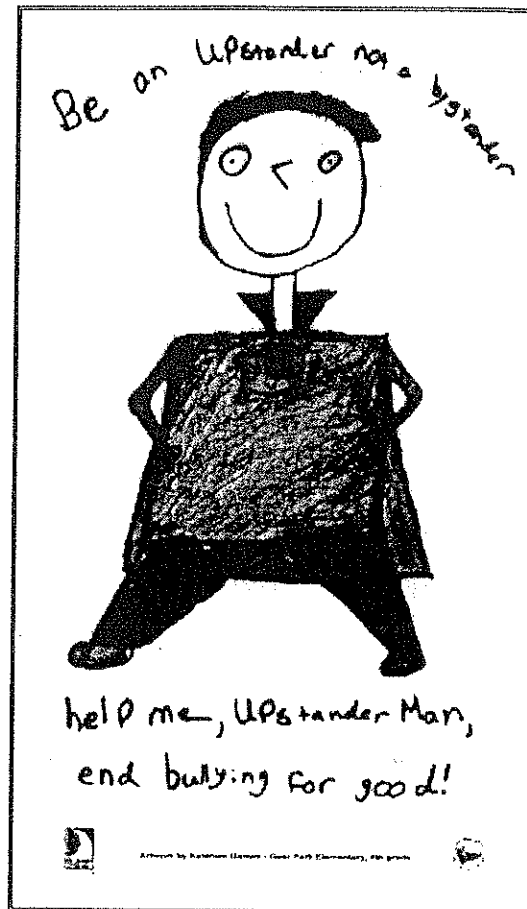


*Anti-Bullying
Advice and Guidance
For Parents and Other Caring Adults*



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How to Help Your Child . . .

when you suspect they are being bullied:

- ➡ **Take an active interest in your child's social life.** Discuss friendships, how free time is spent and the journey to and from school.
- ➡ Share with them that **a friend is someone that makes you feel good** about yourself.
- ➡ **If you think your child is being bullied, inform your child's school immediately** and ask for an interview with the child's teacher, principal or staff member identified to deal with bullying incidents.
- ➡ **Do not feel intimidated** by the school community.
- ➡ If you don't get satisfaction from person *a*, go to person *b* and then so on and so forth. Follow the chain of command. All of Dearborn staff members have been trained to respond to bullying. There are caring adults throughout the Dearborn Schools.
- ➡ **Keep a written record if the bullying persists.** It may be painful, but it will provide supportive information regarding the "Who, What, Where and When."
- ➡ **With the school staff, devise strategies with your child** that will help and provide her/him with support inside and outside of the school.
- ➡ **If the problem occurs OUTSIDE of school,** you may contact the bully's parents to discuss the situation and how they intend on helping to resolve the problem.
- ➡ **If the problem continues to occur OUTSIDE of the school, contact the police.** The police can then contact the bully's parents, informing them of the legal ramifications of a recurrence of such behavior.

- ⇒ **Please do not encourage your child to hit back.** It will only make matters worse. Your child could then be labeled a bully and get seriously hurt or in trouble for fighting. Hitting and other forms of physical aggression never completely resolve the problem at hand.
- ⇒ **“Treat others the way that you want to be treated.”**
Encourage your child to take the high road and follow the Golden Rule.
- ⇒ **“Be an Upstander, not a Bystander.”**
Someone who takes a positive stand on behalf of others.

Practice with your child these responses:

1. Say “STOP.”
2. **If the bully doesn’t stop**, tell them the next time this happens you will have to tell a caring adult.
3. **Tell a caring adult.**
 - This also can help eliminate the bully’s finger pointing and telling the victim they are “a tattler” or “a snitch”. But your child can’t be - because they have already given the bully a warning. Your child’s comeback to the bully could be, “I’m not a tattler - I warned you that I was going to tell. You made the choice to think I wouldn’t follow through. That was your mistake!”
 - **MOST BULLIES HAVE BEEN BULLIED ONE TIME OR ANOTHER IN THEIR LIFE** and they have been encouraged to take matters into their own hands and aggressively fight back!
 - Teach your child that hands are not for hitting, to follow the Golden Rule, and to remember that the stronger person is the one who walks away.

