

Bullying: 5 ideas to start the conversation

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Bullying is a hard topic for both children and parents. A parent never wants to hear that their child is bullying or being bullied by someone. A child may be afraid to admit that they are being bullied. Though it is a hard conversation, talking to your children about bullying can help them learn to cope with their emotions and develop productive ways to handle bullying. Together, parents and their children can create a safe environment to be open about bullying and how it affects each child.



Here are 5 ideas to help you begin the conversation about bullying:

1. Be supportive and encouraging

Let your child know that you are there to support them through this difficult situation. A child encountering bullying may feel as though they are alone and can lead to feelings of helplessness.

2. Remind the child that they have some control of the situations.

Children are able to control their actions and reactions even though that can be challenging. This is important, feeling a lack of control could leave a child to feel helpless in a situation.

3. Your child is still learning about their emotions

A child may not have the skills yet to control or understand their emotions. Parents, can model emotional awareness by talking about their own feelings.

4. Bullying can take different forms

Not only can bullying happen at school, or on the playground, but technology has created new avenues for bullying on social media sites or over cell phones. Over half of teens or adolescents have been bullied online, and more than 1 in 3 young people have experienced cyber-threats. Though this type of bullying is not physical, it can be just as hurtful and damaging as bullying face-to-face. Discussing cyber-bullying with your child and proper ways to use technology will help a child understand the seriousness of cyber-bullying and learn to

recognize it.

5. Forgiveness can be difficult, but powerful

Not only can forgiveness show kindness toward a bully, but it can also bring healing to the child who was bullied. Holding on to hurt feelings will only further the harm of bullying. One way to move past bullying is to forgive the bully.

For more resources on how to help combat bullying through skill building and activities for your child we recommend [Seeing Red, an Anti-Bullying Curriculum](#) by Jennifer Simmonds.