



Say "NO" To Bullying

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What is bullying?

Bullying involves a power imbalance, intent to harm, a distressed target, and repeated negative actions. Almost 30% of youth in the United States (or over 5.7 million) are estimated to be involved in bullying as either a bully, a target of bullying, or both. In a recent national survey of students in grades 6-10, 13% reported bullying others, 11% reported being the target of bullies, and another 6% said that they bullied others and were bullied themselves. Bullying is a national problem in public schools.

Who is at risk?

Bullying can happen to anyone, but a Utah survey suggests that children with disabilities are easy targets and need to learn to respond effectively to unfriendly teasing attempts. Children who talk, act, or think differently are frequent targets of bullying and children with autism can be particularly vulnerable to specific bullying situations because of a general lack of social awareness.



What does bullying look like?

Saying hurtful and unpleasant things, making fun of others, using mean and hurtful nicknames, completely overlooking someone, deliberately excluding someone from a group of friends, hitting, kicking, pulling hair, or pushing, telling lies, spreading false rumors, sending mean notes, or trying to get other students to dislike another person. One anti-bullying website describes 5 types of bullying.

- ❖ **Social** (leaving someone out of a game or group on purpose):
"I was bullied in my old school. It was hard. I was left out. They would not play with me. They chatted with each other but not to me. That made me feel sad because I wanted to be friends with them." – Anna, 14
- ❖ **Verbal** (name-calling):
*"It depends really; there are some people I don't like. I don't think I get bullied as such...I'm not really sure if I get bullied or not. I know people make fun of me and call me names" *Mikey, 15*
- ❖ **Physical** (punching , pushing, pinching, hitting):
"It's the same group of people just annoy me all the time. They do a range of different stuff-chucking stuff at me, paper and stuff in class...not usually in break time...Happy slapping me once, that got seriously dealt with...They got detention and badly shouted at." Hugh, 14

BULLYING FACT SHEET

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- ❖ **Extortion** (stealing someone's money or toys):
"It just seemed like every time I got something new she would want to be my friend, it would disappear. After I would hear her laughing and talking about me, but I didn't know how to stop it."
*Jenny, 12

- ❖ **Cyber bullying** (using computers, the Internet, mobile phones, etc.. to bully, threaten, make fun of or intentionally cause harm)
"One night, my daughters phone received a text message. I about died when I read the threat that was on it. She said it was no big deal that kids do it all the time, but it was a very big deal to me!"
*Suzi, 37

What are the effects on an individual that is bullied?

Bullying can affect self-esteem, mental health, relationships, social skills, school attendance, physical health, education and concentration. Students who are bullied may appear anxious, insecure, and cautious, sick or worried and may have a difficulty sleeping or engage in self harm. They rarely defend themselves or retaliate. These effects can last into adulthood with a higher risk of depression and a lower self esteem than other adults.

What can you do?

Learn as much as you can about bullying. Talk to your children about bullying and your expectations of their behavior. Be involved in their lives. Be watchful of the signs of bullying. Teach them what bullying might look like. Role play with them and give them strategies to deal with a bully. Take immediate action if you suspect bullying. Encourage your school/community to take action. When there is a school-wide commitment to end bullying, it can be reduced by up to 50%.

*Name has been changed.

References:

- UPDC, The Special Educator, February 2008, September 2004, December 2000
- www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov
- www.bullying.org
- www.safeyouth.org
- www.wikipedia.com

Bullying Fast Facts

- Bullying is the most common form of violence; between 15 percent and 30 percent of students are bullies or victims. Some 3.7 million youth engage in it, and more than 3.2 million are victims of bullying annually.
- Since 1992, there have been more than 250 violent deaths in schools, and bullying has been a factor in virtually every school shooting.
- Direct physical bullying increases in elementary school, peaks in middle school, and declines in high school. Verbal abuse, on the other hand, remains constant.
- More than two-thirds of students believe that schools respond poorly to bullying, with a high percentage of students believing that adult help is infrequent and ineffective.
- 25 percent of teachers see nothing wrong with bullying or putdowns and consequently intervene in only 4 percent of bullying incidents.

(Cohn & Cantor, 2003; Council on Scientific Affairs, American Medical Association, 2002)

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