

BULLYING

Quotes

About three out of four students reported they were bullied, according to research by Bully Police USA, a national organization that advocates against bullying. The organization also reported that 90 percent of students said bullying causes social, academic, and emotional problems.

– Arizona Republic, July 3, 2005

More than 160,000 children stay home from school each day because of verbal intimidation and put-downs by their peers.

– USA Today, April 10, 2001

Notes

Besides helping the victims, we must help the bullies change their ways. If they don't, they often end up in serious trouble. Most studies in the United States find that about 25% of bullies (as a youngster) end up in trouble with the law. One Canadian study found that approximately 60% of boys who were characterized as bullies in grades 6-9 had at least one conviction by age 24. One other important note here about bullying is that there is a "huge" increase in the number of girls who are becoming bullies.

Strategies

1. First and foremost, teachers and parents **must** take teasing and bullying seriously!
2. Forget about the theory that bullies have low self-esteem. We are discovering that bullies have "high" self-esteem and they gain power, and enjoy, hurting others.
3. How can you tell if your child is being bullied? Study these signs.
 - Child comes home with cuts, bruises on body
 - He or she has torn clothing
 - Child "claims" he lost his lunch money
 - She becomes more quiet, withdrawn
 - He doesn't want to go to school
 - She complains of sore stomach or other illnesses
 - He is more moody or irritable
 - She has trouble sleeping
 - Child's schoolwork starts to suffer
 - She becomes more aggressive with siblings

Recommended Resources

- Please Stop Laughing At Me
- The Bully, The Bullied and Beyond
- Out of This World—Tiglos vs. Secca Ma
- Salvaging Sisterhood



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Strategies

4. How can you tell if your child is a bully? Study these signs.
 - Your child comes home from school with “gifts” from other children
 - Child gets in many fights with peers
 - Child is insensitive to the emotions of others
5. Have children at home and school develop pledges “not to bully others.” Repeat the pledges daily.
6. Schools can place a Bully Box near the counselor’s office. Students can “anonymously” report bullying situations.
7. Teach children how to “walk” tall. Bullies often pick on people who appear to be weak and walk with their heads down. Children can be taught ways to walk that gives them more of an assertive posture. My father told me to, “Walk like you like yourself.” It makes a lot of sense to me now!
8. Teach children “calming statements” to use when they are confronted. Examples are, “I can handle this.” “I’m a good person.” “I’m not going to let her mess up my day.”
9. Parents may wish to encourage their children to become more assertive by getting them interested in martial arts.
10. Students should be encouraged to join clubs, sports, and other school activities. When students become part of a club or team, it gives them a good support group and they are less apt to be teased. Often it is the “lonely” kids who become victims.
11. Children need to be told that it is not a sign of weakness to walk away from rude individuals.
12. Teach children strategies to control their anger. Bullies enjoy seeing their targets get angry.
13. Have children make a list of caring adults that they can go to when they are bullied or scared.
14. Conflict resolution expert Naomi Drew recommends victims to implement the “Stop, Breathe, Chill” strategy. STOP: take a step back and notice what’s going on inside of you, BREATHE: inhale deeply right down to the pit of your stomach 3 times, CHILL: walk away for a moment, get a drink of water, wash your face, or do something else to release the energy of anger, then go back and talk about the problem with someone you trust.
15. Create a Kindness Committee at the school to teach children how to be kind and respectful to others.
16. Do not let child stay home as a way of avoiding a bully. Tell your child that every day he goes to school it is a triumph over the bully. It lets the bully know that your child has a right to be at school and he will not be deterred.
17. It is very important to teach bystanders ways to help out their friends who are being bullied. They can distract the bully or encourage their friend, “Hey come with me.”
18. Let’s not forget about all the bullying that takes place via the computer. This is known as cyberbullying. Teach your children these strategies to help prevent most cyberbullying.
 - never give out personal information, passwords, PIN numbers
 - don’t believe everything you read....bullies like to lie
 - don’t respond.....bullies want you to
 - if you get a threatening message, don’t delete it....show an adult
 - don’t send a message to someone when you are angry
 - don’t open messages from someone you don’t know
 - never agree to meet with someone you met online