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Tikinagan

Child & Family Services

BULLYING & CYBERBULLYING

RESOURCE FOR
PREVENTION COORDINATORS

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"Working together to learn new life skills"

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WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- **An Imbalance of Power:** Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying can include making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically and verbally, and deliberately excluding someone from a group or activity.

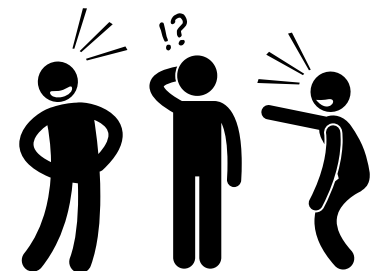
TYPES OF BULLYING

VERBAL

Teasing
Name-calling
Inappropriate sexual comments
Daring
Threatening to cause harm

SOCIAL

Leaving someone out on purpose
Telling other children not to be friends with someone
Spreading rumors about someone
Embarrassing someone in public



PHYSICAL

Hitting/kicking/pinching
Spitting
Tripping/pushing
Taking or breaking someone's things
Making mean or rude hand gestures



SOME FACTS ABOUT BULLYING

WHERE & WHEN

Bullying can occur anywhere, at any time. It can happen at school in the classroom, outside in the schoolyard, after school, at public events, and on-line.

WHO

Kids who are bullied can feel like they are:

- Different
- Powerless
- Unpopular
- Alone

WHY

Kids who bully others for many reasons, they may:

- Want to copy their friends
- Think bullying will help them fit in
- Think they are better than the kid they are bullying

WHAT

Bullying can make them:

- Sad, lonely, or nervous
- Feel sick
- Have problems at school
- Bully other kids

Bullying is never ok. Those who bully use power to hurt people.



Kids who are bullied have a hard time standing up for themselves. When kids see bullying, they may not know what to do. They may feel depressed or worried. They may be absent from school because they don't feel safe. They may join in or stay silent so they won't get bullied themselves. They may stand up to the bully. But the best thing to do is get an adult who will stop the bullying on the spot.

RISK FACTORS

No single factor puts a child at risk of being bullied or bullying others. Bullying happens anywhere. Every child is at risk of being bullied, or, becoming a bully. Some children are at greater risk of being bullied than others. Children with disabilities, LGBT youth, and children teased or perceived as being 'different' are especially at risk.'

Generally, children who are bullied:

- Are perceived as different from their peers, such as being overweight or underweight, wearing glasses or different clothing, being new to a school, or being unable to afford what kids consider “cool”
- Are perceived as weak or unable to defend themselves
- Are depressed, anxious, or have low self esteem
- Are less popular than others and have few friends
- Do not get along well with others, seen as annoying or provoking, or antagonize others for attention

Children who bully others:

- Have often been bullied at home and feel a sense of powerlessness
- Are aggressive or easily frustrated
- Have less parental involvement or have issues at home
- Think badly of others
- Have difficulty following rules
- View violence in a positive way
- Have friends who bully others

Remember, those who bully others do not need to be stronger or bigger than those they bully. The power imbalance can come from a number of sources—popularity, strength, cognitive ability—and children who bully may have more than one of these characteristics.

INDICATORS OF BULLYING

There are many warning signs that may indicate that someone is affected by bullying—either being bullied or bullying others. Recognizing the warning signs is an important first step in taking action against bullying. Not all children who are bullied or are bullying others ask for help.

It is important to talk with children who show signs of being bullied or bullying others. These warning signs can also point to other issues or problems, such as depression or substance abuse. Talking to the child can help identify the root of the problem.



Indicators that may suggest a child is being bullied:

- Unexplainable injuries
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewelry
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Kids may come home from school hungry because someone may have stolen their lunch
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Feelings of helplessness or decreased self esteem
- Self-destructive behaviors such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide

If you know someone who is being bullied, don't ignore the problem. Get help right away.

WHY KIDS DON'T ASK FOR HELP



Most kids don't tell adults when they are being bullied because:

- Bullying can make a child feel helpless. Kids may want to handle it on their own to feel in control again. They may fear being seen as weak or a tattletale.
- Kids may fear backlash from the kid who bullied them.
- Bullying can be a humiliating experience. Kids may not want adults to know what is being said about them, whether true or false. They may also fear that adults will judge them or punish them for being weak.
- Kids who are bullied may already feel socially isolated. They may feel like no one cares or could understand.
- Kids may fear being rejected by their peers. Friends can help protect kids from bullying, and kids can fear losing this support.

BY THE NUMBERS

50%

Research shows that **half of all children** are bullied at some time during their school years.

While verbal abuse was the most common form of bullying, **40%** reported having been physically threatened.

