



February 2025

Dear Families,

The school year is now in full swing and we hope it is a great year so far! This month we are going to address the topic of bullying. Sadly, more than 1 out of every 5 US students ages 9-18 report being bullied. With the increase in electronic devices and social media, cyberbullying has also increased. We want to share some resources with you so we can define what it is and how to stop it and, ultimately, prevent it from ever happening.

What Is Bullying?:

According to stop.bullying.gov, bullying is defined as “unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has a potential to be repeated, over time.” *In order to be considered bullying, there must be three core elements:*

- *unwanted aggressive behavior*
- *observed or perceived power imbalance*
- *repetition or high likelihood of repetition of bullying behaviors*

This definition helps determine whether an incident is bullying or [another type of aggressive behavior](#) or both.



How To Talk To Your Child About Bullying:

- Ask open-ended questions and have thoughtful talks with your child daily.
- Don't wait for bullying to happen before talking about it.
- Use your experience to have them talk about theirs.
- Talk about bullying in a general way as if it is a subject you want to know more about.
- Stay calm and provide validation when your child shares. Show that you are listening and that you trust them.
- Determine if you need to talk to the school about it. (Is there a power imbalance?)

What Else Can I Do?:

Below are some ways to play your part to stop bullying according to StopBullying.org:

- Recognize the [warning signs](#) that your child is involved in bullying. They could be being bullied, bullying others, or witnessing bullying.
- Understanding what bullying is is the first step in forming a plan to prevent or respond to bullying with your child. Many behaviors that look like bullying may be just as serious, but may require different response strategies. You can also learn about:
 - The [frequency of bullying](#);
 - Who is at [risk for being bullied](#) and [bullying others](#); and
 - The [effects of bullying](#)
- If you know or suspect bullying has occurred, learn how to [find out what has happened](#) with your child. Understanding what has happened can also help in communicating with school or community officials about the situation.
- If bullying is occurring at school, learn about what your state requires schools to do in your [state's anti-bullying law](#). Learn also about [federal laws](#) that require



schools to address harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, and disabilities and ways to report situations that have not been adequately addressed to the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice.

Prevention:

- Help kids understand bullying. Talk about what bullying is and how to stand up to it safely. Tell kids bullying is unacceptable. Make sure kids know how to get help.
- Keep the lines of communication open. Check in with kids often. Listen to them. Know their friends, ask about school, and understand their concerns.
- Encourage kids to do what they love. Special activities, interests, and hobbies can boost confidence, help kids make friends, and protect them from bullying behavior.
- Model how to treat others with kindness and respect.

Cyberbullying:

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation.

- [Cyberbullying](#) often requires different strategies than in-person bullying and can be less noticeable. Learn how to work with your kids to prevent [cyberbullying](#) and [how to respond](#) when it occurs.
- One in five teens has been cyberbullied, cyberbullied others, or seen cyberbullying.



- 49.8% of tweens said they experienced bullying at school and 14.5% said they experienced it online.
- The type of cyberbullying tends to differ by gender. Girls were more likely to say someone spread rumors about them online while boys were more likely to say that someone threatened to hurt them online.

Resources:

Reference [this link](#) to find more external resources for families, educators, and mental health professionals

Reference [this link](#) to find videos for parents, students, and school personnel addressing this topic

[topic.https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/bullying](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/bullying)

Please feel free to reach out to the school counselors. We are always here to help answer questions,

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