



October is Bully Prevention Month

Here are some helpful tips when talking with your children about bullying.

Communication is Essential to Preventing Bullying

Talk to your children regularly about school so they can understand what bullying is and how your child should respond if they are being bullied or if they know someone else who is. Rather than asking, "How was your day?" which usually leads to: "good" or "ok," consider asking questions that encourage a longer conversation. Some examples include:

- What did you do at recess today? Who did you play with?
- What was the best thing that happened today?
- Does anyone in your class seem to be having a hard time?
- Did anyone make you feel good / bad today? How?

What to Do If Your Child Thinks They're Being Bullied

If your child discloses that they think they are being bullied, make sure they understand that it is NOT their fault. Reassure them that they did the right thing by telling you. Do make sure to talk to your child about the difference between a conflict and bullying. Conflict is a disagreement that happens when people want different things. If what your child starts to explain is sounding more like bullying, below are the questions needing to be asked:

- Has this student been doing this to you over and over again, more than once?
- Is this one-sided? How did you respond?
- Is it un-fair and on purpose?
- Did they stop when you asked them to stop or did it continue?

It is important to communicate with your child's school. As the school tells your child, if the incident is not reported we cannot help set up plans, monitor the situation, or help.

Did you know?

"When children intervene in a bullying situation, it can have a powerful effect. Research shows that when peers intervene in a bullying situation, the bullying stops nearly 60% of the time."

Empowering the Bystander

- Use their assertive communication skills. If they feel safe, children can say something like, "Hey, that's not cool! Why are you doing that?" If children are friends with the instigator, they can talk to them later and ask why they were doing that. Saying something like, "Did you know that you were being hurtful?" can help break the cycle of bullying.
- Walk away from the incident and encourage others who are watching to walk away. If there is no audience for the bullying, the incident is likely to stop. Students can tell others who are watching to stop and encouraging everyone to walk away. If they feel safe, children can help the victim themselves get away.
- Have empathy and show empathy. The impact of bullying won't last as long if the victim feels they have support from their peers. Encourage your child to talk to the victim of bullying and let them know it wasn't their fault. Being present and supportive can make a big difference.
- Get help from a trusted adult. If children don't know what to do, they should talk to a trusted adult. Make sure your child knows they can talk to you about anything, and encourage them to tell a teacher or counselor if they see anything that makes them uncomfortable.

Our first priority at Salnave is to create, ensure, and sustain a safe and positive learning environment. Please partner with us to support your children. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call or email me.