

What Can Parents Do to Stop Bullying?

(Stop the Bullying by Ken Rigby and Partners for Safe Schools by the Centre for the Study and Prevention of Violence)

Is your child being bullied:

- Comes home from school upset, missing things, has physical marks on them
- Does not bring peers home, seldom spends time at peers' houses
- Seems isolated from peers
- Has headaches, poor appetite (especially in the morning)
- Shows mood changes that are unexpected
- Is anxious, unhappy, distressed
- Takes a lot of money to school (perhaps for the bully)
- Walks an illogical route to school
- Losing sleep, losing interest in school work
- Seems depressed, talks of suicide
- Other symptoms could include:
 - ❖ Weaker than most
 - ❖ Body anxiety
 - ❖ Cry or become upset easily
 - ❖ Afraid of being hurt, joining a team
 - ❖ Poor self-esteem, cautious, sensitive, quiet, shy

What can parents do:

- Praise and encourage your child
- Encourage them to tell you what is happening
- Report it- do not ignore it
- Motivate your child to join a club or team they are interested in
- Seek help from the school, family doctor
- Maintain contact with the school, child's teacher(s) to stay on top of the situation

If your child is the bully what can parents do:

- Children who bully increase their risk in engaging in other forms of antisocial behaviour
- Keep an eye and ear out if your child hits, kicks, pushes or fights others
- Keep an eye and ear out if your child taunts, threatens, name calls, teases, spreads rumours, slanders others or makes faces, excludes, makes obscene gestures or manipulates friendships
- Possible bullies may:
 - ❖ Be physically stronger
 - ❖ Have a bad temper
 - ❖ Are defiant and aggressive
 - ❖ Have negative attitudes toward school
 - ❖ Talk themselves out of situation easily
 - ❖ Have difficulty conforming to rules
 - ❖ Like to dominate and control friends and family

This behaviour is unacceptable and doing nothing implies that it is acceptable. Some false beliefs about bullying include:

- Boys will be boys
- Kids will be kids
- Bullying is a part of growing up
- Sticks and stones may break your bones, but names will never hurt you
- What did you do to make them/him/her do that to you?
- Just toughen up
- Hit him back

Parents of bullies can do something:

- Let the child know that their behaviour is unacceptable
- Develop clear rules and boundaries
- Monitor and supervise your child's activities
- Set a good example
- Build on your child's talents
- Maintain contact with your child's school
- Seek help from the school or other agencies if need be