

What Every Parent Should Know About Bullying,

And other useful information

Shaftsbury Elementary School
Counseling Office

Bullying?

Normal peer conflict exists at all ages. Aggression and hurtful remarks are a part of that conflict; they do not necessarily mean that a bully problem exists. Bullying can be recognized by the following social interactions:

Bullies and victims have different emotions:

- ① The bully shows little or no emotion and will say that the victim provoked or deserved the aggression; he or she has little or no caring for the victim.
- ② The victim is typically very upset. He or she may withdraw, cry, or become very angry

Characteristics of a bully:

- ☞ They typically value the rewards aggression can bring
- ☞ They typically lack compassion or guilt
- ☞ They like to be in charge, to dominate, and to win in all situations
- ☞ They typically have parents (or other role models) who model aggression
- ☞ They think in unrealistic ways ("I should always get what I want")

Normal Peer Conflict	Bullying
Equal power or friends	Imbalance of Power
Happens occasionally	Repeated negative actions
Accidental	Purposeful
Not serious	Serious w/ threat of physical or emotional harm
Equal emotional reaction	Strong emotional reaction from victim and little or no emotional reaction from bully
Not seeking power or attention	Seeking power, control, and attention
Not trying to get something	Attempt to gain material things
Remorse-will take responsibility	No remorse-blames victim
Effort to solve problem	No effort to solve problem

As parents, you play an important role in helping our school deal with bullying.

Please:

- ☞ Watch for signs that your child is involved with bullying, either as a victim or a bully
- ☞ Never ignore your instincts
- ☞ Contact the school if you are concerned
- ☞ Do not allow bully behavior at home
- ☞ Teach your children how to resolve conflicts without using aggression

If your child is being bullied:

- ❶ Talk to them calmly about what is happening
- ❷ Find out what happened, who hurt them, where it happened, if it has happened before, and if they reported it to their teacher or principal
- ❸ Praise him or her for talking to you about it
- ❹ Encourage your child to tell a teacher and yourself if it happens again
- ❺ Arrange a talk with your child's teacher to discuss ways to resolve the problem

Advice For Parents

- ➡ Take an active interest in your child's social life, discuss friendships, playtime, and bus rides
- ➡ If you find out that your child is being bullied, inform the school
- ➡ Keep a written record if the bullying persists
- ➡ If the problem occurs outside of school, contact the police

Do not encourage your child to hit back, instead encourage your child to recruit friends. A child who has friends around them is less likely to be bullied.

When you are made aware of the fact that your child is being bullied, it is natural and right to want to protect them.

It is always helpful to go to your child's teacher.

When talking to the teacher, remember these important tips:

- ↗ Remain calm and collected
- ↗ Remember that the teacher may not be aware that your child is being bullied
- ↗ Remember that the teacher may have already heard of a different version of the situation
- ↗ Tell the teacher as much detailed information as possible about the situation, such as names of the children present and where it happened
- ↗ Ask if there is anything you can do to help resolve the situation

Here are some great listening tips that will help your son “open Up”*

- ✓ Connect with him through an activity
- ✓ Avoid teasing and shaming
- ✓ Share your experiences
- ✓ Really listen to what he is saying
- ✓ Give him regular, undivided attention
- ✓ Encourage him to express a wide range of emotions
- ✓ Express your love as openly as you might with a girl

*William S. Pollack; From Real Boys and Real Voices

Ways to Beat Prejudice in Your Home

- ↘ Read and encourage your children to read books that promote understanding of different cultures
- ↘ Speak out against jokes and slurs that target people or groups.

- ✍ Be knowledgeable; provide as much accurate information as possible to reject harmful myths and stereotypes
- ✍ Be mindful of your language; avoid stereotypical remarks and challenge those made by others

Parts of this brochure are from Bullywatch: A Primer for Everyone, published by Bay-Arenac ISD, 2001