



BULLYING

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS



WHAT IS BULLYING AMONG TEENS?

Bullying is the repetitive and intentional hurting of one person or group using intimidation or aggression to create a physical or emotional sense of power over a victim. About 20% of teens experience some level of bullying. Bullying puts children at risk of mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety and PTSD.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

There are some ways you can help your teen address bullying. This includes checking in with them daily and showing them unconditional love. When parents are involved, engaged and offering support, their teens have better mental health overall. Teaching them how to cope with bullying may also be empowering.

THIS CAN LOOK LIKE

- Teach them some neutral phrases such as "that's not okay"
- Encourage them to walk away and to not engage with their bully or observe another being bullied
- Teach your teen to surround themselves with supportive friends, especially when they are experiencing bullying
- Persuade them to tell their teachers or coaches about bullying so that prevention and protection can occur
- Problem solve with them ways to stop the bullying and how best you can intervene to help and advocate. Step in if needed

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT YOUR TEEN?

Having regular conversations with your teen is a great way to support them and gain more knowledge about potential bullying encounters. **Some things to talk about and include:**

- Do you like being on the team and why?
- Who are your best friends on the team and why are they your best friends?
- Have you ever seen bullying occur on your team?
- Have you ever been bullied?
- Prepare your children with the knowledge to understand exactly what bullying is. Arm them with assertive, specific language to advocate for themselves, and ensure they know ways to seek help.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

Reduced interest in school or extracurricular activities

Appearing sad, depressed, or irritable

Low self-esteem

Withdrawing from friends and family

Unexplained scratches, cuts or other injuries

Stolen or damaged belongings

Changes in appetite

Frequent aches and pains

What if my child is the bully?

THERE ARE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR TEEN MOVE FORWARD IN A HEALTHIER WAY

Address their behavior

Avoid shaming and be objective about past behavior to improve future behavior

Don't excuse their bullying behavior but ask questions about the "why"

Have a discussion about the effects of bullying on their victims, encourage empathy

Help your child develop new coping skills

Encourage them to hang out with a different group of friends if needed

Gain the assistance of others such as a coach, teacher or adult

REMEMBER: Bullying puts your teen at risk of mental health disorders such as PTSD, depression and anxiety. If you begin to see symptoms or risk of mental health disorders, seeking treatment or consultation from a mental health professional is essential.

If you have concerns regarding your teen's safety, call 911 or 988

Spanish language hotline: 1-888-628-9454

RESOURCES

[APA.ORG](https://www.apa.org)

[STOMP OUT BULLYING](#)

[CLEMSON](#)

[RAISING TEENAGERS](#)

This information should not be used for diagnosing or treating a health problem or disease; anyone seeking personal medical advice should consult with a licensed professional



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