40%

37
SECONDS

The average bullying episode lasts only **37 seconds** but the affects on a child's self-esteem can last a lifetime.

Only 1 in 10 victims of cyberbullying tell a parent.

1IN10

WHAT IS CYBERBULLYING?

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, tablets and lap tops. These devices can be used to access communication tools such as social media sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, etc.), instant text messaging, and websites, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Hurtful rumours, embarrassing pictures or videos, once uploaded or posted online, appear instantly anywhere in the world where there is internet access. Once posted, inappropriate messages, texts, videos and pictures are extremely difficult to delete.

FORMS OF CYBERBULLYING

- **Flaming and Trolling** – sending or posting hostile messages intended to “inflame” the emotions of others
- **Happy-Slapping** – recording someone being harassed or bullied in a way that usually involves physical abuse, then posting the video online for public viewing
- **Identity Theft/Impersonation** – stealing someone’s password and/or hijacking their online accounts to send or post incriminating or humiliating pictures, videos, or information
- **Photoshopping** – doctoring digital images so that the main subject is placed in a compromising or embarrassing situation
- **Physical Threats** – sending messages that involve threats to a person’s physical safety
- **Rumor Spreading** – spreading gossip through e-mail, text messaging, or social networking sites



AFFECTS OF CYBERBULLYING

Cell phones and computers themselves are not to blame for cyberbullying. Social media sites can be used for positive activities, like connecting kids with friends and family, helping students with school, and for entertainment. But these tools can also be used to hurt other people. Whether done in person or through technology, the effects of bullying are similar. Kids who are cyberbullied are more likely to:

- Use alcohol and drugs
- Skip school
- Experience in-person bullying
- Be unwilling to attend school
- Receive poor grades
- Have lower self-esteem
- Have more health problems

TALKING TO KIDS ABOUT IT

Use these discussion starters to get an Internet safety conversation going with your children. The more often you talk to them about online safety, the easier it will get, so don't get discouraged if they don't respond immediately!

- Why do you think people cyberbully?
- How does your school deal with cyberbullying?
- Have you ever sent a mean message because you were upset?
- What would you do if someone created a mean, fake profile for you or one of your friends?
- How can you stop yourself from being cyberbullied?
- Who would you talk to if it happened to you?

SIGNS OF CYBERBULLYING

- Avoids the computer, cell phone, and other technological devices or appears stressed when receiving an e-mail, instant message, or text
- Withdraws from family and friends or acts reluctant to attend school and social events
- Avoids conversations about computer use
- Exhibits signs of low self-esteem including depression and/or fear
- Has declining grades
- Has poor eating or sleeping habits

HOW TO DEAL WITH CYBERBULLYING



Some people think bullying is a natural part of childhood that kids simply 'have to deal with'. In fact, bullying is not natural and can have devastating effects on every aspect of a child's development. For these reasons, it is important that parents and caregivers take steps to help their child deal with and respond to cyberbullying.

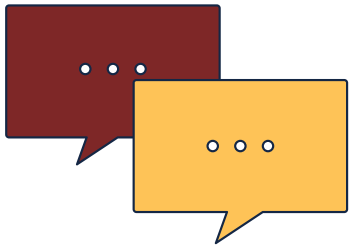
- Tell your child not to respond to rude e-mails, messages, and comments.
- Save the evidence, such as e-mail and text messages, and take screenshots of comments and images. Also, take note of the date and time when the harassment occurs.
- Contact your Internet service provider or cell phone provider. Ask the website administrator or ISP to remove any Web page created to hurt your child.
- If harassment is via e-mail, social networking sites, IM, and chat rooms, instruct your child to “block” bullies or delete your child’s current account and open a new one.
- If harassment is via text and phone messages, change the phone number and instruct your child to only share the new number with trustworthy people. Also, check out phone features that may allow the number to be blocked.
- Get your child’s school involved. Learn the school’s policy on cyberbullying and urge administrators to take a stance against all forms of bullying.
- If you feel something illegal has occurred, contact the police.

STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS & TEACHERS



Strategy 1: Do Something!

Bystanders have an impact on bullying. If you see someone being bullied, do something. When a bystander intervenes the bullying typically stops within 10 seconds. Parents can teach their children how to identify situations that require intervention and what options they have for taking actions to make it stop. If children are not comfortable with stepping in or it is not safe to do so, getting the help of a teacher or other adult is another helpful strategy.



Strategy 2: Talk about it!

Talking about being bullied can make it stop. It's an adult's responsibility to protect children. Teachers and parents can talk to children about what bullying is and what to do if they are victim to it. Speaking up doesn't always mean telling someone face-to-face that you are being bullied. Some children find it easier to put their feelings in writing. Encourage children to write down what happened and how they are feeling.



