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## Be a Buddy Not a Bully

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When a student is repeatedly harmed, psychologically and/or physically, by another student or groups of students, they are a victim of bullying, as defined by Kari Sassu et al. in their article titled “Bullies and Victims: Information for Parents”. Bullying has been around, especially in schools, for as long as we all can remember. You, as parents, need to be aware of your child’s emotions and how to notice if your child is being bullied. There are different signs/forms of bullying, different effects of bullying, and many prevention programs. It is important to remember that bullying can be seen in many different forms. Such as, cyberbullying, intentional exclusion from a group, spreading rumors, racial bullying, physical assaults or aggressions, religious bullying, physical or verbal threats, or repeated name calling. “Both boys and girls engage in bullying behavior, but some differences are evident. Boys, for example, typically engage in direct, overt



bullying behaviors, including physical assaults or verbal taunts and threats. Girls often use more indirect, discreet means to bully others, such as intentionally leaving someone out of activities or spreading rumors” (Sassu et al. 2004). Children are creative and can be very mean towards their peers, it is

important, as a parent, to watch for these signs. Some signs or behaviors may not be recognized as “bullying”, but if they are dismissed, there could be serious impacts to your child or another child’s development. “bullies are more likely to become abusive spouses or parents and to engage in criminal activities as adults” (Sassu et al. 2004). This is an important factor to take into consideration, bullies grow into something more serious.

The impact of bullying can be detrimental to a child’s development. There are many negative effects that come with it. Bullying is “associated with poorer family functioning, interparental violence, and parental maltreatment” (Sourander et. al 2007). While the victims of bullying tend to be depressed, insecure, and anxious. In the scientific journal “What Is the Early Adulthood Outcome of Boys Who Bully or Are Bullied in Childhood? The Finnish “From a Boy to a Man” Study” by Sourander et. al, they found that “antisocial personality and anxiety and psychotic disorders ... substance use, and depressive and anxiety disorders” are all effects of bullying (Sourander et. al 2007). This is a great description of the effects of bullying and how much someone can be hurt in the matter of a few seconds. A victim, later in life,

may develop personality disorders and such. If you notice your child coming home from school acting abnormal, sad, anxious, or less talkative, you may want to talk to them about that and what is going on at school. Another aspect to look when considering the impact of bullying would be the effect of those who get bullied due to their bodies. “children and adolescents with

obesity had greater odds of experiencing bullying than their counterparts with healthy weight. Children and adolescents with obesity and overweight were more likely to experience bullying than their normal weight peers” (Cheng et. al 2022). Children must be protected from



bullies, especially those that struggle with their weight. Overall, the effects of bullying on a child are very real, and society needs become more aware of this. Bullying doesn't have to continue. We can put an end to it. When conducting research, I found various articles and websites that have bullying prevention plans in place. I think this is something you as parents, and the schools, should take into consideration. Interventions was one of the main prevention programs I came across. In an academic journal titled, “Bullying Prevention Strategies in Early Childhood Education” by Olivia Saracho, she stated, “interventions can offer them social and emotional skills that can help them avoid bullying behaviors and initiate a foundation to cultivate solid social relationships. Victimized children have difficulties establishing limits and effectively protect themselves” (Saracho 2016). I

think this intervention can be very beneficial if handled in the correct manner. This intervention addresses both the bully and the victim which will be needed. Another program I continued to come across was the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, which decreases bullying and improves relationships among students in all levels of schooling in their home and school environments. “(1) the adults’ warmth, positive interest, and participation; (2) stringent parameters that explain unacceptable behaviors; (3) persistent concentration to nonphysical restrictions for acceptable behaviors, disturbances, or regulations; and (4) adults are considered authorities and positive role models” (Saracho 2016). These four fundamental principles are crucial. All in all, there are many programs and interventions to decrease the amount of bullying that goes on in the classrooms.

Bullying is an intentional, harmful, action towards someone. Do you want your child to experience an intention action that could potentially harm them for the rest of their life? If not, you need to become aware of the different forms of bullying, the effects of bullying and the prevention programs in place.

Reference Page

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