

What Parents Need to Know About Bullying

Parent Workshop

Presented by Gretchen Vassar, School Counselor



4 Corners Warm Up Activity

- Bullying can start in pre-school.
- There should be a family list of rules for proper etiquette guidelines for your child's cyber communication with friends.
- Bullying/teasing isn't serious, it's simply a matter of "kids being kids."

Bullying - Fact or Fiction?

1. Nearly one-third of American teens are involved in bullying.
True: In a recent survey, 13% admit to bullying, 11% admit to being bullied, and 6% have been bullied and also bully others.
2. Less than 10% of American teens admit to bullying others.
False: See above
3. Students who are bullied in school are usually attentive students with good attendance.
False: Students targeted by bullies sometimes avoid school or have trouble concentrating. They sometime suffer from depression and anxiety.
4. Most students who bully are insecure.
False: Studies show that most bullies have confidence and high self-esteem.
5. Contrary to stereotypes, male bullies are not usually bigger and physically stronger than their peers.
False: Male bullies are usually bigger and stronger than their victims.
6. Students who witness bullying often refuse to remain friends with the victim and feel guilty for not reporting the incident.
True: Witnessing an act of bullying has negative consequences even if you are not directly involved.
7. Bullies have trouble making friends.
False: Bullies seem to make friends easily, particularly with other students who are aggressive and may join them in bullying.
8. Bullies do poorly in school compared to others who do not bully.
True: The problem behaviors associated with bullying include impulsiveness, disliking school and getting in trouble often.
9. Most bullies discontinue violent or aggressive behavior in adulthood.
False: 60% of bullies have at least one criminal conviction because the behavior carries over into adulthood.
10. If you are being bullied it's best to handle it alone.
False: Putting an end to bullying requires a commitment from everyone in a school, including teachers, custodians, students, administrators, cafeteria workers and crossing guards. You should seek adult intervention and try to stay among friends if you are being bullied.

Sources: www.safeyouth.org; www.tolerance.org

What is Bullying?

Bullying is...

As defined by state law SHB 1444 and ISD policy 3214

- **An intentional written, verbal or physical act, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by any characteristic such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, or other distinguishing characteristics, when the intentional act:**
 - (a) Physically harms a student or damages his/her property;**
 - (b) Substantially interferes with the student's education; or**
 - (c) Is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or**
 - (d) Or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school**

Simply stated, bullying...

- **Hurtful words or actions**
- **Deliberate**
- **Repeatedly occurs**
- **Occurs in a relationship in which there is an imbalance of power**

(May include face-to-face, subtle and indirect ways, texting, IMing, Facebook, exclusion, etc.)

3 Criteria for Bullying Incident:

- 1) Intentional harm – this means the person “did it on purpose”
- 2) Carried out repeatedly – it is not just a one time incident, it happens again and again
- 3) Relationship where there is an imbalance of power – one person is “calling all the shots”

The 3 types of Bullying

The three types with examples

Physical Bullying	Verbal Bullying	Relationship Bullying
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Hitting, Kicking, or Pushing someone▪ Stealing, Hiding or ruining someone's things▪ Making someone do something he or she doesn't want to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Name calling▪ Teasing▪ Insulting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Refusing to talk to someone/ Excluding▪ Spreading lies and rumors about someone▪ Making someone feel left out or rejected/ Excluding

Gender may make a difference.

Bullying is NOT...

- A normal childhood activity
- A rite of passage
- The target's fault



Differentiating Bullying from Normal Peer Conflict/Mean Behavior

Normal conflict/mean behavior

- Equal power or are friends
- Happens occasionally
- Accidental
- Not serious
- Equal emotional reaction
- Not seeking power
- Remorse-will take responsibility
- Effort to solve the problem
- Teasing

Bullying

- Imbalance of power
- Repeated negative actions
- Intentional
- Physical or emotional harm
- Unequal emotional reaction
- Seeking control/material things
- No remorse-blames target
- No effort to solve the problem

The Roles of Bullying

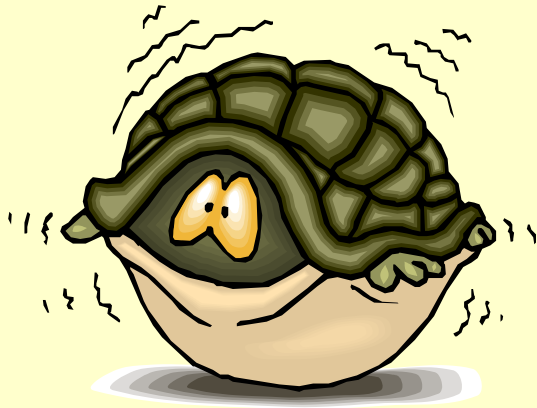
- **Bully Behavior-** Child exhibiting bullying behavior. Ex. Hitting, pushing, shoving, threatening, hurtful teasing, manipulating, spreading rumors, name calling, excluding, eye rolling, controlling, etc.
- **Target/Victim-** The target is the child who another child is exhibiting bully behavior toward. The victim is the child continually being bullied. Don't let the target become the victim!
- **Bystander-** The person watching or seeing the bullying happen. Choosing to ignore the bullying is the same as supporting it.

