

What is Bullying?

Bullying is a widespread and serious problem that can happen anywhere. It is not a phase children have to go through, it is not "just messing around", and it is not something to grow out of. Bullying can cause serious and lasting harm.

Although definitions of bullying vary, most agree that bullying involves:

- **Imbalance of Power:** people who bully use their power to control or harm and the people being bullied may have a hard time defending themselves
- **Intent to Cause Harm:** actions done by accident are not bullying; the person bullying has a goal to cause harm
- **Repetition:** incidents of bullying happen to the same person over and over by the same person or group

Types of Bullying

Bullying can take many forms. Examples include:

- **Verbal:** name-calling, teasing
- **Social:** spreading rumors, leaving people out on purpose, breaking up friendships
- **Physical:** hitting, punching, shoving
- **Cyberbullying:** using the Internet, mobile phones or other digital technologies to harm others

An act of bullying may fit into more than one of these groups.

Facts and Statistics:

- It is estimated that 160,000 children miss school every day due to fear of attack or intimidation by other students.
- American schools harbor approximately 2.1 million bullies and 2.7 million of their victims.
- 1 in 7 Students in Grades K-12 is either a bully or a victim of bullying.
- 56% of students have personally witnessed some type of bullying at school.
- According to bullying statistics, 1 out of every 10 students who drops out of school does so because of repeated bullying.
- Harassment and bullying have been linked to 75% of school-shooting incidents

Recognizing the Warning Signs

There are many warning signs that could indicate that someone is involved in bullying, either by bullying others or by being bullied. However, these warning signs may indicate other issues or problems, as well.

- They are ashamed of the bullying.
- They are afraid of retaliation if they tell an adult.
- They don't think anyone can or will help them.
- They believe that it is part of the lie that bullying is a necessary part of growing up

Being Bullied

- Comes home with damaged or missing clothing or other belongings
- Reports losing items such as books, electronics, clothing, or jewelry
- Has unexplained injuries
- Complains frequently of headaches, stomachaches, or feeling sick
- Has trouble sleeping or has frequent bad dreams
- Has changes in eating habits
- Hurts themselves
- Are very hungry after school from not eating their lunch
- Runs away from home
- Loses interest in visiting or talking with friends
- Is afraid of going to school or other activities with peers
- Loses interest in school work or begins to do poorly in school
- Appears sad, moody, angry, anxious or depressed when they come home
- Talks about suicide
- Feels helpless
- Often feels like they are not good enough
- Blames themselves for their problems
- Suddenly has fewer friends
- Avoids certain places
- Acts differently than usual

Bullying Others

- Becomes violent with others
- Gets into physical or verbal fights with others
- Gets sent to the principal's office or detention a lot
- Has extra money or new belongings that cannot be explained
- Is quick to blame others
- Will not accept responsibility for their actions

- Has friends who bully others
- Needs to win or be best at everything

Being a bystander is not the answer!!

- The bystanders aid and abet the bully through acts of omission. They stand idly by or look away, or they can join in with the bully.
- They are at risk of becoming bullies themselves.

Empower bystanders to stand-up for the person being bullied

1. Help them see that their silence makes the aggressive students more powerful and contributes to the harm done to the target.
2. Model positive behavior for them through our own actions...could be role played
3. Protect bystanders from retaliation of the bully