



STAND UP FOR RESPECT

A Parent's Guide

Presented by:

Life Ed QLD

Stand Up for Respect Bullying Prevention Program



UNDERSTANDING BULLYING

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is more than just a disagreement or a one-off mean moment. It's repeated, intentional behaviour that causes physical, emotional or social harm. It can happen in person or online.

Types of Bullying:

- Physical: Hitting, pushing, damaging belongings
- Verbal: Name-calling, insults, threats
- Social: Exclusion, spreading rumours, humiliation
- Cyber: Hurtful messages, social media harassment, online threats

Key Signs Your Child Might Be Bullied:

- Sudden reluctance to go to school
- Unexplained injuries or lost belongings
- Mood swings, anxiety or withdrawal
- Trouble sleeping or complaints of feeling sick

Bullying Isn't...

- A one-off fight or argument
- A single act of social rejection
- Friendly teasing (when both kids are having fun)

Knowing the difference helps parents respond in the most helpful way with both children and school personnel.



IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS

Bullying is a complex issue and having common language is one of the first steps in simplifying what bullying is and isn't. A shared understanding of bullying ensures all parties understand what constitutes bullying and how it will be reported and dealt with at your school. There are many different understandings of why bullying occurs, but it is driven in part by the quality of our social connections both inside and outside of the school environment.

When children have weak or strained relationships with family members, friends, peers, or members of their community, they are more likely to be a target of bullying or to bully others. Families, students and teachers all have a role to play in increasing a child's sense of connectedness at school and creating a culture of kindness and inclusivity.

School connectedness refers to the extent students' feel they belong, feel cared about and listened to, as well as their perceptions of the quality of their relationships with teachers and peers, and their level of engagement in school life.

Parents can support by:

- Developing positive relationships with teachers and maintaining respectful communication
- Being aware of your school's anti-bullying policy and reporting process
- Cultivating relationships with fellow parents and school personnel
- Encouraging student involvement in extra-curricular activities
- Promoting respect for diversity
- Following your school's complaint process and avoid derogatory commentary about school and staff – both online and in person.



WHY DO STUDENTS BULLY?

The answer to this is not simple. There can be many factors that influence whether someone engages in bullying behaviour.

A student who is bullying others:

- May feel unsafe or unhappy at school
- May have a reputation they find hard to shake
- May be physically strong, confident and assertive
- May have previously been the target of bullying
- May have difficulty expressing their emotions safely, especially emotions such as anger and frustration
- May have a friend group that accepts this type of behaviour although students may not be well liked.

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO – PREVENTION STARTS AT HOME

1. Build Open Communication

Encourage daily check-ins.

- Ask open-ended questions like: “What was the best part of your day?” “Who did you enjoy hanging out with today?” “You seem a bit flat today – what’s on your mind?”
- Use fun connection games like “Yay, Nay, Hoorah”. This involves naming something you liked about the day, something you didn’t and something you are looking forward to.
- Pick times of the day to chat when your child is more receptive and relaxed, and you have time to connect
- Use side by side activities to talk – whilst doing an activity together like playing catch or doing a puzzle

2. Active Listening

Listen to understand, rather than to respond or problem solve. You don’t need to have all the answers. Sometimes our children just need a space to vent and feel heard and understood.

3. Teach Respect and Empathy

Help children to understand and name their own emotions. Praise kind, inclusive behaviour and teach the importance of empathy - “putting yourself in another person’s shoes” (understanding how a situation might make another person feel). Talk about how to stand up for others safely.

4. Set Clear Expectations

Make sure your child knows that bullying—either doing it or encouraging it—is never OK. Reinforce family values about kindness and respecting diversity. Use opportunities to celebrate the power of diversity (e.g. skin colour, religion, disability, culture or family background).

5. Develop & Model Coping Skills

Teach healthy coping strategies to express feelings well - like exercise, punching a pillow or meditation. Ensure your child understands how their actions affect others. Discuss conflict resolution strategies and upstander strategies.



HOW TO RESPOND IF YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED



If Your Child Is Being Bullied:

- Stay calm and listen carefully. Avoid jumping in with solutions straight away.
- Reassure them that it's not their fault and they're not alone.
- Clarify to check understanding. Check what they have already done
- Document what's happening (dates, behaviours, people involved).
- Work with the school. Speak with your child's teacher or principal – schools have anti-bullying policies for a reason.

If Your Child Is Bullying Others:

- Stay calm and listen carefully. Avoid jumping in with solutions straight away.
- It can be tough to hear, but knowing gives you the chance to help them learn and grow.
- Stay calm and listen to their side.
- Help them understand the impact of their behaviour.
- Teach them how to repair relationships and express emotions in healthier ways.



Life Ed QLD Tips for Parents:

- ✓ Encourage inclusion and diversity
- ✓ Monitor screen time and online activity rather than taking away access to devices
- ✓ Be a positive role model in how you handle conflict
- ✓ Foster your child's strengths and friendships

"We all make mistakes – what matters is what we do next."

USING THE RECOGNISE, REACT AND REPORT STRATEGY

Encourage children to use the “Recognise, React, Report” (RRR) Strategy when they are facing challenges in any of their relationships.



Recognise

How do I feel? Can I name the emotion? What happening in my body? Is this a one-off situation? Do I feel safe?



React

Do I need to calm down before responding? Use emotional regulation strategies, such as slow deep breathing, expressing feelings (e.g. drawing, writing) or physical release (e.g. dancing, shaking).

Do I need to use one of the upstander strategies in response to bullying behaviour?



- Call them out on the behaviour
- Use body language to disapprove
- I statement (e.g. I feel upset when you...)
- Ask for help
- Show you don't care
- Use humour
- Pretend you don't get it
- Report it



Report

Before reporting to the school, we encourage you to discuss with your child and find out what action they would like you to take. It's our role as parents to help support our child to get the outcome they are looking for.



- Understand the school's reporting process and anti-bullying policy
- Phone the school and make an appointment to discuss in person
- Remember to stay calm and regulated
- Share facts and outline strategies your child has already used in response to the conflict
- Ask for a plan of action and time for follow up.

RESOURCES AND WHERE TO GET HELP

Where to Go for More Support:

- Your child's school: classroom teacher, wellbeing team, or other staff member as designated by the school.
- Kids Helpline (24/7)
Ph: 1800 55 1800
www.kidshelpline.com.au
- Life Education Queensland
<https://www.lifeeducationqld.org.au>
- 13 YARN (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander crisis support line)
Ph: 13 YARN (13 92 76)
<https://www.13yarn.org.au/>
- eSafety Commissioner (cyberbullying support) www.esafety.gov.au
- Bullying No Way!
www.bullyingnoway.gov.au



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