

Bullying Awareness and Prevention Tip Sheet for Parents:

"It's never too early to talk to your child about bullying"

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WHAT IS BULLYING?

- Bullying is a *relationship problem* in which a person or group repeatedly uses power to cause distress to another. It requires *relationship solutions*.
- Bullying can be verbal, physical or electronic. Sometimes it focuses on racial, ethnic or religious differences, sexual issues or disabilities.
- Children and youth don't have to be friends with everyone, but everyone has the right to be safe and treated with respect.

WHY SHOULD PARENTS BE CONCERNED ABOUT BULLYING?

- Children who bully are learning to use power and aggression to control and distress others. This can lead to a pattern they carry forward.
- Children who are repeatedly bullied become increasingly powerless and unable to defend themselves; they get trapped in the abusive situation.
- When kids become involved in bullying, adults need to be involved to help them learn from their experiences.

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT BULLYING

- Be proactive. Start a discussion with your child about bullying and raise the topic often, especially in times of transition such as a change of school.
- Listen to what children say about bullying and take it seriously.
- Make it clear that you think bullying is wrong.
- Let children know that you will help solve the problem, whether your child is the victim, the bully or a witness to bullying.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS A BYSTANDER TO BULLYING

- Encourage children to Choose Action and stand up for kids who are being bullied.
- Let children know there are many ways to provide support for someone who is being bullied and they should choose a method they're comfortable with.
- Always recognize the courage it takes to report bullying and be sure to let children know that telling is not the same as tattling.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS INVOLVED IN BULLYING

- Calm down and think before you take action. Respond caringly and let your child know you'll help.
- Keep a record of what happened and work with other adults to make a plan. Evaluate your success.