The Target Who Has Become The Victim: Signs and Symptoms



The Victim

Signs and Symptoms



- Appears afraid or reluctant to go to school in the morning, complaining repeatedly of headaches or stomach aches.
- Chooses an “illogical” route for going to and from school.
- Bed wetting
- Refusing to participate in extra-curricular activities.
- Has bad dreams or cries in his sleep.
- Suddenly change the way he/she talks: “I’m a loser, or a former friend “is a jerk”.
- Appears sad or depressed, or shows unexpected mood shifts and sudden outbursts of temper.
- Seems socially isolated.
- Over or under eating

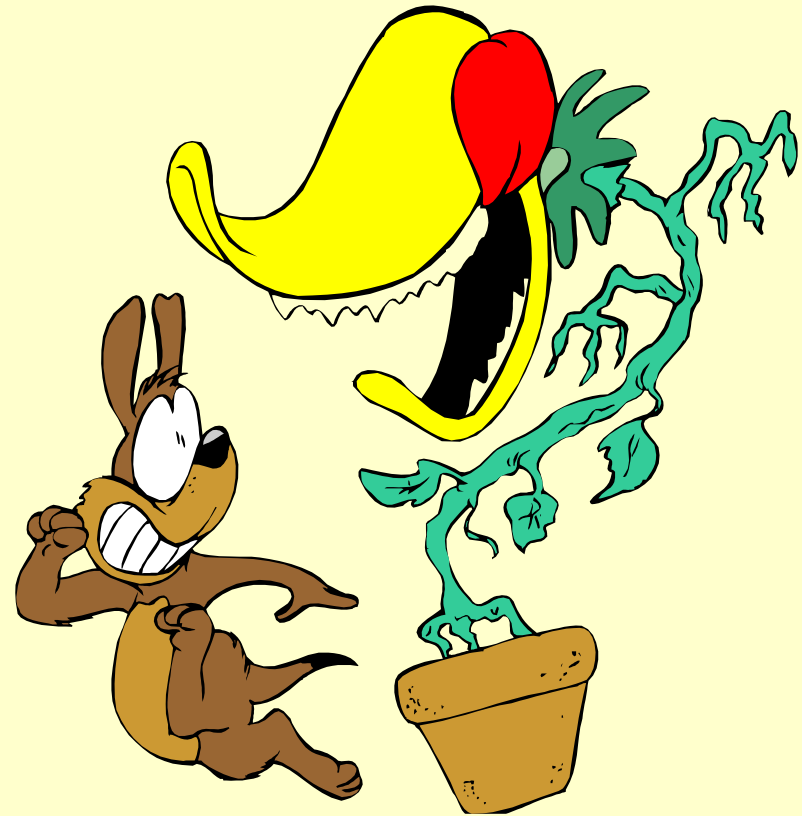


The Child Exhibiting Bully
Behavior

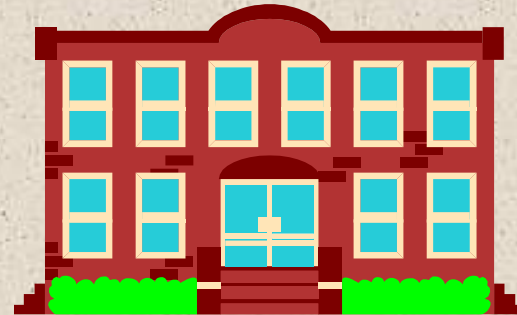
The Bully

Signs and Symptoms

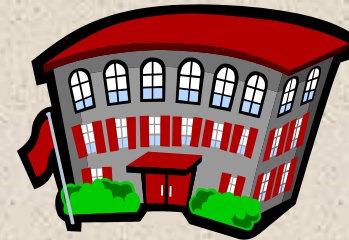
- Has a strong need to dominate and subdue others.
- Asserts himself, uses power and threats to get his own way.
- Intimidates his siblings or kids in the neighborhood.
- Brags about his actual or imagined superiority over other kids.
- Is hot tempered, easily angered, impulsive, and has low frustration tolerance.
- Has difficulty conforming to rules and tolerating advice.
- Oppositional, defiant, and aggressive behavior toward adults, teacher and parents.
- Gender can make a difference



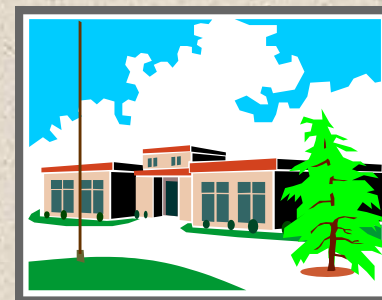
- Bullying begins in the elementary school ...



