



Bullying:
What Can We All Do?

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4

(a) As used in this Code section, the term “bullying” means *an act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system, that is:*

- (1) Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; (cont.)

Bullying definition, cont.

- (2) Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; *or*
- (3) Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
 - (A) Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of the Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1;
 - (B) Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
 - (C) Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
 - (D) Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Fannin County Schools Policy

Bullying

The Fannin County Board of Education believes that all students can learn better in a safe school environment. Behavior that infringes on the safety of students will not be tolerated. Bullying, as the term is defined in Georgia law, of a student by another student is strictly prohibited. Bullying is defined in the definition section of the Student Code of Conduct. Teachers, school employees, students, parents, guardians, or other persons may report or otherwise provide information related to bullying activity. The information may be provided by contacting the school administration. If the person wishing to provide information desires to remain anonymous, that person may contact the school electronically or by using the United States mail. Concerns related to bullying can be reported to the State

Department of Education Hotline

1-877-SAY-STOP.

Fannin County Schools Policy

Bullying, electronic bullying, threatening

Bullying is specifically defined as an act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities, or by use of data other electronic technology of a local school system, that is:

Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;

Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or

Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:

Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such item is defined in Code in Code Section 16-5-23.1;

Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;

Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

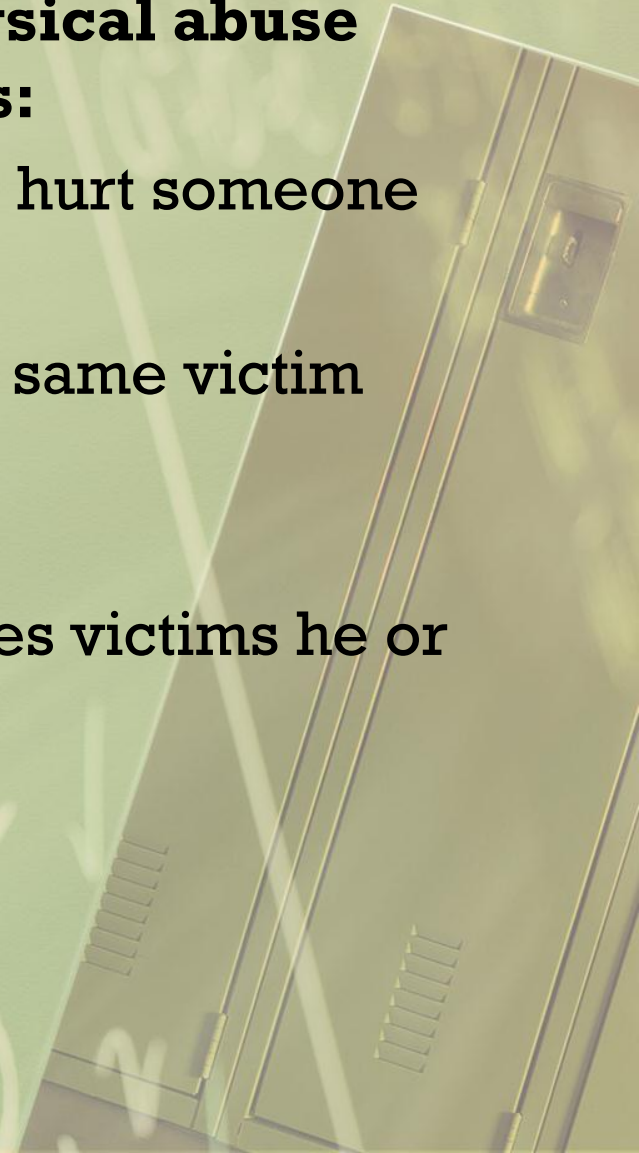
OCR defines harassment

- Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling; graphic and written statements, which may include use of cell phones or the Internet; or other conduct that may be physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents.

Basics about Bullying

Bullying is a form of emotional or physical abuse that has three defining characteristics:

- **1 Deliberate**—a bully's intention is to hurt someone
- **2 Repeated**—a bully often targets the same victim again and again
- **3 Power Imbalanced**—a bully chooses victims he or she perceives as vulnerable



What does Bullying look like?

