

Bullying: Guidelines for Students

If you are being bullied...

Reach Out

- Tell an adult. Sometimes you may have to tell more than one trusted adult.
- Ask your friends to help you. There is safety in numbers.
- Practice what to say the next time you're bullied with your parents, teachers or friends.

Be Cool in the Moment

- Stay calm and confident. Don't show the bully that you're sad or mad.
- Ignore the bully and walk away.
- Remember: Fighting back can make bullying worse.

Change the School Community

- Work with others to stop bully behavior; your whole school will benefit.
- Remember: A lot of kids have to cope with bullying. You are not alone. No one deserves to be bullied.

If you witness bullying...

Interrupt It

- Stand next to, or speak up for, the person being bullied.
- Ask the bully to stop.
- Comfort the person being bullied and offer friendship.

Get Help

- Walk away and get help.
- Find an adult who can intervene.

If you are the bully...

Make a Commitment to Change

- Talk to an adult, like a teacher or parent, about how to get along with others.
- Ask a friend to help you stop your bully behavior.
- Apologize to the kids you have bullied.

Focus on Empathy and Responsibility

- Think about what it feels like to be bullied -- would you want to be treated that way?
- Before you speak, think about whether your words will help or hurt another student.

Adapted from "Misdirections in Bullying Prevention and Intervention," by [Stop Bullying Now!](#)

Why Do Some Children Become Bullies?

Most bullying behavior develops in response to multiple factors in the environment—at home, school and within the peer group. There is no one cause of bullying. Common contributing factors include:

Family factors: The frequency and severity of bullying is related to the amount of adult supervision that children receive—bullying behavior is reinforced when it has no or inconsistent consequences. Additionally, children who observe parents and siblings exhibiting bullying behavior, or who are themselves victims, are likely to develop bullying behaviors. When children receive negative messages or physical punishment at home, they tend to develop negative self concepts and expectations, and may therefore attack before they are attacked—bullying others gives them a sense of power and importance.

School factors: Because school personnel often ignore bullying, children can be reinforced for intimidating others. Bullying also thrives in an environment where students are more likely to receive negative feedback and negative attention than in a positive school climate that fosters respect and sets high standards for interpersonal behavior.

Peer group factors: Children may interact in a school or neighborhood peer group that advocates, supports, or promotes bullying behavior. Some children may bully peers in an effort to “fit in,” even though they may be uncomfortable with the behavior.