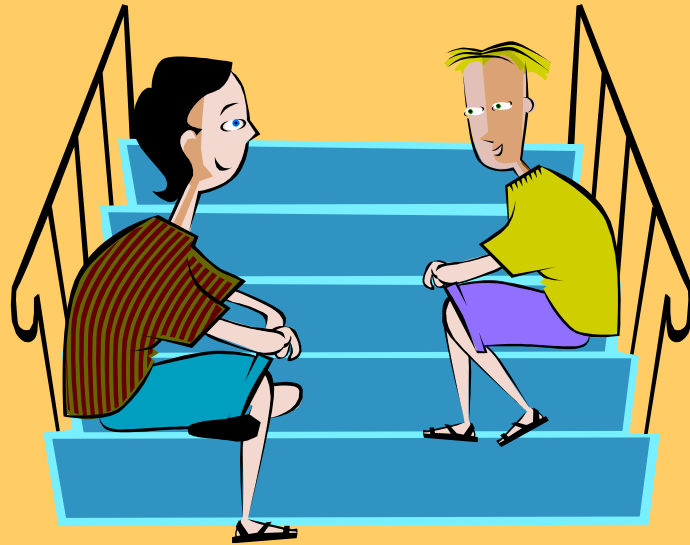
- Peaks in the middle school...



- Usually lessens in senior high.
However, extreme cases
occasionally can become more
severe in senior high.



What to do if you are a parent of
“the victim”...



How to Help Your Child



- Listen to your child with your ears and eyes.
- Give your child space to talk.
 - “I’m so sorry. That must be really painful.”
- Keep communication open.
- Help your child problem solve.
 - Role play
 - Practice techniques
- Give your child lines that she/he can use.
- Remind your child that if they are a witness or a bystander, they are encouraging the behavior to continue.
- Get help by the teacher, counselor, or administrator if needed.

Strategies to Teach your Child

Self Talk



Teach your child to say
to him/herself things
like,

“I can handle this”

“I can walk away”

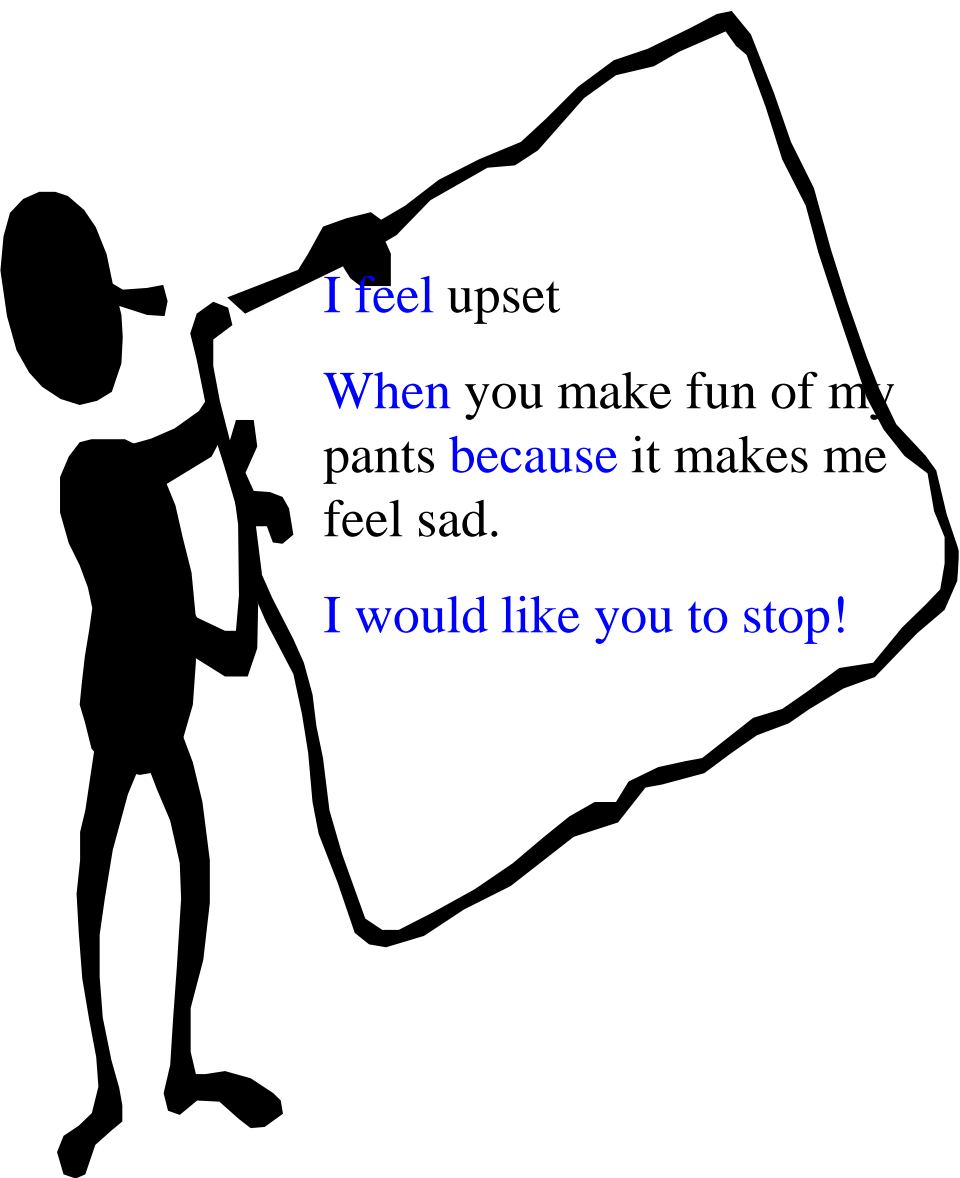
“This isn’t true”

