

How to prevent your child from getting bullied—or being a bully

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(HealthDay)—With the start of a new school year, bullying will become an issue for many children and their parents.

Parents should teach their [children](#) to respond to bullying by staying calm; looking the bully in the eye; saying in a firm voice, "I don't like what you are doing," or "Please don't talk to me like that"; or simply walking away, the American Academy of Pediatrics says.

Parents need to recognize the serious nature of bullying and acknowledge their [child's](#) feelings about being bullied. It's also important to teach children to know when and how to ask a trusted adult for help.

Encourage your child to make friends with other kids, support your child in activities that interest him or her, and monitor your child's social media or texting so you can identify problems before they get out of hand.

If your child is a bully, emphasize that bullying is never OK. Set firm and consistent limits on [aggressive behavior](#), use nonphysical discipline such as loss of privileges, and praise [positive behaviors](#) such as helping or being kind to other children.

Help your children learn empathy by asking them to consider how bullying makes other children feel. Ask how they would feel if someone bullied them. Demonstrate by example that kids can achieve their goals without teasing, threatening or hurting others.

Work with the school principal, teachers, social workers, psychologists and [parents](#) of children your child has bullied to find practical solutions.

Teach children that if they witness bullying, they should tell a trusted adult. Encourage them to join with other kids to tell bullies to stop, and to include bullied children in their activities.

More information: The U.S. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development has more on [bullying](#).

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