

HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD DEAL WITH BULLYING?

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People preparing for school have a lot on their minds. Bullying may be low on the list, yet if bullying is happening, it may severely damage your child.

1. How can I help my child deal with a bully?

*Tell your child what bullying is and what makes a bully in terms she/he can understand.

*A bully is a person or group of people, who deliberately torment, taunt, and tease. The abuse can be verbal or physical, making you feel frightened and miserable. Intimidation like this can force you to stay away from places or friends that you have every right to enjoy.

*There are lots of reasons people bully. Most of the time, bullies have problems. They have probably been bullied themselves. Sometimes they don't understand the changes in their own lives. Bullies use physical, racial, gender, or other kinds of differences to control people or situations. People who encourage bullies are also bullies themselves. People who ignore bullying are, in their own way... bullies.

*Types of bullying are things like yelling, punching, kicking, damaging belongings, or name-calling. Other bullying tactics include embarrassing texting or publishing in the cyber world, ignoring or pushing out of groups, or alienating someone from a social scene.

2. What can I do about it?

*Don't suffer in silence. Tell!

*Know the anti-bullying policy at school and act on what you find.

*Don't be ashamed. Chances are others are suffering because of bullying. You are NOT wrong to tell. Find a compassionate authority to report the bullying to. You can probably find a way to be anonymous if you like.

*Find/research online or at your library, effective tools related to bullying and what to do. Examples: <http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/kids>, <http://www.kidshealth.org>, and <http://dontfeedthebully.com>, <http://practiquet.com>

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