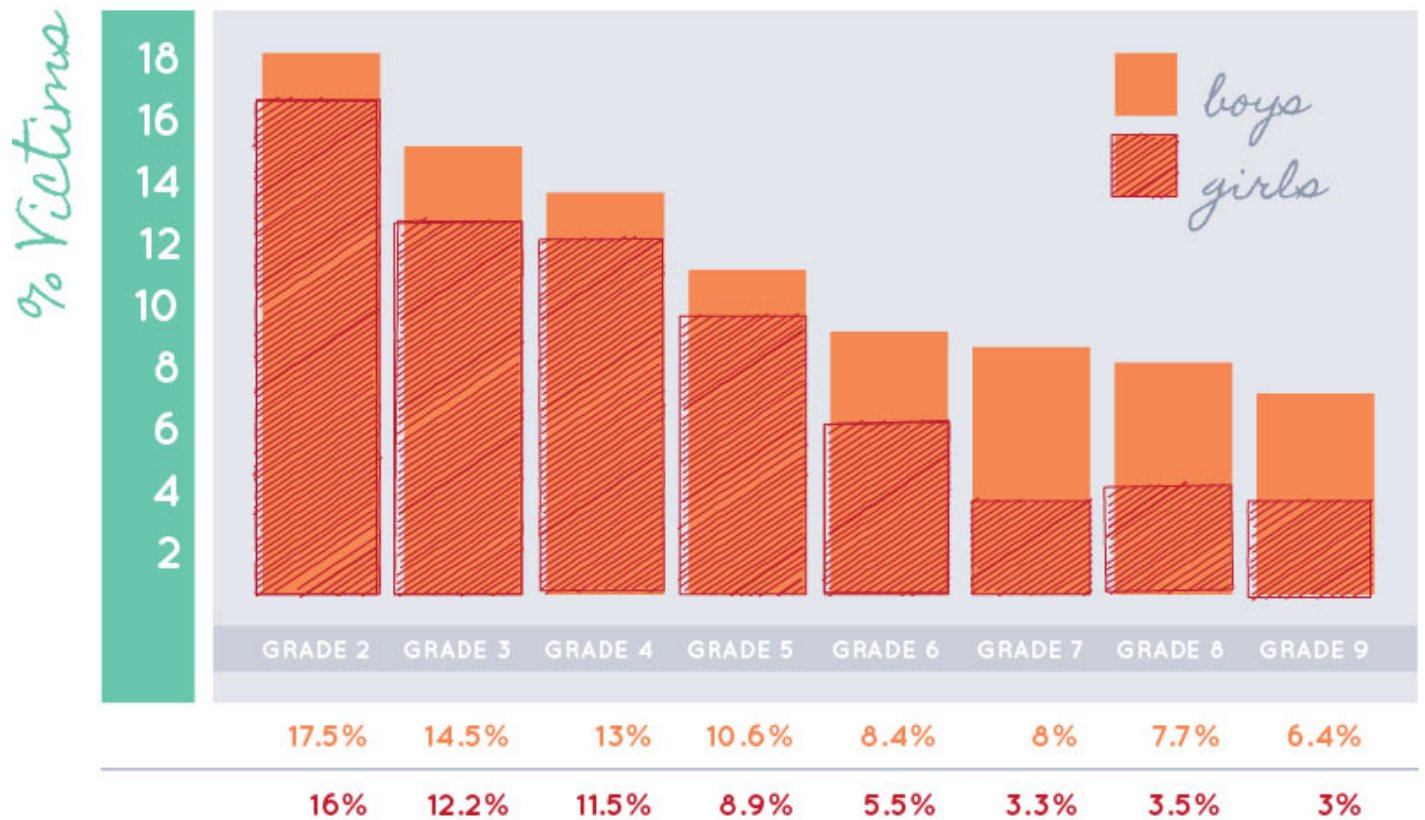
Knowing that bullying stems from weaker judgement and self-image can be a comforting and powerful realization for victims. This is not a mere suggestion, but a truth. In fact, bullying dissipates with maturity.