“I am a good person”

Ignore

- Displays of anger or tears often invite more teasing.
- Teach your child to not look at the bully and walk away.
- Teach him/her to pretend that nothing has happened.
- If need be, say nothing and walk toward an adult.
- This strategy does not work with prolonged bullying.





Use I- Messages

This allows your child to assertively and effectively express their feelings.

I feel _____
(emotion)

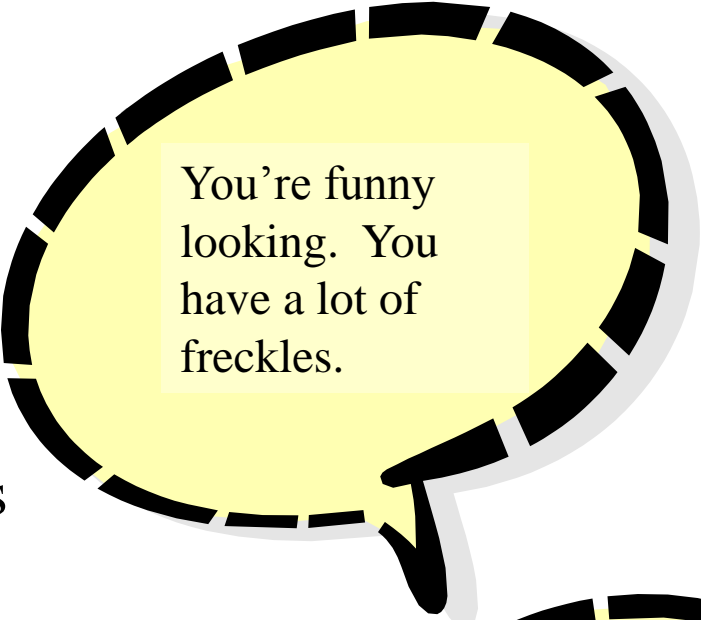
When _____
(action)

Because _____
(reason)

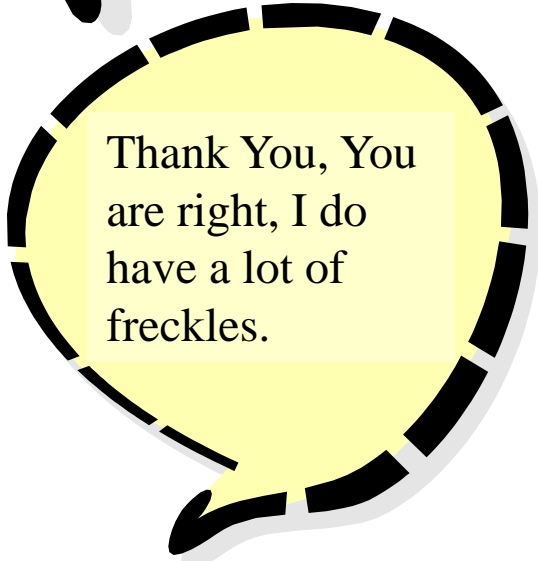
What you want to happen?

Agree

- Agreeing with the bully is one of the easiest ways to handle an insult.
- This usually eliminates the feeling of wanting to hide or cry.
- Also no one can fight with someone who agrees with them.

