



Bullying

Why You Should be Concerned:

If your child is the victim

- A child's feeling of safety or lack of safety at school can affect their academic performance.
- As many as 160,000 students stay home each day because they are afraid of being bullied.
- Children who are bullied have lower self esteem, and higher rates of depression and suicide.

If your child is the bully

- Young people who bully are more likely to drop out of school, smoke, drink alcohol, steal and get into fights.
- 60% of boys who were bullies in middle school had at least one criminal conviction 10 years later, 40% had 3 convictions.

Know Your Child:

Signs of a bully

- Impulsive, hot-headed, dominant
- Easily frustrated
- Lacks empathy
- Has difficulty following rules
- Views violence in a positive way
- Gets into frequent fights
- Vandalizes or steals property

Signs of a victim

- Comes home with torn, damaged, or missing pieces of clothing, books or other belongings
- Unexplained bruises, cuts or scratches
- Afraid to go to school, walk to and from school, or ride the school bus
- Afraid to take part in organized activities with peers
- Appears sad, moody, teary or depressed when he or she comes home
- Appears anxious and/or suffers from low self-esteem

What You Can Do:

If your child is the victim

- Ask your child questions to stay in tune to the situation daily. For example:
 - How was the bus ride today?
 - Who did you sit with at lunch?
 - I notice that you have been feeling sick a lot and wanting to stay home, can you tell me about that?
 - Are kids making fun of you?
 - Has anyone been unkind or hurt you in any way?
 - Did the child hurt you on purpose?
 - Was it done more than once?
 - How did it make you feel? Angry, ashamed, afraid?
- Listen to your child.
- Be supportive and encouraging. Tell your child he is wonderful and try to build his self-esteem.
- Gather information about the bully.
- Provide information to your child. Help them understand that the bully's behavior is not okay.
- Explore intervention strategies. Contact your child's teacher. Ask the teacher to talk to other adults who interact with your child at school to see if they have observed students bullying your child.
- Take action. Bullying can have serious side effects.

If your child is the bully

- Explore your child's feelings to discover why they may be bullying.
- Listen to your child's answers without getting angry or voicing opinions.
- Be supportive. Educate your child about bullying by providing information on what behavior is inappropriate and not to be tolerated.
- Teach respect and compassion.
- Provide clear, consistent consequences for bullying.
- Work with the school to change your child's behavior.
- Role play.
- Encourage and reward good behavior.
- Seek help from professionals if your child is still behaving aggressively.
- Take action. Being a bully can have serious consequences.

If your child is the kid in the middle

- Ask your child questions often to stay in tune to situations they may observe daily.
- Encourage your child to have compassion for victims.
- Ask your child how they might encourage or help the victim.
- Reward your child for any action they may take based on your discussions.

Helpful Resources:

- iMOM.com
- www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov
- www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org

Visit iMOM.com

- For free information, ideas and inspiration for moms
- To sign up for our free daily email, the *Espresso Minute*
- To purchase our *Pillow Talk* interactive journal, a creative way to communicate with your child
- To purchase iMOM t-shirts and other resources