

## What is bullying?

Bullying is a problem that needs serious attention. In the past, it was thought to be part of growing up. Children were told to stay away from a bully. Bullying includes things like making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally. **Bullying** can have a lasting affect on the victim as well as the bully.

## Who are they?

Both boys and girls are affected by bullying. Boys tend to be more physical. They may hit, punch or kick. It may lead to beatings with serious injuries or the use of weapons. Girls more often use emotional or social means like rumors, name-calling or rejection. Internet web sites, social media and texting are also used to bully. This is called cyber bullying.

## What effects does it have on the victims?

Children who are bullied have real suffering. It can cause problems with social and emotional growth, school and health. Children who are bullied may feel they deserve to be teased. They may be depressed, have anxiety issues and may be afraid to go to school. Their friends may be afraid of being bullied. This makes it hard for the victims to make or keep friends at school.

## What effects does it have on the bullies?

Bullies can have long-term problems. Bullying during childhood may lead to serious school, social, emotional and legal problems. They may face social isolation, peer rejection and suicidal thoughts. Bullies also are at risk for criminal convictions and alcohol abuse in adulthood.

## What can parents do?

- Be open and direct with bullies.
- Make it clear that bullying is not okay. Teach children to report bullying when they see it.
- Ask your child to include children who often are left out.
- Teach children to solve conflict peacefully.
- Support the victim.
- Reward teamwork.
- Get involved when you see bullying.
- If bullying happens at school, talk with school staff. Ask the school to create a safety plan.
- Help angry children learn ways to manage their emotions.
- Watch your child's use of technology.



### What can parents do? continued

- Teach your child how to be assertive with words.
- Help children develop their own talents. This can help them feel powerful.
- If your child is a victim, teach ways to stay bully-free:
  - Stay away from bullies.
  - Tell a friend or teacher.
  - Use humor or assertive statements to calm situations.
  - Travel in groups.
  - Run away when in danger.

### Where can I get more information?

If you are feeling hopeless or helpless or know someone that is, please call the LIFELINE at [1-800-273-TALK \(8255\)](tel:1-800-273-TALK).

[www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov) This website has resources for youth, parents and teachers. Every state has policies or laws. Find out how your state refers to bullying in its laws. Find out what they require schools and districts to do.

<https://bit.ly/2oJSZWS> The Parents Act Now website has a series of videos on the topic of bullying, including ways to handle different types of bullying that may affect your child or teen, whether at school, at home, or in the community.

**ALERT:** Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

**This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.**