

## **What should I do if my child is being bullied?**

Many children are plagued with bullying throughout their school years. As a parent, it is important to notice the signs that your child is being bullied at school and aid them with coping with the emotional turmoil associated with this. Bullying takes many forms and can turn simple tasks such as walking to the bathroom, or riding the bus home into daunting experiences that plague children with worry. Although bumps and bruises are evident of bullying, parents should also watch for more subtle signs of harm such as when your child fears going to school or has trouble sleeping.

If you find out that your child is being bullied, talk with them about what is occurring. They likely feel vulnerable or ashamed about being bullied and your love and support is vital in combating these feelings. Parents should reassure their children that they are not to blame and encourage your child to connect with peers to lessen their isolation.

To help ward off bullies, problem solve with your child about ways to stay safe. Identify counselors and teachers that can help when they feel unsafe. In addition, encourage your child to not retaliate against bullies. Bullies want to have control over your child's emotions and getting upset makes the bully feel more powerful. Keep in mind that you may have to intervene in persistent cases of bullying when your child's safety is threatened. Parents should work closely with school personnel and community advocates to assure that your child's school experience remains a positive one.