



For Parents & Caregivers: Talking to Your Youth About Bullying



Talking to your child or teen about bullying is important for identifying, preventing, and addressing the issue effectively.

Bullying can have significant impacts on youth, affecting various aspects of their lives. For example:



Mental Health

Students who are bullied may experience anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem.

Physical Health

Youth may come home with unexplained injuries, and ongoing stress from being bullied can affect their physical health and emotional development.

Academic Performance

Bullying can be distracting and demotivating, affecting their academic performance.

Social Relationships

Bullying can lead to social isolation, making it difficult for young people to interact with peers and friends.

It's important to help youth understand and recognize different types of bullying:



Physical:

Hitting, pushing, unwanted contact, or any physical harm.



Verbal:

Insults, offensive name-calling, rumors, or threats.



Social/Relationships:

Spreading rumors, excluding others from groups, or damaging someone's social reputation.



Cyberbullying:

Online bullying through offensive comments, threats, or spreading harmful content via social media, texts, or emails.

The information on this handout is based on [StopBullying.gov](https://www.stopbullying.gov), [USCRI](https://www.uscristeam.org), [UNICEF](https://www.unicef.org), [Understood.org](https://www.understood.org), [KidsHealth.org](https://www.kidshealth.org), [WellnessEveryday](https://www.wellnesseveryday.org), [Child Mind Institute](https://www.childmindinstitute.org), & [Planned Parenthood](https://www.plannedparenthood.org)

Why do youth bully others?

Youth may target someone who appears weaker or different to feel more important or in control. While some bullies are physically stronger than their victims, this isn't always the case. Some youth also imitate behaviors they've seen in their families or in the media, where violence and ridicule may be common. Young people bully others for different reasons. For example:

Appearance



Academic Performance



Socioeconomic Status



Disability



Other Reasons (such as nationality)



What should I do if my youth is being bullied?

Provide Love and Support



Provide Strategies

- ✓ Ignore the bully
- ✓ Firmly tell the bully to stop
- ✓ Avoid being alone with the bully
- ✓ Report it immediately to a trusted adult at school
- ✓ In case of cyberbullying, take screenshots of the bullying
- ✓ Change privacy settings and block the bully online

Involve the School

Your youth may not want you to speak with the staff members at school, but it's important to explain to them why involving the school is necessary to help intervene and prevent further bullying.

- Write down detailed accounts of bullying incidents (including dates, places, and people).
- Review the school regulations, as well as state and federal laws on bullying.
(For more information, click [here](#))
- Report the bullying to a school staff member, such as a teacher, school counselor, administrator, or school police officer.
(For more information on how to seek help from the school, click [here](#))



The information on this handout is based on [StopBullying.gov](#), [USCRI](#), [UNICEF](#), [Understood.org](#), [KidsHealth.org](#), [WellnessEveryday](#), [Child Mind Institute](#), & [Planned Parenthood](#)

What if my youth is the bully?

Talk with your youth about the incident

and listen calmly and openly.



Clarify that bullying is not acceptable

In this house, we do not tolerate bullying.



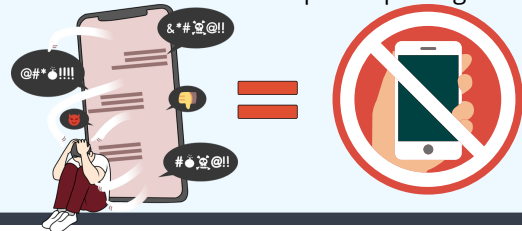
Help your youth understand what is behind their behavior

Instead of just telling your youth to apologize, ask what led them to act that way. They may be facing emotional or mental health challenges. Offer support and teach your youth how to manage their emotions. Additionally, help them reflect and recognize how their actions affect others.



Apply appropriate consequences to their behavior

Example: If your youth is involved in cyberbullying, remove their internet and/or phone privileges.



How do I teach my youth to prevent bullying?

Teach them to be a positive example for others in the following ways:



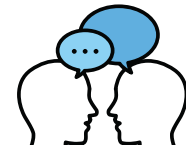
Be kind to others



Do not spread rumors



Stand up for others



Tell an adult if they witness bullying



Remember..

Talking to your youth about bullying is important for their safety and well-being. Informing them about bullying can help them face challenges with confidence.



If your youth's life and/or safety are in danger, call **911** immediately for help.

If you need to talk to someone or are looking for assistance with bullying, text the word **HELP** to **741741** to connect for free with a crisis counselor provided by the **CRISIS TEXT LINE**



The information on this handout is based on StopBullying.gov, [USCRI](http://USCRI.org), [UNICEF](http://UNICEF.org), Understood.org, KidsHealth.org, WellnessEveryday.org, [Child Mind Institute](http://ChildMindInstitute.org), & [Planned Parenthood](http://PlannedParenthood.org)