*My Child is Being Bullied -
What Can I Do, What Can I Say?*

- First - see page 7.
- **Tell your child that being bullied is not his or her fault.**
Help your child find a safe route to and from school.
Encourage your child to travel with friends.
- Tell your child that **using fists** as protection against bullying is **not effective** - because someone may get hurt and/or the situation may get worse.
- Encourage your child to use his/her head - **“to think before they act and to think before they speak.”** Explain to your child that this means thinking about different responses and selecting one that may improve the situation.
- Encourage your child to stand up to bullies - **“Be an Upstander, not a Bystander.”**

Upstander,

(Uhp'stän'der) noun

a person who takes action,
particularly when the easiest
or most acceptable course
is to do nothing

- ⇒ **Tell your child to be confident and make eye contact.**
 The bully wants to take away your child's power and they don't expect your child to confront them.
- ⇒ Tell your child to **speak in a calm and clear voice** and say:
 - 1) "STOP!"
 - 2) "I'm going to tell a caring adult."
 - 3) Go and tell the caring adult.
- ⇒ **Practice with your child** the three different things (above) that they can say to the bully.
- ⇒ Suggest to your child that **walking away from the bully** and in the direction of friends or an adult who can help may defuse the situation. Bullies usually want a reaction; it makes them feel in control.
- ⇒ **Retaliation is not the solution.** Ignoring a bully is the best strategy when the bully is physically capable of hurting your child or when they're bullying for the first time. Most bullies will back down when they don't get the response they were expecting.
- ⇒ Talk to your child. **Ask him/her if help is needed.**
 If not, wait a few days then ask again.
- ⇒ Remind them **no physical aggression** - it will only make things worse.
- ⇒ **Inform the school staff if there is a problem** - right when the bullying begins. Keep records of dates, times, names of those involved, calls to the school, who you spoke with.

My Child Is a Bully - What Do I Do?

If you have been contacted by the school or by another parent about your child's bullying behavior . . .

- ➡ Reinforce with your child **the need to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive way**. Ask the school principal, teacher, social worker, or counselor for information on conflict resolution.
- ➡ **Ask if your child's school has a Peer Mediation Program**. The skills that your child will learn during Mediation Training will be helpful for your child the rest of his/her life. It teaches them ways to resolve conflict peacefully and it will reinforce that physical violence is never a way to deal with anyone!
- ➡ **Spend positive time with your child every day** doing something your child enjoys.
- ➡ **Monitor your child's television watching**. LIMIT THE AMOUNT OF TV AND MONITOR THE KIND OF PROGRAMS YOUR CHILD WATCHES - including video games, the type of music your child listens to, electronic communication, etc. Our children are being de-sensitized to violence by these items.
- ➡ Make a point of always **knowing where your child is** and who he/she is with.
- ➡ Encourage your child and your whole family to **resolve conflict in a positive manner in your home**.

Talk to your child if they are bullying others:

- ⇒ **Frequently ask your child** if anyone is bothering them at school.
- ⇒ **Coach your child in . . .**
assertive behavior, not aggressive behavior.
- ⇒ **Tell your child that hands are not for hitting.**
- ⇒ **Tell your child not to hit back if they are hit.**
- ⇒ **Make sure you are not bullying your own children!!**
- ⇒ **Treat Others The Way You Want To Be Treated!**
- ⇒ **Think Before You Act - Think Before You Speak!**

Stay Positive & Optimistic!

J.K.L.P. "Just Keep Loving People."

~ Tanner Cipriano

Signs that a Child is Being Bullied -

Look for changes in the child. However, be aware that not all children who are bullied exhibit warning signs.

Some signs that may point to a bullying problem are:

- Unexplainable injuries
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewelry
- Frequent headaches, stomach aches, feeling sick, faking illness
- Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Kids may come home from school hungry because they did not eat lunch.
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Feelings of helplessness or decreased self esteem
- Self-destructive behaviors such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide

**If you know someone in serious distress or danger,
don't ignore the problem. Get help right away!**

Signs a Child is Bullying Others -

Kids may be bullying others if they ...

- Get into physical or verbal fights
- Have friends who bully others
- Are increasingly aggressive
- Get sent to the principal's office or to detention frequently
- Have unexplained extra money or new belongings
- Blame others for their problems
- Don't accept responsibility for their actions
- Are competitive and worry about their reputation or popularity

www.stopbullying.gov