

MOST PEOPLE KNOW WHAT BULLIES ARE.

Yet Bullying Problems are Often Ignored or Denied.



LARGE NUMBERS OF STUDENTS HAVE BEEN BULLIED over long periods of time while nobody paid any attention! Today, however, more people are recognizing that it is a basic democratic right for students to feel secure at school and not to be troubled by offensive and humiliating treatment. Because of highly publicized school events, we now know what the effects of long-term bullying can be—for both the victim and the bully.

GENERALLY, WE CALL IT BULLYING when one or more persons repeatedly say or do hurtful things to another person who has problems defending himself or herself. It can happen at school, on the playground, on the school bus, in the neighborhood, or over the Internet. Direct bullying usually involves hitting, kicking, or making insults, offensive and sneering comments, or threats. Repeatedly teasing someone who clearly shows signs of distress is also recognized as bullying. However, indirect bullying—the experience of being excluded from a group of friends, being spoken ill of and being prevented from making friends—can be just as painful. Girls tend to use these indirect and subtle methods of bullying, such as purposely leaving someone out, backbiting, and manipulation of friendships.

OFTEN PEOPLE DISMISS BULLYING among kids as a normal part of growing up. But bullying is harmful. It can lead children and teenagers to feel tense and afraid. It may lead them to avoid school. In severe cases, teens who are bullied may feel they need to take drastic measures or react violently. Others may even consider suicide. For some, the effects of bullying last a lifetime.

Parents, if you know of a child who is being bullied, or who is a bully, log onto the sites below to see how you can help.

For Parents:

Bullying is Not a Fact of Life at <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/15plus/aboutbullying.asp>
Cyberbullying at <http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/adult/indexAdult.asp?Area=cyberbullying>
Helping Kids to Deal with Bullies at <http://kidshealth.org/parent/emotions/behavior/bullies.html>
Your Three-Step Plan to Stop Bullying at www.pacer.org/publications/bullypdf/BP-12.pdf
Girls and Bullying at <http://www.ncpc.org/topics/by-audience/parents/for-girls/girls-and-bullying>
Great Bullying Resources: Medline Plus at <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/bullying.html#skip>
Stop Bullying Now at <http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/index.asp?area=main>
Talk With your Child about Bullying at www.pacer.org/publications/bullypdf/BP-2.pdf

For Kids:

Bully Round-up and Bully Beware at http://www.bam.gov/sub_yourlife/yourlife_bullyroundup.html#
Child and Youth Health at www.cyh.com, click on Kids' Health, then on the "B" on the keyboard and scroll down to Bullying-being unkind to others
National Crime Prevention Council at www.ncpc.org, click on Bullying Prevention and read "Friendship Beats Bullying Every Time"