- **Bullying occurs in many different forms, with varying levels of severity. It may involve:**
- **Physical Bullying**— poking, pushing, hitting, beating up etc.
- **Verbal Bullying**— yelling, teasing, name-calling, insulting, threatening to harm
- **Indirect Bullying**—ignoring, excluding, spreading rumors, telling lies, getting others to hurt someone



Warning Signs of Bullying



Things to look for that may indicate your child is being bullied:

- Unexplained damage or loss of clothing and other personal items
- Evidence of physical abuse, such as bruises and scratches
- Loss of friends; changes in friends
- Reluctance to participate in activities with peers
- Loss of interest in favorite activities
- Unusually sad, moody, anxious, lonely, or depressed
- Problems with eating, sleeping, bed-wetting
- Headaches, stomachaches, or other physical complaints
- Decline in school achievement
- Thoughts of suicide

• **PAY CAREFUL ATTENTION TO THESE RED FLAGS. WATCH AND LISTEN CAREFULLY, ESPECIALLY IF THE WARNING SIGNS ESCALATE! Some children may withdraw, while others may get angry and seek revenge.**

Why do children not report Bullying?

- Don't recognize it as bullying
- Are embarrassed
- Don't want to appear weak
- Believe they deserve it
- Want to belong
- Fear retaliation
- Don't know how to talk about it
- Don't have a trusted adult to confide in
- Think adults won't understand
- Think nothing can be done about it

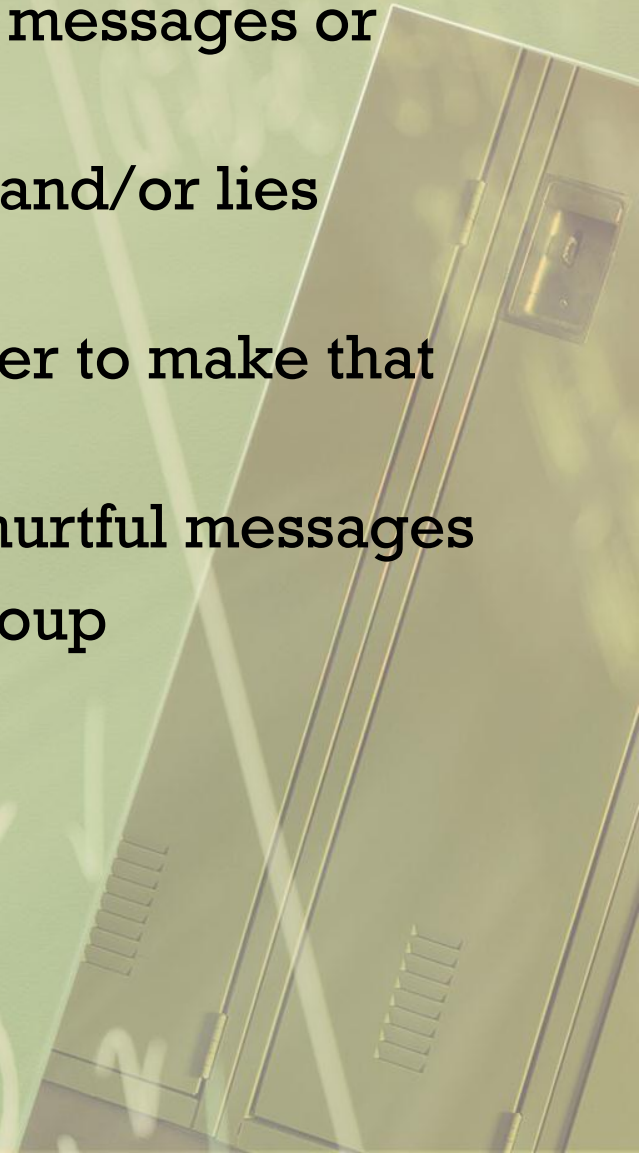


What about cyberbullying?



What is Cyberbullying?

- Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images;
- Posting sensitive, private information and/or lies about another person;
- Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad.
- Getting other people to post or send hurtful messages
- Excluding someone from an online group



Sources of Cyberbullying

- Emails
- Instant messages
- Text or digital imaging via a cell phone
- Social networking sites
- Web pages
- Blogs
- Chat rooms or discussion groups



Ways to prevent Cyberbullying

- Keep computers in visible places so that you can monitor use.
- Talk with children about safe and responsible use of the Internet and cell phones, and about the dangers of cyberbullying.
- Discuss what to do when cyberbullying occurs, such as ignoring the posting or calmly, but firmly, telling the cyberbully to remove the harmful material.
- Remind children not to share any personal information online.
- Encourage children to tell you if they are being cyberbullied or know others who are.
- Assure them that you will help them deal with the problem.