A large study of school-aged children in Norway in the 1980s found that bullying in general decreases with age. Findings indicated that there were fewer instances of physical bullying in later years as well.

Being bullied by an older student was particularly common for the youngest victims in the study - ages 8 and 9 years old - and more than half had been bullied by older children.

The graph below illustrates the findings of the study. Note that the percentage of students who reported being directly exposed to bullying decreases steadily from grades 2 through 9.



BULLYING TAKES A TOLL ON EVERYONE

Bullying affects families even when it's not known. Parents may notice a shift in moods with their child but have no idea why. Kids not willing to talk about bullying may want to be left alone and become distant. He or she may drop out of sports they once enjoyed. That can become extremely frustrating for family members who want to help but have no idea what is wrong.

Once the problem is known, it will probably cause angst with family members. Nobody likes the idea that someone is tormenting one of their own. Be sure not to rush into something rash. Cool heads will prevail with a well-thought-out plan of how to address the problem. The hardest thing to remember is that the bully matters too.

Constant monitoring of the situation will be your best source to relieve the tension. Explain to your child that - you will not do anything to compromise his reputation at school or embarrass him. Explain to him that you only want to have open and honest communication. This will help you to better understand what he is going through.

A LOOK AT THE FACTS + STATS

THE NUMBERS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

It is estimated that **160,000** children miss school every day due to **fear of attack** or intimidation by other students.

1 out of every 10 students who drops out of school does so because of **repeated bullying**.

American schools harbor approximately 2.1 million bullies and 2.7 million of their victims.

1 in 7 students in grades K-12 in either a bully or a victim of bullying.

15% of all school absenteeism is directly related to fears of being bullied at school.

71% of students report incidents of bullying as a problem at their school.

282,000 students are physically attacked in secondary schools each month.

Revenge is the strongest motivation for school shootings.

87% of students said shootings are motivated by a desire to "get back at those who have hurt them."

86% of students said, "other kids picking on them, making fun of them or bullying them" causes teenagers to turn to lethal violence in the schools.

61% of students said students shoot others because they have been victims of physical abuse at home.

THE RESEARCH

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT BULLIES TODAY

Research on the self-esteem of bullies has produced equivocal results. ^[1] ^[2] While some bullies are arrogant and narcissistic, ^[3] they can also use bullying as a tool to conceal shame or anxiety or to boost self-esteem; by demeaning others, the abuser feels empowered. ^[4] Bullies may bully out of jealousy or sometimes because they themselves are being bullied. ^[5]

A typical bully has trouble resolving problems with others and also has trouble academically. He or she usually has negative attitudes and beliefs about others, feels negatively toward himself/herself, comes from a family environment characterized by conflict and poor parenting, perceives school as negative and is negatively influenced by peers. ^[6]

- 1: Cardemil, Alisha R.; Cardemil, Esteban V.; O'Donnell, Ellen H. (August 2010). "Self-Esteem in Pure Bullies and Bully/Victims: A Longitudinal Analysis" *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* (Sage Publications) 25 (8): 1489-1502. doi:10.1177/0886260509354579. PMID 20040706. Retrieved 2013-10-29.
- 2: Batsche, George M.; Knoff, Howard M. (1994). "Bullies and their victims: Understanding a pervasive problem in the schools". *School Psychology Review* 23 (2): 165-175.
- 3: "Those who can, do. Those who can't, bully". *Bully OnLine*. Tim Field. Retrieved 2013-10-28.
- 4: Syiasha. *Presentation Bullying*. Scribd. Scribd Inc. Retrieved 2013-10-28.
- 5: Levinson, Edward M.; Levinson, Edward M. (2004). *Assessment of Bullying: A Review of Methods and Instruments*. *Journal of Counselling & Development* (American Counselling Association) 82 (4): 496-503. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6678.2004.tb00338.x. Retrieved 2013-10-29.
- 6: Cook, Clayton R.; Williams, Kirk R.; Guerra, Nancy G.; Kim, Tia E.; Sadek, Shelly (2010). *Predictors of Bullying and Victimization in Childhood and Adolescence: A Meta-analytic Investigation*. *School Psychology Quarterly* (American Psychological Association) 25 (2): 65-83.