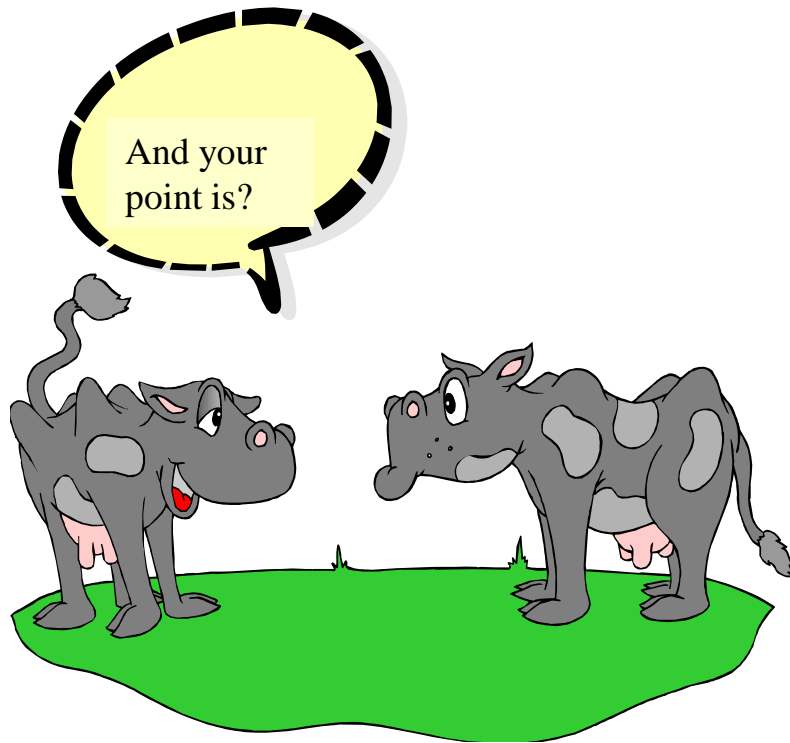


You're funny looking. You have a lot of freckles.



Thank You, You are right, I do have a lot of freckles.

Give a Standard Answer



Teach your child statements to use 'in the moment.' This way when your child is caught off guard, he/she will have something to say.

Try something like:

- "So."
- "...And your point is?"
- "Thanks for your opinion."
- Smile and shrug shoulders without making a comment at all.

Use Compliments

- Using compliments may throw the bully off and he/she won't know what to say.
- If your child is being teased about the way he runs Respond with ...
“ I agree, I can't run as fast as you. You are a good runner.”



Use Humor



- Laughing can often turn a hurtful situation into a funny one.
- Someone says, “That is the ugliest jacket I’ve ever seen.”
- Response: “Thank You, my mom and I tried very hard to find the ugliest jacket. I’ll tell her we did it.”

Ask For Help

- At times, seeking help from an adult is the only thing that can be done and should be done.
- Talk to your child about a safe person



Tell An Adult

Tattling

is trying to get
someone

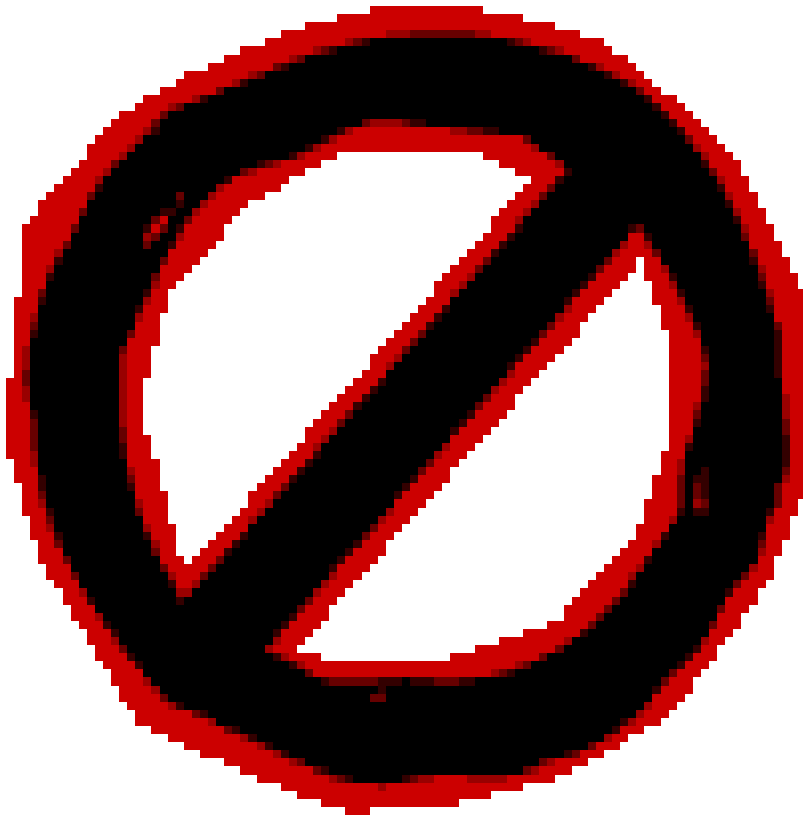
into
trouble.

