

## RECOGNIZING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NORMAL PEER CONFLICT AND BULLYING

<b>Normal Peer Conflict</b>	<b>Bullying</b>
Equal power or friends	Imbalance of power; not friends
Happens occasionally	Repeated negative actions
Accidental	Purposeful
Not serious	Serious with threat of physical or emotional harm
Equal emotional reaction	Strong emotional reaction from victim and little or no emotional reaction from bully
Not seeking power or attention	Seeking power, control, or material things
Not trying to get something	Attempt to gain material things or power
Remorse – will take responsibility	No remorse – blames victim
Effort to solve the problem	No effort to solve problem

## STRATEGIES OF INTERVENTION

(from *Bully-Proofing Your Child: A Parent's Guide* by Garrity, Baris, and Porter.)

LEVELS OF RISK			
Strategies of Intervention	Low	Medium	High
<b><i>Not joining in</i></b>	Walk away	Stay but do not participate.	Declare your non-participation.
<b><i>Getting Adult Help</i></b>	Get help anonymously.	Identify who the helpful adults are and get one of them.	Announce loudly your intention to get adult help; then do it.
<b><i>Mobilizing Peer Group</i></b>	Identify a peer leader and offer to join in standing up to the bully.	Identify others who are capable of mobilizing peers in defense of the victim and recruit them to the cause.	Be a leader in recruiting others to join in standing up to the bully.
<b><i>Taking an individual stand</i></b>	Go over to the victim and lead him or her away from the situation.	Say, "leave him alone."	Say, "we don't treat people like that at our school."
<b><i>Befriending the victim</i></b>	Privately empathize with the victim by saying, "that was unfair or cruel."	Go over and stand with the victim or invite him or her to join you in doing something else.	Stand with the victim and publicly announce the "unfair" behavior of the bully.

## How can I help my child develop appropriate social skills and emotional intelligence?

1. Listen to your child. Validate your child's feelings about any issues that make him/her feel uncomfortable.
2. Often bullied children blame themselves. Be sure to let your child know it is not his/her fault.
3. Listen carefully to the social context of the bullying event. Explore how your child felt when they were being bullied.
4. Together strategize different ways to handle the situation (i.e., Don't react, Walk away, Agree with the aggressor: "You're right!," Call the person on their behavior: "What would make you say something mean to hurt someone else's feelings?"), Avoid being alone near the person harassing you, etc.
5. Role play with your child different scenarios to respond to bullying.
6. Teach your child to stand up for others when a peer is being harassed.
7. Teach your child to report uncomfortable events to an adult in school that will keep the reporter anonymous.
8. Provide opportunities for your child to partake in activities and opportunities to develop and practice forming and being in relationships.

### If your child is the bully:

1. Be sure to indicate that you feel this is an unacceptable behavior and will not be tolerated. Provide non-violent consequences.
2. Be a positive role model. Engage your child in developing better problem solving skills.
3. Praise your child for appropriate social behaviors.
4. Provide more supervision and appropriate told modeling of acceptable social behaviors.
5. Enlist school assistance.

## How to Help: Steps to Bully-Proof Your Child

(from: *Bully-Proofing Your Child: A Parent's Guide* by Garrity, Baris, and Porter)

1. Let the school know your safety worries immediately.
2. Keep a record of time, date, names and circumstances to show a pattern of harassment.
3. Teach your child self-respect – confident kids are less likely to become a victim.
4. Let your child know it is okay to express anger if done appropriately.
5. Encourage friendships – there is strength in numbers.
6. Arrange weekend play dates to promote friendships.
7. Build social skills early.
8. Help shy kids with social skills training – role play together situations that have occurred previously.
9. Explain the difference between telling and tattling. Tattling is when you report something just to get someone in trouble. Telling is when you report that you or someone else is in danger. (Verbal abuse and being excluded are dangers too.)
10. Stress the importance of body language – a “victim stance” may attract bullies.
11. Teach your child effective skills for making friends such as how to share, compromise, apologize, use “I” statements, change the topic to avoid conflict, and use a “diplomatic” approach.
12. Teach your children alternative responses – **HA HA, SO (Help, Avoid, Humor, Assert yourself, Self-talk, Own –it)**.
13. Don't advise physically attacking the bully.

# Responding to Bullying as a Bystander

## 1. Recognize the bullying.

Ask yourself:

- Is it fair?
- How does it feel? (Threatening? Bad? Uncomfortable?)
- Does it keep happening?

## 2. Refuse to let others be bullied.

Ask yourself:

- Is it safe for me to speak out assertively?

If it is safe to speak out:

- Label it and say, "Stop."
- Encourage other bystanders to speak out.

## 3. Report the bullying.

Offer to go with the person being bullied.

Report it to an adult immediately if:

- Someone is unsafe.
- Someone is touching or showing private body parts.
- Refusing doesn't work.