

BULLYING

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW AS A
PARENT

WHAT IS BULLYING?

- Bullying is when someone is picked on by a person or group.
- Bullies might make fun of people who they think don't fit in.
- Bullies might make fun of others for many things, including:
 - appearance (how someone looks)
 - behavior (how someone acts)
 - race or religion
 - social status (whether someone is popular)
 - sexual identity (like being gay, lesbian, or transgender)

TYPES OF BULLYING

- **Physical bullying** is when bullies hurt their targets physically. This might be shoving, tripping, punching, or hitting. Any form of touching that a person does not want can be bullying and possible sexual assault.
- **Verbal bullying** is taunting or teasing someone.
- **Psychological bullying** is gossiping about or excluding people to make them feel bad about themselves.
- **Cyberbullying** is when bullies use the internet and social media and say things that they might not say in person. This can include sending mean texts, posting insults about someone on Twitter, or making rude comments on their Instagram pictures. Cyberbullies also might post personal information, pictures, or videos designed to hurt or embarrass someone else.

THE IMPACT OF BULLYING

Bullies often pick on people over and over again.
This can make teens:

- Feel afraid, stressed, depressed, or anxious
- Have thoughts about suicide or hurting themselves
- Have problems with mood, energy level, sleep, and appetite
- Have trouble with their schoolwork

HELP YOUR CHILD IDENTIFY BULLYING

- Does your child either emotionally or physically feel hurt by the other child's behavior?
- Has your child been the target of negative behavior more than once?
- Does your child want the behavior to stop?
- Is your child unable to make the behavior stop on their own?

If you responded “yes” to one or more of these questions your child may be bullied.

PARENTS

As a parent, you can play a key role in preventing and responding to bullying.

COMMUNICATE. LISTEN TO AND TALK WITH YOUR CHILD DAILY.

- Show you care.
- Ask about their school day, including experiences to and from school, lunch, recess and extracurricular activities.
- Ask about their friends.
- Notice and observe their emotional state. Changes in behavior, appetite and sleep patterns may be a sign of anxiety.

TEACH AND MODEL RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY & RESILIENCY

- Create healthy anti-bullying habits by teaching your child to be kind, empathize, take turns and be respectful. Discourage your child from being mean to others, teasing and pushing.
- Make sure your child knows what to do if someone is mean to him/her. Tell the bully to stop, then walk away and report it to the appropriate person.
- Be a good example and role model for your child. If you speak to another person in a mean or abusive way you are teaching your child that bullying is ok.

MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD KNOWS:

- It is not their fault. They are not to blame.
- They are not alone. You are here to help.
- It is the adults' responsibility to stop the bullying.
- Bullying is never okay and they have a right to be safe.
- No one deserves to be bullied.
- They deserve to be treated with respect.
- They have the right to be safe in school.

PARENTS
AVOID THESE MISTAKES:

- Do not blame the child for being bullied. Even if he/she provoked the bullying, no one deserves to be bullied.
- Never tell the child to ignore the bullying.
- Do not tell your child to physically fight back. It could get the child hurt, suspended or expelled
- Parents should resist the urge to contact the other parents involved. Schools or other officials can act as mediators between parents.

BYSTANDERS

CHILDREN CAN BE AFFECTED BY BULLYING EVEN IF THEY ARE NOT BULLIED THEMSELVES OR BULLYING OTHERS

They may not know what to do or feel unsafe if they see another person being bullied. Things they can do to assist the child being bullied is:

- Help them get away
- Be their friend
- Don't give bullying an audience
- Tell a trusted adult
- Set a good example

IF YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN BULLIED...

- Children who are bullied may struggle to talk about it . Consider a referral to a counselor or mental health.
- Assure your child the bullying is not their fault and work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child,
- Ask your child what can be done to make then feel safe again.
- Develop a plan.
- Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight.

**WHAT IF YOUR CHILD IS THE
BULLY?**

IF YOUR CHILD IS A BULLY

- Make sure your child understands what the problem behavior is. He/she must learn their behavior is wrong and hurts others.
- Show them bullying is taken seriously and will not be tolerated. Model respect when speaking with your child.
- Help your child understand why they bully – is it to fit in, issues at home or because they have been bullied themselves?
- Involve the child who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. Write a note of apology or do a good deed for the person who was bullied
- Follow up. Help your child understand what they do has an impact on other people. Praise acts of kindness and talk about what it means to be a good friend.

“If my child is being bullied, it’s okay for them to fight back

“Words will never hurt you”

“Bullying is a natural part of childhood”

“Girls don’t bully”

“Some people deserve to be bullied”

“Bullying is the same thing as arguing

“Bullied kids need to learn how to deal with bullying on their own”

“Cyberbullying starts in middle school”

MISPERCEPTIONS ABOUT BULLYING

“Children and youth who are bullied will almost always tell an adult”

“It’s only teasing”

“Children and youth who bully are mostly loners with few social skills”

“Cyberbullying is less harmful because it does not happen face-to-face”

“Ignoring bullying will make it go away”

“Bullying is easy to recognize”

“Most children and youth who observe bullying don’t want to get involved”

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

There are many available resources and information regarding bullying. A few are listed here for your use.

- <https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/bullies.html>
- <https://www.pacer.org/bullying/parents/helping-your-child.asp>
- <https://www.pacerteensagainstbullying.org/advocacy-for-self/tell-an-adult/>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/passive-aggressive-diaries/201601/5-do-s-and-don-ts-helping-kids-handle-bullying>
- <https://getparentingtips.com/tweens-and-teens/relationships/how-to-stop-bullying-and-cyberbullying/default.asp>
- <https://about.instagram.com/community/parents>

SOURCES CITED

<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/bullies.html>

<https://www.pacer.org/bullying/parents/helping-your-child.asp>

THANK YOU

Please feel free to reach out to the Social Worker or Parent and Family Engagement Specialist at your child's school if you have questions or concerns.

Hand Middle School Social Worker

Rachel Arroyo

Email: rachel.arroyo@richlandone.org

Phone: 803.343.2947

Dreher High School Social Worker

Ebony Hilton

Email: ebony.Hilton@richlandone.org

Phone: 803.253.7000

Parent and Family Engagement Specialist for Hand & Dreher

B-Linda Rogers

Email: bobbi.rogers@richlandone.org

phone: 803.908.9565