Telling

is trying to get
someone

out of
trouble.
(or help them)

Please Do Not ...

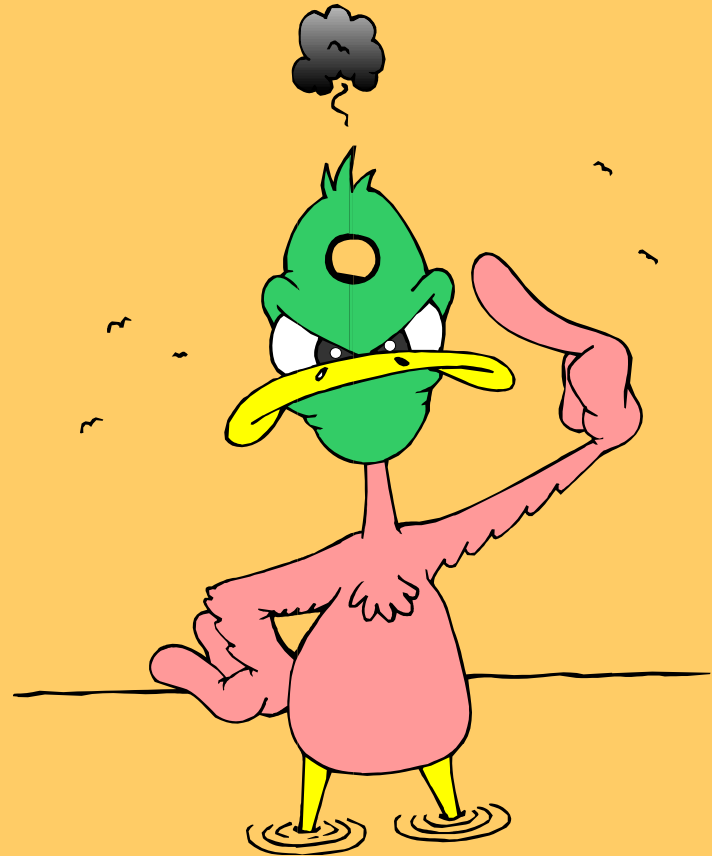


- Confront the bully or the bully's parents.
- Tell your child to “get in there and fight.”
- Blame your child. It's not their fault.
- Promise to keep the bullying a secret.

What to Do If Your Child is acting like the Bully...



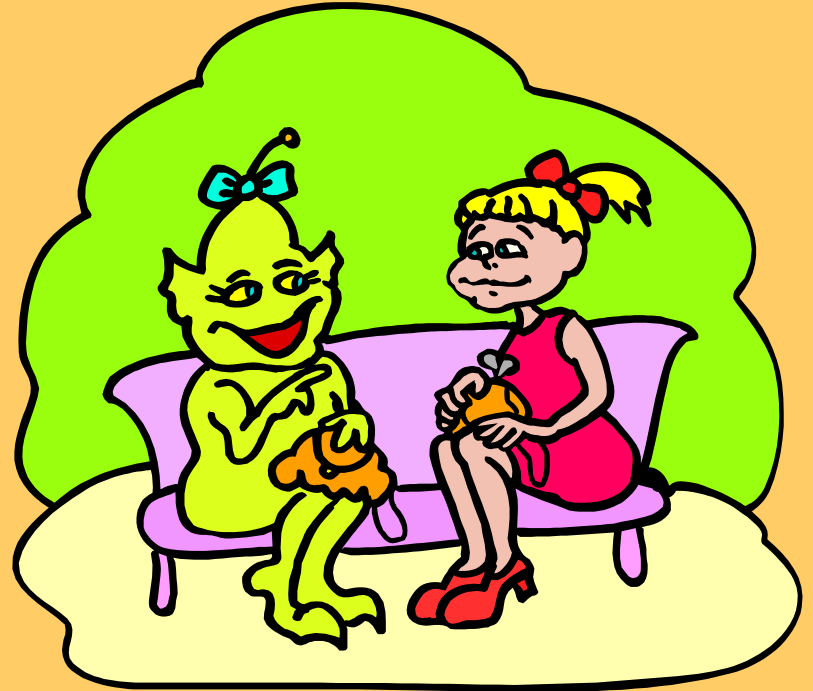
**Teach your child to
recognize and
express emotions
nonviolently or
non-aggressively.**

