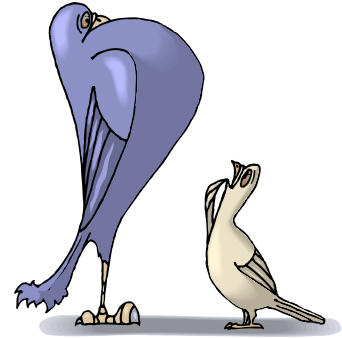


## Anti - bullying know how

Bullying is a real problem in our society, by the time children reach the age of eighteen, one or two in every ten will have been bullied. Bullying happens when someone uses their power to repeatedly harm another and gains enjoyment or satisfaction from these actions.



Bullying can be physical, or through words such as name-calling and cruel jokes and lastly about relationships, that is leaving others out or spreading malicious gossip.

When should you start to worry about bullying? Perhaps you've noticed your son or daughter isn't enjoying school as much as before, tummy aches and headaches are bothering them on school days and they seem to have lost confidence. These may be the first signs of bullying so it's time to find out more about what's going on.

Sometimes it's hard to tell the difference between a normal falling out and bullying.

Three features set bullying apart. Firstly bullying is repeated, the child is hurt or distressed by the same person over a period of time. Secondly the bully is more powerful than the child being bullied. This power could come from physical strength or quick wittedness. Lastly the bully enjoys the feeling of power while the bullied child is left upset and hurt.

If you think your child is being bullied first of all stay as calm as you can, your child needs to see that you'll handle the situation firmly but carefully. Be aware your child may have been threatened with more bullying if they tell so take it slowly.

You could talk with your child about these ideas:

The best way your child can defend themselves against a bully is to always tell an adult when they are being threatened, to hold their head high and act as if they are confident and to stay close to friends and play in a group rather than alone. Please advise your child not to fight back when bullying happens. When children fight back they tend to be overpowered and their reaction gives even more satisfaction to the bully.

If the problem continues you could enlist the help of others such as teachers. The class teacher, school nurse or other member of staff can help you work out ways to support your child. Every school has an anti-bullying policy which tells you what the school will do to tackle this issue. This should spell out how they will work with your child and how they will help the bully to act with kindness.

You can build your child's emotional strength so they are less likely to be bullied, or, if bullying happens, the effects will be less. You can do this by reminding your child of their good points so their self esteem is raised, by helping them to make friends for example through joining clubs such as Rainbows, Beavers, or sporting groups.

Lastly you can tackle bullying through your own actions - each time you show respect to others and expect it in return you are setting an example for the whole community to follow.

### Parents' tips:

Nikki, mother of Niall aged five, Kieran, aged seven and Jade, aged nine, of Blurton says " Always take it seriously if your child says they've been bullied. Sit down and talk about it first then go into school and work out a plan with the teacher to sort it out. Keep in touch with the teacher to make sure things are getting better".

Sue, mother of Marie, aged twenty five, Mark, aged twenty four and Paul, aged twenty one and grandmother of Ashley, aged seven and Jessica, aged five, of Upper Tean says: " Give children ideas of what to say to bullies, like : "I'm going to tell the teacher about this!". Help children to build friendships by getting them to invite school mates round to play."



For more information on First Steps  
Psychological Service  
Please call 01782 425 883

Written by Claire Halsey  
Consultant Clinical Psychologist