END BULLYING NOW.

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A LITTLE ADVICE

STEP ONE

When someone hurts your feelings or makes you feel teeny tiny, it's hard to ignore them. You might not fight back. But really, it's the best way. Bullies feed off of the reactions they get, and when they're ignored, it diminishes their power.



STEP TWO

Now it's the fun part – discussing the bullying event with mom and dad. Okay, okay, we know you probably won't want to discuss this with your parents. But we have some good reasons we think you should.

- The earlier you tell them, the quicker it will stop
- They only have your best interest at heart
- They have more wisdom than you think
- They will know what to do, or know who to talk with

You will feel better after discussing it with them

STEP THREE

Develop a plan so you know what to do when you are bullied. Do this with your parents so your plan is based on sound advice. Here are some ideas for starters:

In a strong voice, tell the bully, ***"Stop it!"***

Tell them that if they continue, the next person they'll be talking with will be the principal or your parents.

Turn and simply walk away. Say something short like,

"I don't have time for this."

When possible, travel with your friends.

Say something grown-up like, ***"Everybody knows that people who make fun of others have low self-esteem."***

STEP FOUR

If bullying has not stopped, it's time to take things more seriously. Tell your parents that it hasn't stopped and that an intervention is needed. This might mean contacting the school for a more serious discussion on the problem.

YOU CAN HELP STOP BULLYING

SMALL WAYS TO HELP OTHER VICTIMS

You probably think you don't have any power, but you do. Here are things you can do to help stop bullying:

Be an upstander - stand up for people being bullied

Report any incidents to a teacher, principal, or parent

Tell your friends you will not participate in bullying

Don't make fun of others

Seek out kids who are struggling to fit in and make them feel welcome

Be inclusive - try never to be exclusive

Always treat others with kindness, even bullies



All it takes is telling your story to one person. Telling your story will help heal the hurt and aid in ending the cycle of bullying.

Is someone you love acting differently? It's better to ask if something is up than to assume everything is okay.

THE LAW SAYS

YOU HAVE LEGAL OPTIONS

Unfortunately, there may be some instances where you will need to see legal counsel for bullying. You should not feel ashamed nor should you hesitate when bullying goes to the extreme. State and local lawmakers are committed to prevent bullying and protect children.

Each state varies on the laws it employs to addresses bullying. Find out how your state refers to bullying in its laws and what they require on part of schools and districts. Bullying, cyberbullying, and related behaviors may be addressed in a single law or may be addressed in multiple laws.

Have your parents contact a lawyer in your area and they will be able to give you proper counsel on your rights. Please check out the resources provided below.

RESOURCES AND HELP

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO STOP BULLYING?

First things first: if there has been a crime or someone is at immediate risk of serious physical harm, call 911.

Bullying is serious stuff. If you or someone you know and love is being bullied, don't wait to act. There are various forms and degrees of bullying, so we're here to help you decide how to act.

Even if you feel like you've done everything you can to resolve the situation, you can always reach out for additional help.

PUBLIC RESOURCES

Bullying should never be ignored. Use the resources below to learn more about how and when to seek additional or professional help.

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[Society for Occupational Health Psychology \(.\)](#)

[Society for Human Resource Management \(.\)](#)

[CDC Podcasts: Bullying Prevention for Kids \(.\)](#)

[Teen Health and Wellness \(.\)](#)

HOTLINES

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DEGREE OF URGENCY☐ NOT WORRIED YET☐ SOMEWHAT WORRIED☐ VERY WORRIED☐ SEVERELY WORRIED

SUBMIT

END BULLYING NOW.