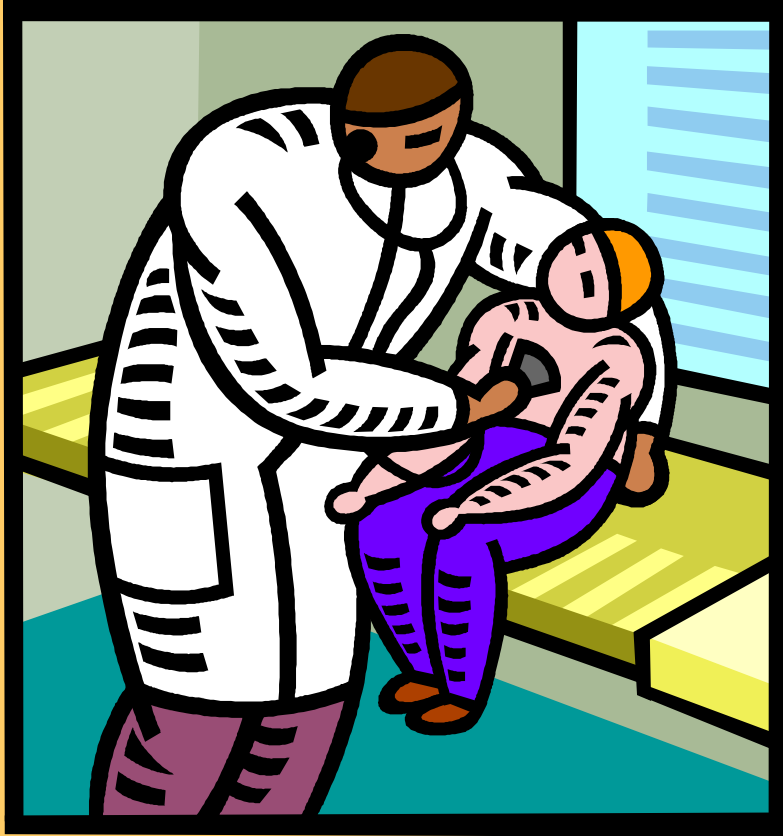


Teach Conflict Resolution

- Teach your child how to use conflict management skills.
- Use things such as:
 - Walk away
 - Talking it out
 - Exercise
 - Cool Down
 - Counting

**Emphasize talking
out the issue
rather than
fighting or
saying hurtful
remarks.**

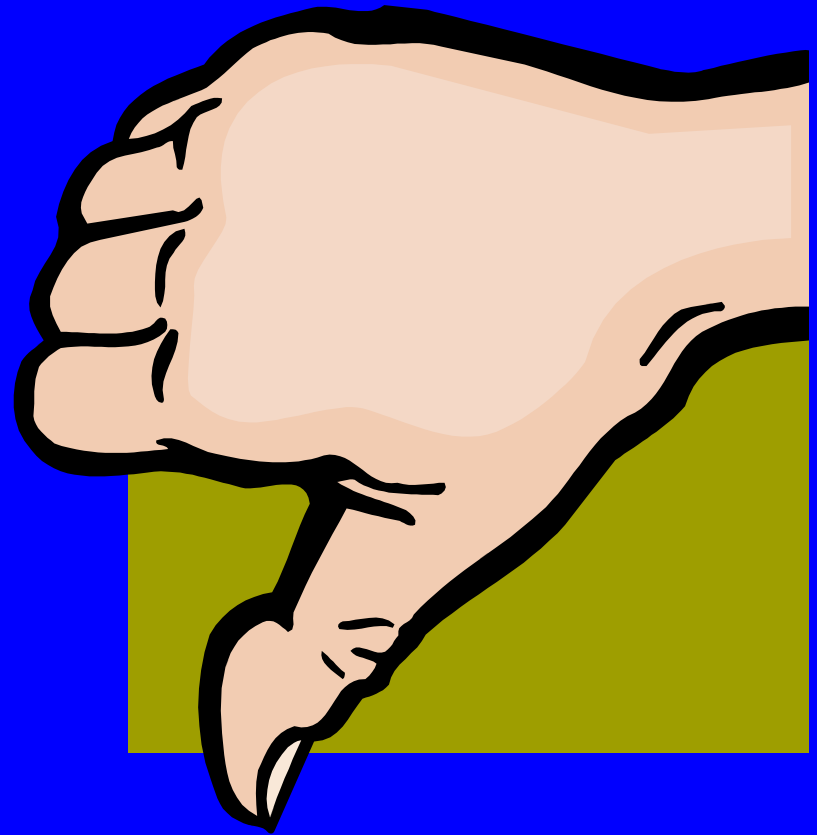




- Promote empathy.
- Point out the consequences for others that your child's verbal and physical actions may have caused.

Don't put your child down. "Bullies" are intolerant of any insult to their self concept. They can not take criticism.

However, do hold your child accountable for his actions.



