

TIPS FOR PARENTS: WHEN YOU SUSPECT YOUR CHILD IS BEING *BULLIED*

Look for Warning Signs

Physical Injuries

Anxiety-Related Symptoms

- Excessive worry
- Sense of panic
- Biting finger nails; wetting bed

Depressive Symptoms

- Looking sad and dejected; irregular patterns of mood (ups and downs)
- Decline in motivation and grades at school; refusal to go to school
- Diminished interest in everyday activities; social withdrawal
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Self-doubt, self-blame, feelings of helplessness, feelings of hopelessness

Attention-Related Symptoms

- Difficulty concentrating
- Disorganization
- Impulsivity

Acting-Out Symptoms

- Disruptive and oppositional behavior; excessive anger
- Risky behavior (including any indications of substance use, self-injury, promiscuity)
- Bullying behavior (*Note: individuals who have been bullied often become bullies themselves.*)

Discuss with Your Child

Facts of Bullying

- Differences between teasing, threats, harassment, and victimization
- Covert aggression (including gossip, social ostracism, and cyber-bullying)
- Potential dangers and consequences
- Necessity that parents intervene if bullying is chronic

Coping Strategies

- Distance oneself from kids known to be overly-aggressive
- Prior to acting, stop to reflect and formulate a plan of what to do
- Be assertive (*Note: assertiveness is different from aggressiveness*); don't overreact!
- Seek help from a teacher, parent, or friend

When Necessary, Get Professional Help

- From your child's pediatrician
- From a psychologist