

TAKE THE **TIME** • **TALK** TO YOUR KIDS

TACKLE BULLYING



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Bullying Prevention Tips for Parents

What is bullying?

- Bullying has two key components: repeated harmful acts and an imbalance of power.
- It involves repeated physical, verbal or psychological attacks or intimidation directed against a victim who cannot properly defend him- or herself because of size or strength, or because the victim is outnumbered or less psychologically resilient.

What are some signs and signals that a child is being bullied?

- The child comes home with torn, damaged or missing pieces of clothing, books or other belongings.
- The child has unexplained bruises, cuts or scratches.
- The child seems afraid of going to school, walking to and from school, riding the school bus or taking part in organized activities with peers.
- The child appears sad, moody, teary or depressed when he or she comes home.

Start a conversation and discuss the possibility that your child may be bullied.

If your child shows any signs, it does not necessarily mean that he or she is being bullied, but the possibility is worth exploring. To get the conversation going, ask questions such as:

- “Do you have any special friends at school?”
- “Are there any kids at school who tease you in a mean way?”

If your child does open up and tell you he or she is being bullied, here’s how you should respond.

- Check your emotions.
- Never tell your child to ignore the bullying.
- Don’t blame the child who is being bullied.
- Listen carefully to what your child tells you about the bullying.
- Don’t encourage your child to “hit back.”

Take action.

- First, focus on your child and be supportive.
- Do not contact the parents of the student(s) who bullied your child.
- Contact your child’s teacher and/or principal.
- Listen carefully to what your child tells you about the bullying.
- Expect the bullying to stop.

What do I do if my child is bullying others?

- Children who bully tend to be impulsive, hot-headed, dominant, easily frustrated, lack empathy, have difficulty following rules and view violence in a positive way.
- Make it clear to your child that you take bullying seriously and will not tolerate this behavior.
- Develop clear, consistent rules within your family for your child’s behavior.
- Share your concerns with your child’s teacher, counselor and principal. Together, send clear messages that the bullying must stop.

Every 7 minutes a child is bullied at school.

If you're a parent or someone who cares for children, you should take bullying seriously. It's **NOT** a rite of passage and its effects can last well into adulthood. We hope you will use these tips, and we encourage you to pass this information about bullying to other family and friends.

As of January 1, 2009, every school in Pennsylvania must have a bullying policy. Learn what the bullying policy is at your school. For additional tips and more ways to prevent bullying in your school, go to www.highmarkhealthyhigh5.org.

Bullying Prevention Tips for Kids

Here's what to do if you are being bullied.

- Always tell an adult.
- Don't fight back.
- Stay in a group.
- Join clubs or take part in activities where you'll meet other kids.
- If it feels safe, try to stand up to the person who is bullying you.

Here's what you can do if a friend is being bullied.

- Report the bullying to an adult.
- Be a friend to the child being bullied just by eating lunch or walking to school together.
- If you feel safe, stand up to the bully (with some friends if that's more comfortable) and say it isn't cool.

Here are some signs that you bully others.

- You've repeatedly shoved, punched or physically pushed someone around just because you felt like it.
- You've spread a nasty rumor about someone.
- You and your friends regularly exclude someone from hanging out with you.
- You've regularly teased others in a mean way calling them names, making fun of their appearance or the way they talk, dress or act.
- You've been part of a group that regularly does these things.

Highmark Healthy High 5 is in the third year of a 5-year, \$100 million commitment to children's health promotion. An initiative of the Highmark Foundation, Highmark Healthy High 5's goal is to improve the health of children and adolescents ages 6-18 by providing them with the tools and practices needed to live healthier lives by making informed choices. We recognize the importance of promoting lifelong, healthy behaviors in children and adolescents to help them grow physically, mentally and emotionally. Highmark Healthy High 5 is focused on five areas that are critical to children's overall health and well-being – nutrition, physical activity, grieving, self-esteem and bullying prevention. For more information, go to www.highmarkhealthyhigh5.org.

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