

Bullying Basics

Questions parents can ask children about bullying

- Have you ever been teased at school?
- Do you know other children who have been teased?
- How long has this been going on?
- Have you ever told your teacher about the teasing?
- What kinds of things do children tease you about?
- At recess, do you play with other children or by yourself?

Ways children bully

- **Cyber bullying:** Harassment through e-mail, instant messaging, Internet chat rooms and electronic gadgets such as camera cell phones.
- **Emotional bullying:** Isolating or excluding from activities or spreading rumors.
- **Physical bullying:** Kicking, hitting, biting, pinching, hair pulling or threats of physical harm.
- **Racist bullying:** Racial slurs, offensive gestures or making jokes about cultural traditions.
- **Sexual bullying:** Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or inappropriate comments.
- **Verbal bullying:** Name-calling, incessant mocking and laughing at a child's expense.

Responses to bullies

- Hold back anger; getting angry just makes the bully feel more powerful.
- Never get physical or bully back.
- Act brave, walk away and ignore the bully. Sooner or later, the bully probably will get bored.
- Use humor or give a compliment to throw the bully off guard, but do not use humor to make fun of the bully.
- Tell an adult. Studies show that schools where principals crack down on this type of behavior have less bullying.
- Talking about it can be a good outlet for fears and frustrations.
- Use the buddy system. When one person speaks out against a bully, it helps others take a stand.
- Join social organizations, clubs or sports programs. Being with other kids improves self-esteem and creates a larger group of peers to turn to.