Different Roles of Bullying



The Bully

- **Bullies... select** and systematically train their victims to comply to their demands. They seek active encouragement, passive acceptance, or silence from bystanders.
- **BULLYING IS ABOUT THE ABUSE OF POWER. CHILDREN WHO BULLY ABUSE THEIR POWER TO HURT OTHERS, DELIBERATELY AND REPEATEDLY.**
- Are hot-tempered, inflexible, overly confident, and don't like to follow rules.
- They lack empathy and may even enjoy inflicting pain on others.
- They often desire to dominate and control others, perceive hostile intent where none exists,
- Overreact aggressively to ambiguous situations
- Hold beliefs that support violence.

The Bully by Ages

- Elementary School children are more direct and more likely to use physical bullying. Less likely to use indirect forms of bullying
- Middle school and High School bullies rely on direct verbal bullying such as name-calling and making threatening remarks, as well as physical bullying such as pushing and hitting.



The Middle and High School Bully

- At this age we start to see girls and boys behave differently. Boys at these ages usually rely on physical dominance.
- While girls are more likely to participate in indirect, relational bullying, such as rumor-spreading and social exclusion. They often use the Internet or cell phones to send these hurtful messages.

**AT ANY AGE KIDS CAN BULLY IN GROUPS IN ORDER
TO ACHIEVE ACCEPTANCE**

Consequences of Bullying

- **In a follow-up study of boys in grades 6 through 9, bullies were found to be four times more likely than their non-bullying peers to be convicted of at least one crime by the age of 24. Surprisingly, 60% of these former bullies had committed at least one crime, and 35% had committed Three or more crimes.**

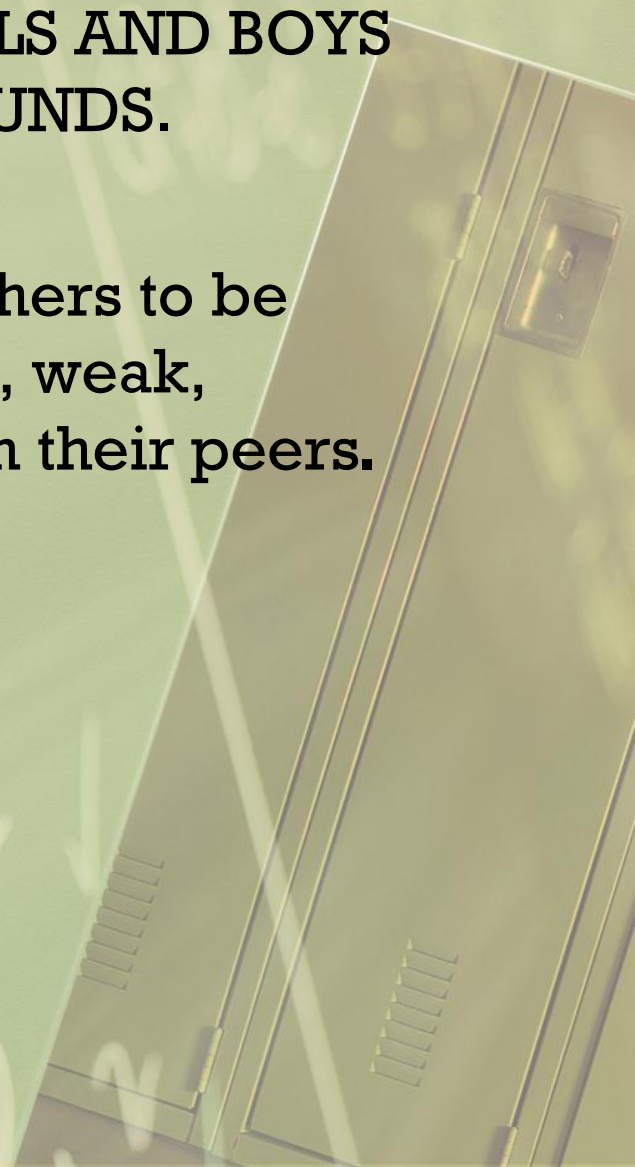
They are also more likely to develop:

- Aggression
- Antisocial behavior
- Carrying weapons to school
- Dropping out of high school
- Convictions for crime
- Difficulty controlling their emotions
- Traffic violations
- Convictions for drunk driving
- Depression
- Suicides



The Victim

- VICTIMS OF BULLYING INCLUDE GIRLS AND BOYS OF ALL AGES, SIZES, AND BACKGROUNDS.
- Some children are more likely than others to be victimized because they appear small, weak, insecure, sensitive, or “different” from their peers.



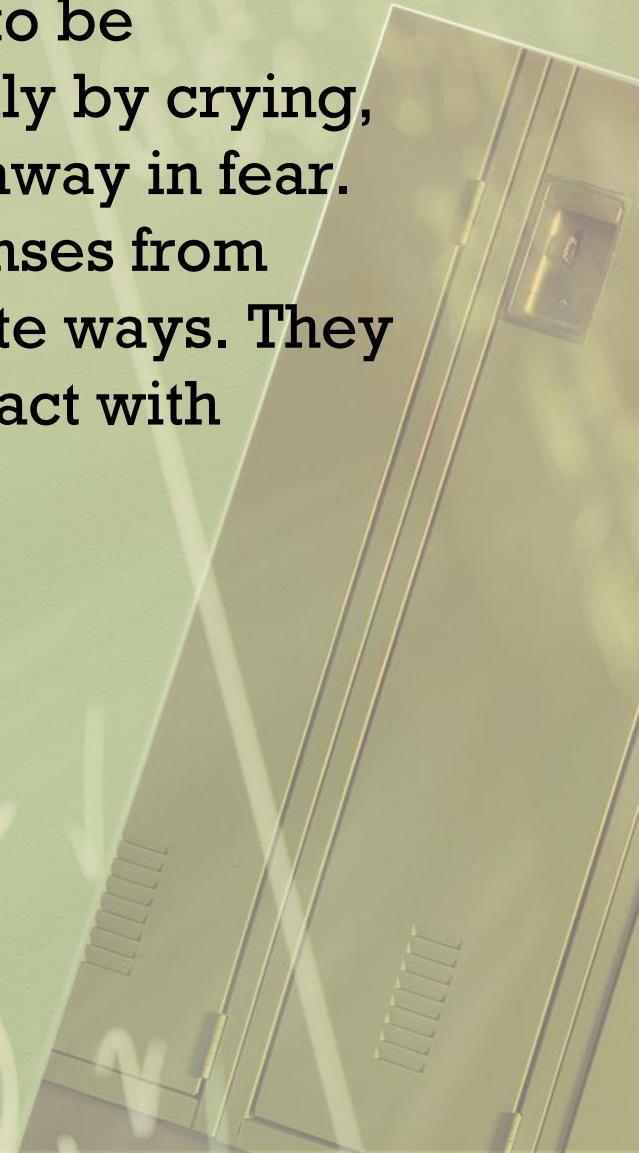
Characteristics of the Victim

- Low self-confidence
- Anxiety
- Fearfulness
- Submissiveness
- Depression or sad appearance
- Limited sense of humor
- Below-average size, strength, or coordination
- Feelings of helplessness
- Self-blame for problems
- Social withdrawal and isolation
- Poor social skills
- Low popularity
- Few or no friends
- Excessive dependence on adults



The Victim

Children who are repeatedly bullied tend to be passive. They inadvertently reward the bully by crying, giving over their possessions, or running away in fear. Some victims also provoke negative responses from others by behaving in socially inappropriate ways. They may trigger conflict or ridicule and then react with anger and exasperation.