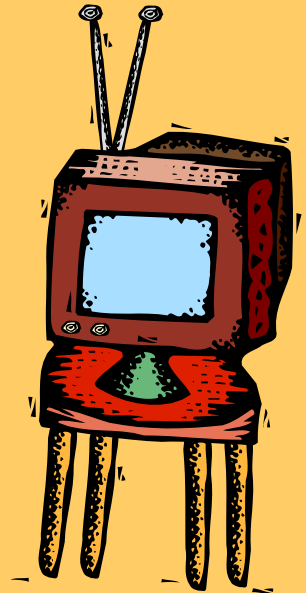
Model Behavior



Remember you are the model for your child as to the type of behavior you want him/her to exhibit. If you model bully-like behavior, they will too.

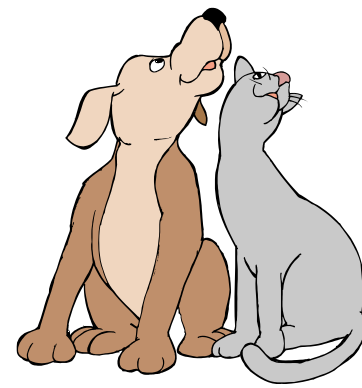
Monitor Your Child

Monitor the type of television shows they watch. Also watch them at play. What do they choose to do with their “free play”.

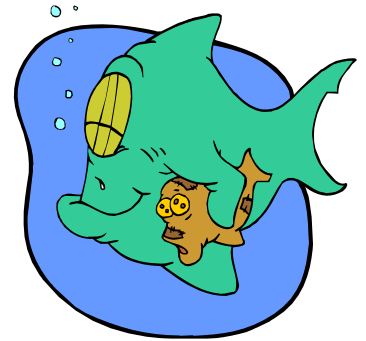


Assertive, Aggressive, Passive

ASSERTIVE	AGGRESSIVE	PASSIVE
Expresses feelings, desires, beliefs, values, opinions	Expresses feelings, desires, beliefs, values, opinions	Doesn't express feelings, desires, beliefs, values, opinions
Speaks clearly, directly, honestly	Uses power, force, threats, violence, other forms of abuse	Doesn't speak clearly, directly, honestly
Respects others	Doesn't respect others; feels more important than anyone	Respects/disrespects others. Won't intentionally hurt people, but won't be honest
Doesn't violate others' rights	Violates others' rights	Doesn't violate others' rights

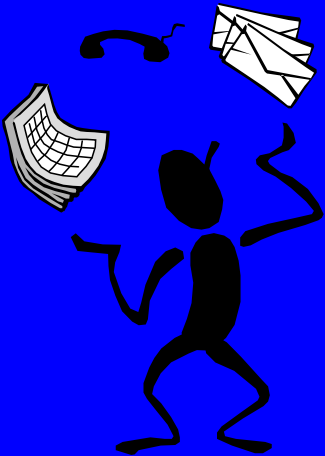


Everyone deserves to
be treated with
dignity and respect!



What BCPS Counselors Are Doing About Bullying

Created by the Hereford Zone
Counselors



Bullying Prevention

- **Classroom Guidance Lessons-** identifying feelings, self-concept, friendship, I-Messages, conflict resolution, bullying
- **Small Group Counseling**
- **Positive Behavior Incentives-** written or oral
- **Positive School Climate**

Responses to Bullying

- Get both sides of the story
- Involve Administration
- Involve Parents
- Make Teachers Aware
- Follow-up with bully and victim through individual or group counseling.

Working Together to Prevent Bullying and Provide Support to Our Children

- Reinforce classroom guidance topics.
- Use everyday experiences to discuss conflict (ie: movies, TV, family outings, etc.)
- Building confidence and trust with your child.
- Communication with the school.

Parent Resources

- Books:

- ❖ Queen Bees & Wannabes
by Rosalind Wiseman
- ❖ The Secret Lives of Boys
by Malina Saval
- ❖ Hot Issues Cool Choices
by Sandra McLeod Humphrey
- ❖ Bullying in Schools: What you Need to Know
by Paul Langan
- ❖ How to Handle Bullies, Teasers and Other Meanies
by Kate Cohen-Posey, M.S.
- ❖ Bullies are a Pain in the Brain
by Trevor Romain
- ❖ They Don't Like Me: Lessons on Bullying and Teasing from a Preschool Classroom
by Jane Katch
- ❖ Circle of Three
by Elizabeth Brokamp
- ❖ Nobody Knew What to Do
by Becky Ray McCain
- ❖ The Bully, the Bullied and the Bystander
by Barbara Coloroso

- Videos:

- ❖ “The Odd Girl Out”
- ❖ “An American Girl: Chrissa Stands Strong”
- ❖ “Mean Girls”