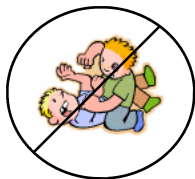




Bullying Proofing Your Child

There are two ways to bully proof your child - teach them the right ways to respond and help them avoid being and feeling victimized:

- Tell your child to report all incidents of bullying to a teacher, principal or trusted adult and to always tell you
- Encourage your child to ignore bullying and walk away
- Encourage them to use humour, which can diffuse the situation
- Tell them to be confident and let the bully know how they feel in a calm but firm voice
- Encourage them to walk to and from school in groups
- Have them leave expensive items at home
- Enroll your child in activities they enjoy to boost confidence and meet friends with common interests
- Teach your child the difference between reporting and tattling
- Praise your child as often as possible and reward them for even small jobs done well
- Love, love, love. Reinforce their uniqueness and positive qualities



Note: Never tell your child to fight or bully back! This can escalate a situation and sends the wrong message about how to deal with future difficult situations.

Important Resources

9-1-1

In any emergency situation, call 9-1-1 immediately.

Kids Help Phone
1-800-668-6868
www.kidshelpphone.ca

Use this number or visit this website for more counselling or information.

Bullying.Org
www.bullying.org

Visit this website to share your stories and learn more about bullying.

Parent Help Line
1-888-603-9100
www.parentsinfo.sympatico.ca

Offers parents a place to turn for counseling and parenting concerns 24 hours a day.



CPAT is a non profit organization mandated to educate and mobilize communities to create safer neighbourhoods through crime prevention initiatives.

For more information or to make a donation, contact our office.



Keeping Every Youth Safe

17 Fairmeadow Ave, Suite 206
Toronto, ON M2P 1W6
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Fax: 416-225-2340
Email: office@cpatoronto.org
Web: www.cpatoronto.org



For Parents

Keeping Every Youth Safe

TAKE A STAND!

*The Truth About Bullying:
The bully and the victim*



“One of the main reasons bullies bully is for power. In order to feel “bigger” they make others feel “smaller” to obtain/regain power and control.”



Bullying is a learned behaviour. Taking a stand against bullying includes listening to your child, watching their behaviour and most importantly, involves watching what you do and say too!

What is Bullying?

Bullying is any behaviour that harms or threatens to harm someone physically, emotionally or socially. A **bully** is someone who is mean and attacks other people with words or actions. They use strength or power to control someone by fear.

Physical bullying includes actions like kicking, punching, slapping, fighting, etc...

Verbal bullying includes behaviour like name calling, teasing, taunting, etc...

- this is the most popular, least noticeable and accounts for 70% of bullying

Emotional, psychological and social bullying includes behaviour like intimidation, exclusion, shunning, pressure, spreading rumours etc...

Why do bullies bully?

Bullying is a learned behaviour. Whether the learning takes place through friends, family, television, or video games, it is an acquired behaviour whereby aggression is thought to be an appropriate way to deal with one's feelings.

What can happen to bullies and victims if the behaviour continues?

Victim - Psychological reactions (depression, anxiety), poor concentration, academic difficulties, suicide

Bully - Drop out of school, increased aggression, gang involvement, drug use, relational violence/abuse

The Bully

The following is a list of a few of the reasons why youth bully:

- they've been bullied / abused elsewhere
- they're being pressured to bully
- they're having problems at home
- they're jealous, lonely, sad, want attention or have low self-esteem
- POWER

Signs that your child may be a bully:

- enjoys feeling powerful and in control
- uses aggression as a means to get what he/she wants
- has new items that you did not purchase
- has difficulty empathizing
- has difficulty admitting to unacceptable behaviour and/or apologizing
- relishes winning and *despises* losing

How to help.

- Do not judge! Talk to your child about his/her behaviour and probe for the root problem
- Talk to the teachers, principals, parents and other individuals involved
- Tell your child that violence and aggression is not acceptable behaviour and is not tolerated
- Create and follow through with real consequences for bullying behaviour
- Teach your child respect, empathy and how to accept others' differences
- Examine your example - check your own attitudes and beliefs be the best role model

The Victim

What characteristics are consistent of victims of bullying?

Victims of bullying usually have common characteristics that sometimes lead to repeated bullying in different settings.

- low self confidence / self-esteem
- scared, shy or timid demeanour

Signs that your child may be a victim:

- unusual sadness, quietness, withdrawal and/or frequent crying
- changes in personality
- lacks a desire to go to school
- lost or missing property
- failing grades
- unexplained injuries
- nightmares



How to help.

- Be open with your child about noticing their new attitude
- Listen to their stories and believe them - parents often dismiss bullying as normal childhood conflicts
- Work with the school to find a solution to the problem
- Create a loving, non-judgmental environment for your child to be open about his/her feelings
- Use stories and anecdotes to encourage their openness and demonstrate empathy