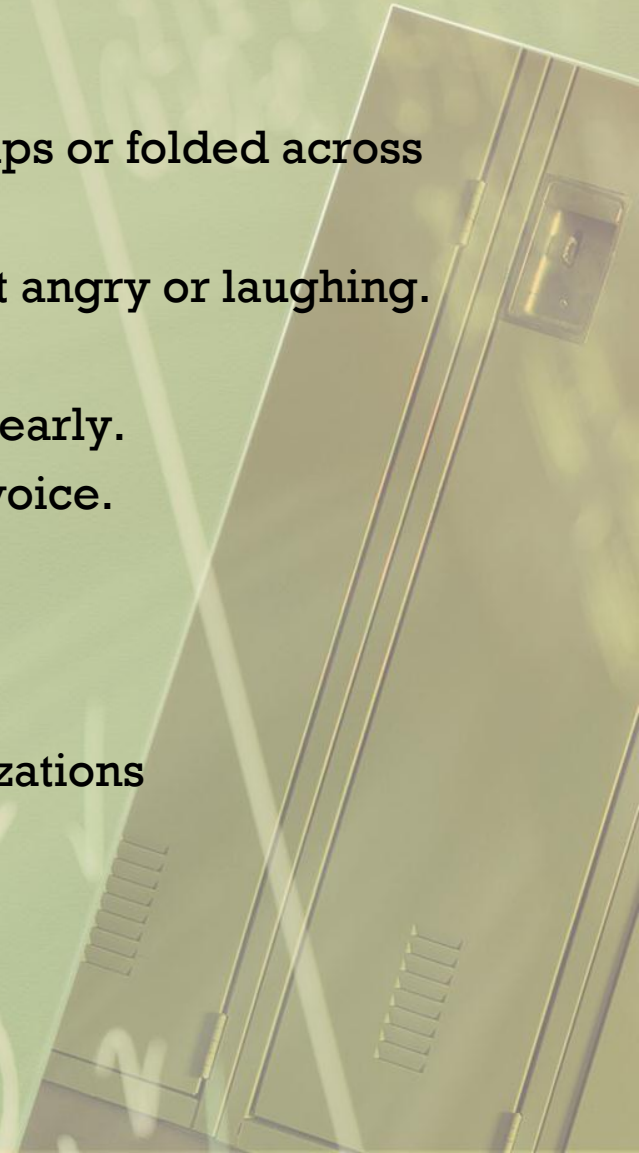
How do I help someone who is being Bullied?

- Help them learn to exhibit self-confidence
- Teach them to avoid the bully's tactics
- Help them practice responding with assertiveness
- Help them obtain support from others
- Help them develop friends



Ways someone can show assertiveness

- Take a deep breath and let the air out slowly.
- Sit or stand tall, head up.
- Keep your hands at your sides rather than on your hips or folded across your chest
- Have a relaxed and purposeful facial expression, not angry or laughing.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Speak with a calm voice, loud enough to be heard clearly.
- Use non-provocative words and a confident tone of voice.
- Avoid name-calling or making threats.
- Avoid finger pointing or other threatening gestures.
- Reply briefly and directly.
- Avoid bringing up past grudges or making generalizations
(any statement that starts with “you always”)



Consequences for the Victim

While under the influence of a bully, victims may show many signs of physical, emotional, and social distress. They often feel tense, anxious, tired, listless, and sad. Some children lose their confidence, become socially isolated, do poorly in school, or refuse to go to school.

They may also show high levels of:

- Skin problems
- Abdominal pain
- Sleep problems
- Bed-wetting
- Crying
- Depression
- Headaches
- School Violence

