



Parenting Tips: When Your Child is a Target of Bullying

What we know:

Research shows that on any given school day, approximately 160,000 children decide to skip school to avoid being picked on or bullied by their peers. The numbers of children who suffer in silence is even higher.

Warning signs:

- Frightened walking or taking bus to school
- Unwilling to go to school
- Ill in morning and/or frequent contact with the school nurse
- Come home with clothes, books, other belongings destroyed
- Come home hungry
- Possessions missing, losing money
- Behavior change – withdrawn, drop in grades, aggressive
- Unexplained bruises, cuts
- Begin to bully siblings, other children
- Improbable excuses for any of above

What parents can do:

- If you suspect your child is being bullied, ASK.
Some questions to start the conversation include:
 - “Who do you sit with at lunch? What is lunch time like at your school?”
 - “What is it like walking to school/taking the bus?”
 - “Are there people at school/neighborhood/sport team who are bullies?”
 - Do kids ever call you mean names...bullied you by hitting or pushing?
- Listen
- Stay calm!
- Take it seriously
- Let your child that it is not his or her fault
- Review options to address bullying with child
- Talk with school personnel
- Keep records of incidents
- Help child practice strategies – encourage independence while offering support
- Help develop new friendships
- Provide opportunities to boost self-esteem