

Tips for Parents

Parents play a critical role in helping their children handle bullying situations. Here are 10 practical suggestions for ways to help (more are available through our Get Connected anti-bullying program):

- Remind your child that body language plays a role in how they are perceived. Walking confidently, looking others in the eye and speaking clearly are important strategies to practice with them.
- Provide your child with opportunities to interact with others if they don't have many friends. Even one healthy peer relationship can help to thwart other's cruelty.
- Ask them what they suspect is the reason why their peer is bullying others—perhaps the bully has problems they need to deal with. When they realize they are not at fault, they can often stop the pattern of abuse, resist internalizing the abuse or blaming themselves.
- If your child is being bullied: Document, Document, Document! Document what your child tells you about bullying incidents so you have a record to share with others. Call the school and give them the facts so you can work with them to effectively resolve the problem. This shows your child you care, are proactive and take this issue seriously.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help, talk to your child's teachers, counselors or principals or call our office to have an expert visit your school and talk with school personnel, students and other parents.
- Keep the lines of communication open with school personnel. (Title IV of the Education Amendments of 1992 states that schools have a legal responsibility to ensure that non-hostile environment is available to all students)
- Look for noticeable signs of abuse; take color pictures of physical abuse. Some signs of a child being targeted are; resisting going to school, changes in sleep patterns, nightmares, and grades dropping.
- Assure your child that you are going to work on the situation together until a resolution takes place.
- Consider counseling. An outside perspective can do wonders for many children. Many mental health facilities offer counseling at reduced rates or on a sliding scale fee.
- Get involved with parent organizations, join your child's school PTA, network with other parents, and volunteer to serve on a committee that is developing bullying prevention policies. The more adults at a school that are aware and educated about bullying prevention, the less bullying incidents are likely to occur.

Get more strategies for handling bullying behavior, through Synergy's [STOP Violence programming](#). Learn more by contacting 816.777.0356 ext. 227.