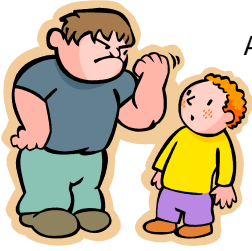


Bullying



A big, tough kid stops a smaller kid on his way to school and threatens to hurt him unless he hands over his homework. The popular girls at school won't let anyone sit at their lunch table except their friends. These two bullying scenarios and others happen more often than most adults realize. [Seventy-four percent](#) of 8 to 11-year-olds say teasing and bullying happen at their school.

But what exactly is bullying?

Bullying is:

- fighting, threatening, name calling, teasing, or excluding someone repeatedly and over time
- an imbalance of power, such as size or popularity
- physical, social, AND emotional harm
- when someone is willing to hurt another person to get what he or she wants

Many parents don't think that bullying is as big of a problem as weapons or drug use but its effects can be severe and long lasting. Every day, nearly 160,000 children miss school because they are scared of bullying, according to the [National Education Association](#). Bullying doesn't only negatively affect its victims but also the bullies themselves.

Kids who are bullied are more likely to:

- do poorly in school
- have low self-esteem
- be depressed
- turn to violent behavior to protect themselves or get revenge on their bullies

Kids who bully are more likely to:

- do poorly in school
- smoke and drink alcohol
- commit crimes in the future

Parents can play a central role to preventing bullying and stopping it when it happens. Here are a few things you can do.

- Teach kids to solve problems without using violence and praise them when they do.
- Give children positive feedback when they behave well to help their build self-esteem. Help give them the self confidence to stand up for what they believe in.
- Ask your children about their day and listen to them talk about school, social events, their classmates, and any problems they have.
- Take bullying seriously. Many kids are embarrassed to be bullied. You may only have one chance to step in and help.
- If you see any bullying stop it right away, even if your child is the one bullying.
- Encourage your child to help others who need it.
- Don't bully your children or bully others in front of them. Many times kids who are bullied at home react by bullying other kids. If your children see you hit, ridicule, or gossip about someone else they are also more likely to do so themselves.
- Support bully prevention programs in your child's school. If your school doesn't have one, consider starting one up with other parents, teachers, and concerned adults.



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