



Bullying and Your Daughter

Bullying is when one person or a group of people repeatedly hurts someone else. Bullying can be hitting, gossiping, threatening to harm, keeping others out of cliques, making fun, and ignoring others. There are also other ways people can bully. Bullying is often done on purpose and it can happen anywhere, such as at school, in the park, on a sports team, or even at home. In fact, bullying is common – 5 million teens have been involved with bullying. For everyone involved, bullying can have serious effects that can last for a long time.

Is your daughter being bullied?

Warning signs:

- ★ Has few or no friends
- ★ Feels picked on, isolated, alone, sad
- ★ Cries easily; has mood swings and talks about hopelessness or suicide
- ★ Claims to be ill; doesn't want to go to school
- ★ Changes her eating or sleeping patterns
- ★ Shows "victim" body language—hangs head, hunches shoulders, avoids eye contact
- ★ Talks about hurting herself or others

If you suspect your daughter is being bullied...

- ★ Get the facts: what's happening, who's doing it, how long it has been going on, and if the teacher knows.
- ★ Make sure your daughter knows it is not her fault.
- ★ Talk about ways of responding to bullies. Role play with her, acting out the different scenarios she might encounter.
- ★ Tell her to report bullying right away to a trusted adult.
- ★ Encourage her to make other friends.
- ★ Encourage her to get involved in activities that focus on her talents. Examples include school clubs or sports teams.
- ★ Tell her your own story if you were bullied as a child.

Is your daughter a bully?

Warning signs:

- ★ Seeks to dominate and/or manipulate others
- ★ Seems to get satisfaction from other's fears, discomfort, or pain
- ★ Is excited by conflicts between others
- ★ Is good at hiding behaviors or doing them where adults can't notice
- ★ Blames others for his/her problems
- ★ Displays intolerance and prejudice towards others
- ★ Lacks empathy towards others

If you think your daughter is a bully...

- ★ Tell her that bullying is NOT acceptable behavior.
- ★ Tell her the penalties for bullying and be sure that you enforce them.
- ★ Help her learn other ways to deal with anger and frustration.
- ★ Teach and reward better behavior.
- ★ Work out a way for her to apologize for the bullying.
- ★ Help her to understand how her bullying has affected the person who has been bullied.
- ★ Seek help or counseling if the bullying does not stop.
- ★ If contacted by the school, stay calm; try not to become angry and defensive. Make an effort to really listen. Keep in mind, this is about the well-being of your child.

For more information on bullying, visit www.girlshealth.gov!



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health

Last updated October 2007