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HELP IDENTIFY AND STOP ACTS OF BULLYING

BULLIES AND THE BULLIED: WHAT TO LOOK FOR

The act of bullying is a sign of insecurity, and therefore, bullies usually target kids who aren't confident or assertive enough to stand up to them. Male bullies are easier to detect, as they often have a positive view towards violence and may be aggressive and frequently angry.

Female bullies usually use isolation techniques to bully victims. They spread nasty gossip or lies and try to manipulate others to "hate" the victim. They are often popular and have an obsession with being popular. Female bullies usually have a strong clique of friends.

Spotting a bullying victim, on the other hand, can be hard. They may seem disconnected from school or extracurricular activities. Although they may have outward signs of physical violence (scars, cuts, bruises), they may only complain of non-visible physical ailments (headaches or stomachaches). Often, they will be anxious and suffer from low self-esteem.

Households were once a safe haven where kids and teens could feel protected from their peers. Now, with the expansive nature of social media and other online channels, bullying can even reach them in the privacy of their homes. Bullying can occur in any place, at any time, and to anyone. When a child becomes the target of online (cyber) bullying, the emotional and psychological implications can be serious.

HOW TO HANDLE A BULLY

When a bullying situation is observed as a teacher or authority figure, it is important to use immediate, consistent, and non-hostile punishment to address the situation. Post classroom rules regarding bullying and schedule time where students can talk openly and freely about bullying or any other issue that may arise.

Communicate quickly and openly with parents of students - whether they are the bully or the victim - and together work to come up with a plan of action. Build the child or student's self-esteem by making them aware of their strengths instead of

weaknesses. Calling attention to the positive attributes the child or student possesses will help them feel more confident in the face of all sorts of criticism.



If you are a parent of a bully, make sure your child knows that their behavior is wrong. Find a way to open their eyes to how the children they are bullying might feel, and help them try to understand their perspective. Try to figure out and talk about why they are bullying other kids, and above all else, model respectful and kind behavior.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

ARE YOU A PARENT?

Make sure you talk with your children regularly about how bullying is not okay. You should create an open communication between you and your child on the topic of bullying. If they are ever bullied or witness a classmate or friend being bullied, they should know how to react. As most parents know, kids don't always want to talk openly about the problem.

The most common reasons for their hesitations include:

They think their parents will make the situation worse

They believe their parents will not understand the situation

They are afraid their parents will overreact to the situation

They worry that their parents will do something to embarrass them

They think their parents will constantly want to discuss the situation

Parents should begin a discussion with the child by addressing these concerns. If you start the conversation with, "I will not do anything you do not want me to do," or "We will figure out a solution together to make it stop," you'll have a better chance at an honest discussion with your child about the bullying situation.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO STOP BULLYING?

As a parent, you probably aren't on the front line where bullying takes place.

Regardless, the strategy is the same - first, open an honest dialogue with your child. Nothing will prepare your child more than meaningful discussions where can they feel safe to tell you everything.

