

Bullying

What you can do



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What is bullying?

Bullying is a repeated act or threat that causes fear, distress, or harm to a person. Bullying can be physical, verbal, and/or psychological. (1)

Is calling a child a bad name bullying?

Yes, calling a person a bad name or word can be bullying if it is repeated and causes fear, harm, or distress to a child. (1)

Can bullying affect anyone?

Of course! Bullying is based on perceived differences including race, religion, disability, immigration status, country of origin, sexual orientation, physical appearance, and so on. Bullying harms not only the individual child but all others who witness or experience the incident. (1)

If a child is being bullied, what can adults do?

As an adult, there are several steps you can take to help a child if they are being bullied or witnessing bullying.

- Because bullying often occurs away from adult supervision, talking with a child about events that might occur with other children is important.
- Discussing what bullying is and if other children are being mean is an important place to start the conversation.
- When you talk to the child, keep a written list with details about each bullying incident and the names of other children involved.
- Encourage a child to inform a trusted adult at school about what is happening.
- Talk to the child's teacher and school staff about what is happening.
- Suggest anti-bullying training in the school.
- Encourage children to be a friend to those who are being bullied, whether they know them or not. Encourage them to become friends with other children rather than judging them. (1) (2) (3)

What can a child do?

- They can stand with children who are bullied and offer support as a friend or classmate.
- Children can seek out a trusted adult and let them know what's happening.
- They can get to know the other children and become friendly rather than judging them for their differences.
- Children can be an friend both in person and online. (2)

When I speak with school administrators, what should I say?

Speaking with administrators and teachers at a child's school is important.

- Bring the written list of details of the bullying incidents.
- Meet with the child's teacher. Ask for more information about what they are observing. Ask questions about how the child is getting along with their peers in class. Schedule a follow-up appointment. Stay in touch with how the situation progresses.
- If you have concerns about how bullying is affecting the child's mental health or behavior, contact the school's counselor or your family doctor.
- If you don't notice any improvement after meeting with the student's teacher or counselor, reach out to the school's principal.
- Keep detailed notes of all meetings with school officials for your records. (3)

What can you expect from school officials to address bullying problems?

- School officials should respond to a bullying problem right away.
- School officials shouldn't set up a meeting between the student being bullied and the aggressor. Bullying is based on a power difference and mediation isn't the correct approach.
- Officials should meet with each student individually to address the problem. They should make an action plan to keep the bullied child safe and should

equally voice their intolerance for bullying behavior that occurs in school. (3)

Learn more

- Anti-Defamation League - Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention <https://www.adl.org/what-we-do>
- Nebraska Appleseed [neappleseed.org](http://www.neappleseed.org)
- Cartoon Network: Stop Bullying, Speak Out <http://www.cartoonnetwork.com/stop-bullying/>
- MTV's Campaign "A Thin Line" <http://www.athinline.org/>
- Stop Bullying - Government of US [Stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)
- Bullying Prevention - Nebraska Department of Education <https://www.education.ne.gov/safety/bullying-prevention/>

Sources

1. "What Bullying Is and Is Not." *Anti-Defamation League Plains States Region*. <https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/table-talk/what-bullying-is-and-is-not>. Omaha, NE. Print.
2. "Be an Ally. Take Action. Stop Bullying." *Anti-Defamation League*. New York, NY. Print.
3. "Bullying: How to Talk With Educators at Your Child's School." <https://www.education.com/reference/article/talk-educators-about-bullying/>. *Stop Bullying Now!* 2009.