

Bullying Statistics & Responses

A Few Statistics

1. One in four kids in the U.S. is bullied on a regular basis.
2. For children with special needs, the rates are two to three times higher. (According to more than ten distinct studies.)
 - In a Massachusetts survey of roughly 400 parents of children with autism, families reported that 88% of their children had been physically or verbally bullied.
 - In Connecticut, more than 50% of tracked bullying reports involved a student with a disability or an IEP.

Two Types of Bullies

1. Some bullies don't understand the impact of their actions and can benefit from education and mediation. When they see the impact of their behavior, they are usually remorseful and do not repeat hurtful actions.
2. Other bullies have ill-intent and cannot see another's perspective. Frequently, this type of bully suffers from mental health issues and may need medical treatment to keep themselves and others safe. Without medical assistance, some of these people will become bullies in the workplace.

Four Types of Cyberbullies

1. **Inadvertent Cyber-bully** *Jokes around, tries different online personas.*
2. **Mean Girls** *Done for fun, social popularity & inclusion.*
3. **Power Hungry** (*"Revenge of the Nerds" as a subgroup*) *Closest to "school-yard bully" & wants to be feared.*
4. **Vengeful Angel** *Defending him/herself from attack, protecting others from attack, righting a perceived wrong.*

Responses for Allies to Cyber-bullying

1. **Be Kind.** Spend time with a friend who is being bullied. Reassure them with supportive calls and texts.
2. **Set a good example.** Don't forward mean messages or use insults to defend a friend.
3. **Block bullying.** Advise the friend not to reply or even read text messages or online attacks. Help the friend block bullies or change their password.
4. **Ask those who are bullying to stop.** Stand up for your friend if it feels safe to do so.

5. **Gather evidence.** Take screen shots and copy messages to keep records of what was said.
6. **Tell others.** Help your friend report what is happening to a trusted adult. Report the abuse to the website.
7. **Report to authorities.** If appropriate, present your evidence to the authorities.

Note: *“Snitching” is to get someone in trouble.*
“Reporting” is to keep someone safe.

What Can I Do as an Adult in the School?

- Recognize bullying can escalate when adults get involved.
- Always speak to the target privately and at a separate time from the bully.
- Identify signs of bullying.
- Cultivate an environment of inclusion and acceptance.
- Create opportunities to help everyone in your classes get to know each other.
- Assess the level of power imbalance, threat, and fear. *(Remember, it could be the most popular child, who can easily deny accusations.)*
- Find out how the target would like to have the situation handled.
- Involve support staff and police, if necessary.
- Help the target feel safe. (e.g. a buddy system, check-ins, etc.)
- Assist the bully in understanding the impact of their actions.