



The Society for Safe & Caring Schools & Communities

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Bullying Tips for Adults

If Your Child is Being Bullied

How can you tell?

Often children don't tell adults they're being bullied because they're embarrassed, they're afraid of revenge or they feel that they must remain silent in order to belong. Some children just feel alone and helpless or even think that they are to blame for the bullying. A child that is being bullied may:

- be afraid to go to school or skip school,
- change his or her route to school,
- avoid the school bus or ask you to drive him or her to school,
- complain about feeling ill in the mornings,
- start to do poorly in school,
- "lose" belongings or come home with clothes or books destroyed,
- regularly "lose" lunch money (to pay off one who is bullying),
- come home with unexplained injuries,
- have nightmares,
- become withdrawn,
- attempt or talk about suicide,
- begin to bully other children and/or
- spend time with teacher or supervisor during recess rather than with other children.

What can you do about it?

If you suspect a child is being bullied, ask him or her directly. If the answer is yes, take action right away.

- **Communicate and offer comfort**
- **Work with the school**
- **Make arrangements for safety**
- **Help develop confidence**
- **Practise effective responses**
- **Build self-esteem**

If Your Child is Bullying Others

How can you tell?

Look for these clues. People who bully may:

- use verbal or physical aggression to deal with conflict,
- come home with items or money that doesn't belong to him or her,
- hang around with other children who appear aggressive,
- have a hard time expressing feelings,
- be unable to play cooperative games with others,
- become angry when he or she loses a competitive game,
- talk about getting even with others,
- react to questioning with anger or avoidance,
- play inappropriately with much younger children and
- put down other children in conversations.

What can you do about it?

There are many reasons why a child might exhibit bullying behaviour. But whatever the reason, the child has to learn that bullying is unacceptable and that if he or she continues, there will be consequences. If you learn that a child is bullying others you may wish to consider the following advice.

- **Stay calm**
- **Be firm**
- **Ask why**
- **Encourage expression**
- **Use non-violent consequences**
- **Aid reconciliation**
- **Set rules**