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health parenting

## Bullying: Stop It

### What can you do if you see someone being bullied?

Although you may not be directly involved in the bullying, there may be times when you see others being bullied. And even though it may be easier to stand by and watch or ignore the bullying, try to keep in mind, we all need a little help from time to time. Think about how you might feel if the bullying was happening to you. Here's how you can make a difference:

**Don't join in on bullying.** If you see someone being bullied, don't join in. If the bully tries to get you to help, refuse and walk away.

**Stop the rumors.** Don't help spread rumors about another person. You wouldn't want rumors spread about you, so don't do it to someone else! If someone gossips to you, let it end with you – don't pass it on to others. You can even tell that person you're not interested.

**Tell an adult.** Don't just stand there and watch, especially if someone is being hurt physically. Tell an adult about the bully and what's going on. If you feel uncomfortable or unsafe telling an adult, ask the adult to keep your comments private.

**Offer help.** When the bully is gone, try and help the person who was bullied and make sure he or she is okay. Encourage her to talk to an adult and stick up for herself.

Each time you help someone who is bullied and don't bully others, you are making a positive impact on someone's life – and your own.

### What can you do if you are being bullied?

You think you're a good person and you don't make anyone mad, at least not on purpose. So what do you do if you are bullied? Should you let it happen? Here are tips on what you can do if you are being bullied:

**Tell an adult.** Many young women fear telling an adult because they don't want to look like a snitch or seem weak. However, adults can help end the bullying. Also, it may make you feel better to tell an adult.

**Stand up for yourself.** Believe it or not, this will help you gain respect from others. Practice what you might say to a bully with a friend, your mirror, or an adult. Practice saying it in a firm, confident voice. You may even encourage others to protect themselves from bullying, too.

**Tell the Bully to stop. Calmly walk away.** Believe in yourself and tell others how you feel and what you think. You will gain respect from others. Also, by leading the way and showing others that you can't be bullied, you can help prevent bullying in the future. You can also encourage others to protect themselves from bullying.

**Do not fight back!** It's hard to do, but walk away from a bully and ignore them. If you give in to a bully and fight back, you could end up getting in trouble instead of the bully! If someone is hurting you physically, try to call for help or get away fast and get help from an adult.

**Lighten the air!** Make a joke to lighten up the mood. Say something funny to distract the people involved.

**Make new friends and get involved.** Making friends, and having interests and extracurricular activities, will make you feel better about yourself and the bullying situation. It will introduce you to people who share similar interests. When making friends, make sure you have positive friendships that are fun and free of bullying.

**Don't blame yourself.** It's important for you to know that it's not your fault. No one deserves to be treated this way. If you're being bullied, try to stop it either by yourself or with help from an adult.

**Be strong!** Bullies like to upset people, particularly those who can't stand up for themselves. Be in control so that the bully won't feel in control. It's important to feel confident and have good self-esteem. Even if you don't feel it at the moment, acting like you do will help. You may find that you are pretty good at handling a bully after all, and the next time you won't have to fake the confidence.

#### **What can you do to prevent being bullied?**

- Avoid bullies when you can
- Walk to school and eat lunch with a friend
- Act confident
- Stay near adults
- Believe in yourself

Remember, "You are the Rhythm of the Universe." You set the tone for how life goes on around you. Speak up for yourself and what's good for you.

#### **What can you do if you are a bully?**

Many people may be bullies and not even know it!

Once you realize that you are bullying others there are things you can do to stop. Here are tips so you can make a change and be a better person.

**Recognize and admit** that you are a bully, and that your actions are hurting people.

**Put yourself in their shoes.** How do you think being bullied would make you feel? Try to understand how your actions make them feel.

**Make a change!** Change your actions and be friendly to others.

**Form healthy relationships.** Form positive relationships with people your age, as well as adults.

**Look within yourself.** Find better ways to deal with anger and be happy such as keeping physically active, getting involved in extracurricular activities, developing positive friendships, and talking with an adult.

**Talk to an adult that you trust.** If you want to change your bullying behaviors and become a nicer person, talk with an adult or a school counselor to learn how to ditch your bullying ways. You may need to talk with someone several times to help you as you grow out of bullying. Don't worry about getting into trouble. Adults would be proud of you for wanting to change your ways.

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If you find yourself wanting to bully others, stop and think about it. Look within yourself and try to figure out why you want to do this. Do you really want to get in trouble and make someone feel bad? The answer is likely no. So, find something else to make you happy like getting involved with a sport or a hobby.

#### **What can you do to prevent bullying in your school?**

Why not make a pledge to not bully others and to help those who are bullied? This way, you can raise the awareness of bullying and get on the right path towards preventing bullying in your school.

Also, the best way to get more involved with bullying prevention in your school is to encourage your parents and school personnel to get involved.

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**My Notes:**