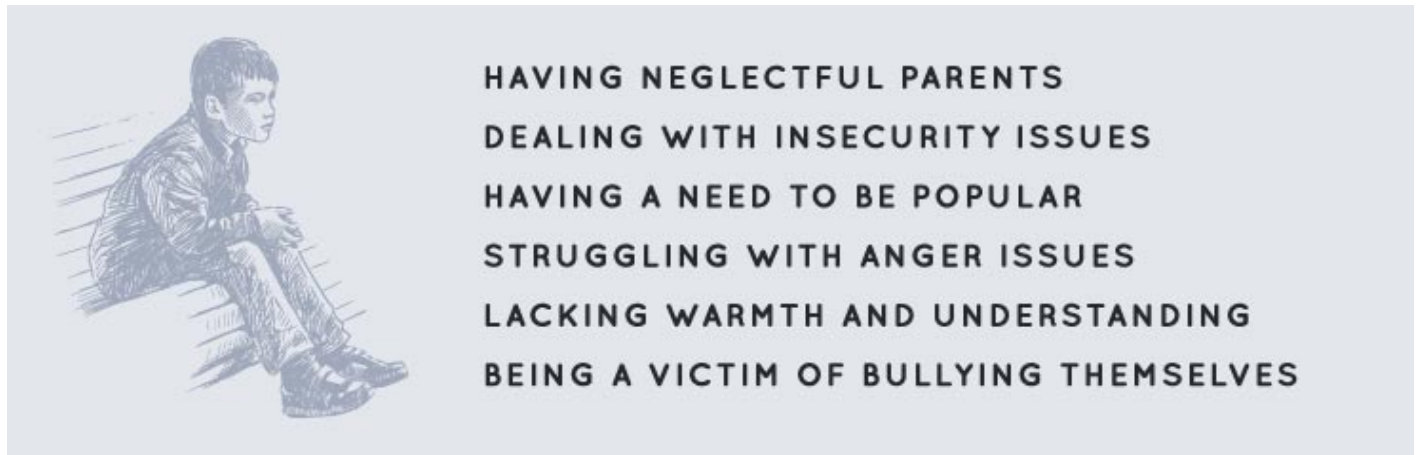
Once you've established this trust, begin having small nightly discussions to help your child understand WHY people bully others, and develop small strategies to help counteract it.



LET'S KEEP TALKING ABOUT IT

FI **1** : THE WHY

Pa **discuss the bullying problem honestly with your child.** Let them know that so **ds** choose to do mean things to other kids. Help them understand that it is not their fault in any way, and that bullies usually have their own issues that foster these tendencies. Discuss candidly the possible reasons why kids bully:



Educators, talk openly about bullying with your students. Hold classroom discussions about how bullying makes others feel - and encourage students to discuss their thoughts on bullying. Finally, help guide the conversation and let them know that bullying will not be tolerated at school - and should be reported if witnessed.

SECOND: THE STRATEGY

Successful solutions stem from a strong strategy. Talk with children and come up with a workable plan on how to react to bullying. Nothing will help arm children with confidence more than knowing they have a plan if they encounter bullying.

Anxiety, often caused from not knowing when bullies will strike next, will be greatly diminished if kids feel like they have a way out. These strategies should never involve physical violence or retaliation. Rather, simply help kids formulate a well-thought-out way to react to and report any bullying.

Kids who have a plan feel safe and more confident in knowing that bullying is wrong. They are less likely to be hurt by the mean behavior of their peers - and more likely to talk openly about what happened.

THE LAW SAYS

YOU HAVE LEGAL OPTIONS

If your child has suffered an injury or mental anguish as a result of bullying at school, it might be necessary to consult a lawyer to assure your child's well being. Most lawyers will offer a free consultation and will be able to tell you if you have legal recourse for dealing with a school bully.

Parents must decide when the line is crossed and when it is time to take legal action. Sometimes this is a very difficult decision. Becoming familiar with the "Protection From Harassment Act" will help.

There are two actionable criminal offenses that may relate to bullying:

The offense of actual harassment

The offense of placing people "in fear of violence"

Schools have a responsibility to thwart bullying, ensuring the safety of all children. Any threatening behavior - psychological or physical - should be documented and addressed with both the victim and bully. Often, this is enough to stop the bullying act. If not, then it might be a good idea to start a legal discussion with an attorney to understand your rights.

RESOURCES AND HELP

PUBLIC RESOURCES

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PHONE NUMBER

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DEGREE OF URGENCY

NOT WORRIED YET

SOMEWHAT WORRIED

VERY WORRIED

SEVERELY WORRIED

SUBMIT

END BULLYING NOW.

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FOR TEENAGERS

A LITTLE ADVICE

The first thing to understand about bullying is that the bully is usually trying to inflate his or her ego, achieve or maintain popularity, or impress friends - in all of these cases, bullies are seeking approval. The important truth is when you're secure and comfortable with who you are, you don't try to make others feel inadequate.