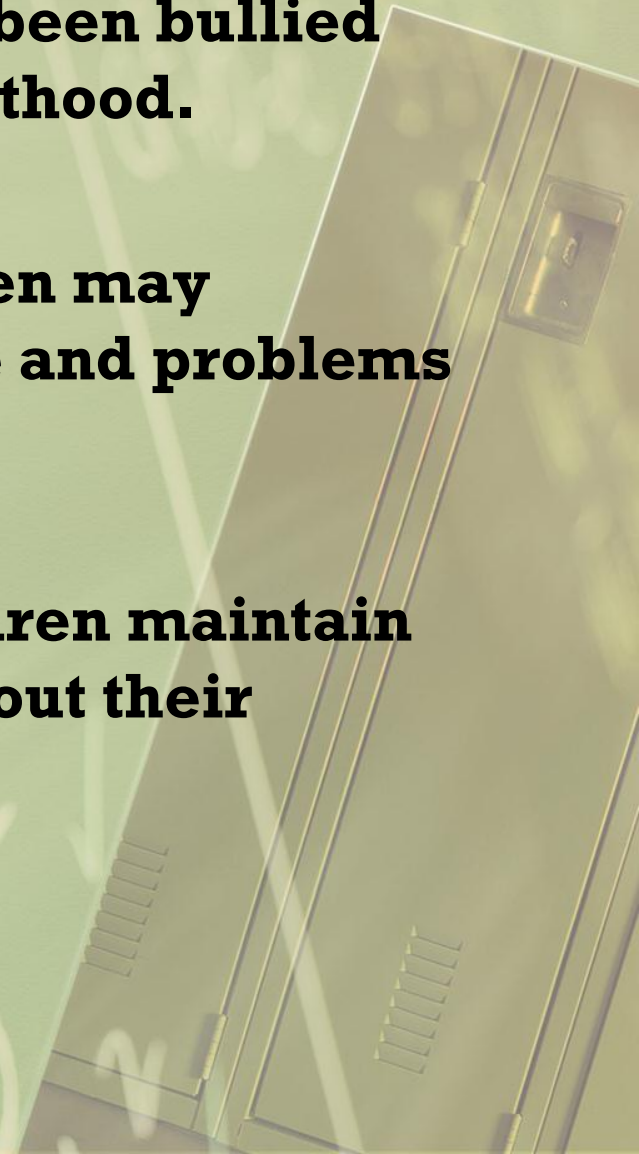


Consequences for the Victim into Adulthood

Victims' painful memories of having been bullied linger as the victims mature into adulthood.

Adults who were victimized as children may continue to show poor self-confidence and problems with depression.

Most adults who were bullied as children maintain vivid memories of the events throughout their lifetime.



The Bystander

- Hurtful Bystander
 - Instigate
 - Encourage
 - Join in
 - **PASSIVELY ACCEPT BULLYING** – While there is often no intent, they provide the audience and the silence the bully craves.



The Bystander cont.

- The Helpful Bystander
 - Directly intervene- defend the victim or redirect the situation away from the bully
 - Get help- gather support from peers to stand up to the bully or tell an adult.
- **More than one-half the time, bullying stops within 10 seconds of a bystander stepping in to help!**

What is our School System doing?

- Educating our children
- Educating the parents and community
- Conducting thorough investigations of all allegations of Bullying
- Taking a no tolerance stance on the issue
- Ensuring that there is no retaliation for reporting bullying.
- Encourage reporting. Anonymous reports can be made to 1-877- SAY-STOP
- Providing confidential ways for parents and children to report



What Can you do as a Parent?

1. Encourage your child to report any bullying incidents to you.
2. Validate your child's feelings. It is normal for your child to feel hurt, sad, and angry.
3. Ask your child how he/she has tried to stop the bullying. Asking questions is a wonderful way to have your child do the thinking.
4. Talk with your child's teacher. Make sure they are aware of what is going on.
5. Encourage your child to seek help from other school personnel.
6. Coach your child in alternatives. Share these strategies: avoidance is often an excellent strategy, playing in a different place, play a different game, stay near a supervisor, look for new friends, join social activities outside of school.
7. Encourage your child to be a HELPFUL BYSTANDER.
8. If you see any bullying, stop it right away, even if your child is the one doing the bullying
9. Set and example-If your children see you hit, ridicule, or gossip about someone else, they are also more likely to do so themselves.

What Can you do if your child is a Bully?

- Take it seriously. Don't treat bullying as a passing phase. Even if you're not worried about long-lasting effects on your child, another child is being hurt.
- Talk to your child to find out why he or she is bullying. Often, children bully when they feel sad, angry, lonely, or insecure and many times major changes at home or school may bring on these feelings.
- Help build empathy for others and talk to your child about how it feels to be bullied.
- Ask a teacher or a school counselor if your child is facing any problems at school, such as if your child is struggling with a particular subject or has difficulty making friends. Ask them for advice on how you and your child can work through the problem.
- Ask yourself if someone at home is bullying your child. Often, kids who bully are bullied themselves by a parent, family member, or another adult.
- Change behaviors that might be setting a bad example (e.g. speaking disrespectfully to coaches, referees, waitresses etc.)

**Questions????
1-877-SAY-STOP**