Strategy 3: Promote change!

Everyone has the ability to promote positive relationships. With the new school year about to start, parents and teachers have an opportunity to initiate change at school. Find out more about where and when bullying happens at school, in the classroom, and in your community. Think about how you can help to stop a child from being bullied. Stand up for a child that is being bullied. If you do not then who will?

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM CYBERBULLYING

Bullying does not always happen in person. Cyberbullying is a type of bullying that happens online or through text messages or emails. Here are some things you can do to protect yourself.

1) Always think about what you post. You never know what someone will forward. Being kind to others online will help to keep you safe. Do not share anything that could hurt or embarrass anyone.

2) Keep your password a secret from other kids. Even kids that seem like friends could give your password away or use it in ways you don't want. Let your parents have your passwords.

3) Think about who sees what you post online. Complete strangers? Friends? Friends of friends? Privacy settings let you control who sees what.

4) Keep your parents in the loop. Tell them what you're doing online and who you're doing it with. Let them friend or follow you. Listen to what they have to say about what is and isn't okay to do. They care about you and want you to be safe.

5) Talk to an adult you trust about any messages you get or things you see online that make you sad or scared. If it is cyberbullying, report it.



If you know someone is being cyberbullied, there are safe things you can do to make it stop:

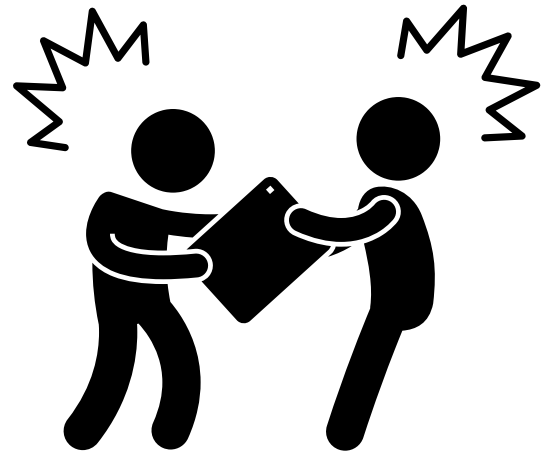
- Talk to a parent, teacher, or another adult you trust. Adults need to know when bad things happen so they can help.
- Be kind to the kid being bullied. Show them that you care by trying to include them. Sit with them at lunch or on the bus, talk to them at school, or invite them to do something. Just hanging out with them will help them know they aren't alone.
- Not saying anything could make it worse for everyone. The kid who is bullying will think it is ok to keep treating others that way.

THINGS ADULTS CAN DO TO STOP BULLYING

All kids involved in bullying—whether they are bullied, bully others, or see bullying—can be affected. It is important to support all kids involved to make sure the bullying doesn't continue and effects can be minimized.

- Listen and focus on the child. Learn what's been going on and show you want to help.
- Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.
- Know that kids who are bullied may struggle with talking about it. Reach out to a community support worker and ask for help.
- Give advice about what to do. This may involve role-playing and thinking through how the child might react if the bullying occurs again.
- Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child.
- Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe. Remember that changes to routine should be minimized. He or she is not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, ask a teacher to rearrange classroom sitting, or, change the child's walking route to school with the help of a close friend.
- Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.
- Never tell the child to ignore the bullying.
- Do not blame the child for being bullied. Even if he or she provoked the bullying, no one deserves to be bullied.
- Do not tell the child to physically fight back against the kid who is bullying. It could get the child hurt, or suspended from school.
- Consider asking a community Elder to facilitate a talking circle between the parents of children who are doing the bullying and the parents of the children who are being bullied.
- Don't assume a one-time intervention will make the bullying stop entirely. Follow-up. Show a commitment to making bullying stop. Because bullying is behavior that repeats or has the potential to be repeated, it takes consistent effort to ensure that it stops.

IF YOUR KID IS THE BULLY...



- Make sure your child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
- Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell your child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.
- Work with your child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied. For example:
 - Sometimes children bully to fit in. These kids can benefit from participating in positive activities. Involvement in sports and clubs can enable them to take leadership roles and make friends without feeling the need to bully.
 - Other times kids act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may be in need of additional support, such as mental health services.
 - Use consequences to teach. Consequences that involve learning or building empathy can help prevent future bullying.
 - Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences.
 - Zero tolerance or “three strikes, you're out” strategies don't work. Suspending or expelling students who bully does not reduce bullying behavior. Students and teachers may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or expulsion is the consequence.
 - Conflict resolution and peer mediation don't work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset kids who have been bullied.
 - Group treatment for students who bully doesn't work. Group members tend to reinforce bullying behavior in each other.
 - Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help your child to understand how what they do affects other people. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good friend.