Teenage bullying can get serious fast. There are many tools today to spread gossip and harass people in the once safe haven of their home with cyberbullying. Bullying includes physical injury, repeated verbal belittlement, and an organized rejection from peers.

TYPES OF BULLYING

Today we categorize patterns of teenage bullying into four groups:

PHYSICAL

Pushing, punching, tripping, and kicking are common forms of physical bullying. Causing bodily harm to another person should never be tolerated. If you witness this type of behavior, you should report it right away.

VERBAL

Repeated putdowns are designed to embarrass and intentionally make the victim feel bad. Verbal techniques include teasing others relentlessly or humiliating them.

PHYSICAL BULLYING IS THE MOST COMMON FORM FOR BOYS.

EMOTIONAL

Organizing a group of friends to shun the victim. This type of isolating bullying can be hard to detect because the victim usually does not talk about it as they feel there has been no confrontation.

CYBER

This is especially harmful as today's teens are able to communicate instantly with large groups of peers. Instant messag, text messages, and social networks can all be used to spread malicious gossip 24 hours a day.

VERBAL + EMOTIONAL BULLYING ARE MORE COMMON AMONGST GIRLS.

COPING WITH BULLYING

WHAT TO DO WHEN TARGETED

Discipline and communication are the key to combating and coping with bullying. Most children and teens try not to think or talk about it, but doing just the opposite is the best the way to deal with bullying. The disciplined response below may help you.

PLEASE REACH OUT

ARE YOU BEING BULLIED?

Tell someone. If you're looking for someone to talk to, or someone to help you take action, there are people who would love to help. Your situation can improve if you have the courage to share your story.



STEP ONE

Find someone to talk to. Find someone whom you trust and tell them exactly what has happened and how it makes you feel. Know that bullying is immoral, self-harming, and toxic. It is the bullies that need help, not you. They usually have a low self-image and self-esteem.

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STEP TWO

Second, strategy. Have a plan of action ready if the bullying occurs again. Most bullies thrive on the reaction and confusion of the victim. The fumbling of words, tears, and blank stares are all things that add fuel to the fire, so to speak. Strategies can range from a catchphrase that is repeated, or to an exit plan, to an immediate phone call to a friend or parent. The point is, have a plan that you know and practice so if the bullying does occur, you have a sense of what to do.

STEP THREE

Third, practice. Practice how you are going to react to bullies. The more familiar you become with your reaction, the easier it will be to do it. If the time arrives when you are bullied, follow through with your strategy.

STEP FOUR

Fourth, assessment. Discuss with your parents or friends the outcome of the situation. Was your reaction enough to stop future bullying? Analyze the outcome.

WHY BULLIES BULLY

SOMETIMES THE ANSWER IS NOT SIMPLE

When these underlying factors exist, kids and teens are more likely to bully others:

- Has issues at home
- Thinks making others feel bad makes them happy
- Has trouble with authority
- Sees violence as a game
- Challenges friends to bully others

BULLIES AREN'T ALWAYS BIG

Bullies don't have to be bigger or stronger. Groups of kids can exert immense bullying power. The perception that many are against the victim is often the case. Bullying is rarely done without a witness. The witness is needed to view the action for the bullying to be validated.



WHY IT'S HARD TO TALK ABOUT

The reasons why teens do not want to discuss bullying with parents are various, with the most common misconceptions being:

They think their parents will make the situation worse

They believe their parents will not understand the situation

They are afraid their parents will overreact to the situation

They worry that their parents will do something to embarrass them

They think their parents will constantly want to discuss the situation

Knowing these issues, parents can begin a discussion with their teen by addressing them individually. To start, say something like "I will not do anything you do not want me to do. We'll figure out a solution together to make it stop." This has a good chance of getting an honest discussion going about the bullying situation.

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Unfortunately, there may be some instances where you will need to see legal counsel for bullying. You should not feel ashamed nor should you hesitate when bullying goes to the extreme. State and local lawmakers are committed to prevent bullying and protect children.

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