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Empowering Parents To Raise Their Children To Be Substance-Free

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Start Talking!
Building a Drug-Free Future

Know! To Defend Against Mean Girls



If your child's safety is at-risk at any point, her property gets damaged or stolen, or the situation simply becomes too much for her to handle directly, you (parents) will need to step in and contact the school, law enforcement, or other appropriate party, depending on the circumstances.

Your daughter comes home from school in tears for yet another day because a girl in her class embarrassed and humiliated her in front of everyone - again. The mama or papa bear in you is growling and ready to attack. But experts say, keep the bear at bay and help your daughter help herself.

It is an unfortunate reality, but at some point in our daughters' youth, she will likely have to deal with a "mean

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Talking regularly with youth about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs reduces their risk of using in the first place.

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girl," which means we have to deal with her too. We can best serve our daughter by giving her the tools she needs to recognize toxic people in her life and know how to handle them.

What exactly is a "mean girl?" She may be in your daughter's current or past circle of "friends," or she may be someone your daughter doesn't know well or at all. Mean girl behavior is universally manipulative however, and typically involves one or more of the following (**from EmpoweringParents.com**):

- Excluding
- Forming cliques
- Gossiping
- Spreading rumors
- Making nasty comments
- Cyberbullying
- Outcasting
- Sharing secrets
- Backstabbing

A mean girl also tends to recruit others to join in her hateful tactics, and though they know it goes against their better judgment, others may comply to remain in "good graces" with the bully, or maintain their social status.

This is devastating for the victim, to the point where she may beg to stay home from school, may not want to participate in her extracurriculars, and withdrawals from the social activities she usually looks forward to and enjoys.

While this type of manipulative and mean behavior is not exclusive to girls, Nancy Rue, a teacher-turned-author of the Mean Girl Makeover trilogy, says that, "Teenage boys and girls handle friendships differently. While boys value their friendships, they're not the potentially devastating things they can be for girls, who tend to over-analyze and emotionally invest more than boys. This means they [girls] suffer more when those friendships go wrong."

In fact, the long-term consequences of mean-girl-type bullying include eating disorders, body image issues, substance abuse, PTSD, self-harming behaviors, depression and even thoughts of suicide.

The whole experience can be excruciatingly painful for her, and for us, as her parents who love her and want only the best for her.

The best defense in protecting our daughters against mean girls is open and positive communication, so that she knows she can turn to us (her parents) for understanding and sensible advice.

Action Alliance

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Prevention Action Alliance
6171 Huntley Road, Suite G
Columbus, Ohio 43229
PH: (614) 540-9985
FX: (614) 540-9990

In the tip to follow, we will share tips on talking to our daughters about mean girls, and how best to handle them and move on.

Sources: Laurel-Ann Dooley, Woman's Day: 8 Ways to Help Your Daughter Deal with Mean Girls. Mar 29, 2017. Sherri Gordon, Very Well Family: 9 Things You Need to Tell Your Daughter About Mean Girls. Jul 28,2019. Maria Lally. The Telegraph: Mean Girls - How to talk to your daughter about toxic friendships. Apr 8, 2016. Peggy Moss, JD, EmpoweringParents.com: Girl Bullying: What to Do When Your Daughter Is the Victim of "Mean Girls."

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