

Bullying Definition

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.



In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- An imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power, such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situation, even if they involve the same people
- Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying included actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.



Parents, school staff, and other adults have a role to play in preventing bullying. Learn how to talk to kids about bullying and how to respond to bullying. More information can be found at the link below.

stopbullying.gov



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NASSAU COUNTY
SHERIFF

Sheriff Bill Leeper



**What parents
need to know
about
Bullying**

Bullying Statistics

- The 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) indicates that, nationwide, 20% of students in grades 9–12 experienced bullying.
- The 2008–2009 School Crime Supplement (National Center for Education Statistics and Bureau of Justice Statistics) indicates that, nationwide, 28% of students in grades 6–12 experienced bullying.



Effects of Bullying

Bullying is linked to many negative outcomes including impacts on mental health, substance use, and suicide. It is important to talk to kids to determine whether bullying—or something else—is a concern. Kids who are bullied can experience negative physical, school, and mental health issues. Kids who are bullied are more likely to experience:

- Depression and anxiety, increased feelings of sadness and loneliness, changes in sleep and eating patterns, and loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy. These issues may persist into adulthood.
- Health complaints
- Decreased academic achievement—GPA and standardized test scores—and school participation. They are more likely to miss, skip, or drop out of school.

A very small number of bullied children might retaliate through extremely violent measures.

In 12 of 15 school shooting cases in the 1990s, the shooters had a history of being bullied.

Is my child being bullied?

- torn clothes
- loss of appetite
- mood changes
- reluctance to go to school
- bruises or injuries that can't be explained

Is my child the bully?

- impulsiveness
- no empathy for others
- a desire to be in control
- may be an arrogant and boastful winner and poor loser in competitive games

How do I talk about Bullying?

Parents, school staff, and other caring adults have a role to play in preventing bullying. They can:

- **Help kids understand bullying.** Talk about what bullying is and how to stand up to it safely. Tell kids bullying is unacceptable. Make sure kids know how to get help.
- **Keep the lines of communication open.** Check in with kids often. Listen to them. Know their friends, ask about school, and understand their concerns.
- **Encourage kids to do what they love.** Special activities, interests, and hobbies can boost confidence, help kids make friends, and protect them from bullying behavior.
- **Model how to treat others with kindness and respect.**



If you suspect your child of being bullied talk with your child. Be supportive and gather information about the bullying. Then, report suspected bullying to your child's school.

Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying occurs when children or teens use the internet, cell phones or other devices to send or post text or images intended to hurt or embarrass other children or teens. This can include sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images; posting sensitive, private information about another person; or pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad. Children and teens can cyber bully each other through e-mails, instant messaging, text messages, web pages, blogs or chat rooms.

Tips to help prevent cyber bullying:

- Keep your computer in easily viewable places
- Talk regularly with your child about on-line activities that he or she is involved in
- Tell your child that you may review his or her on-line communications if you think there is reason for concern
- Consider installing parental control filtering software and/or tracking programs
- Educate your child about the consequences of inappropriate use of his or her electronics, such as losing internet access or use of their cell phone

Tips for dealing with cyber bullying that your child has experienced:

- Strongly encourage your child not to respond to the cyber bullying
- do not erase the messages or pictures (save these as evidence)
- Try to identify the individual doing the cyber bullying
- Contact your child's school
- Contact the police if cyber bullying involves acts such as threats of violence, extortion, obscene or harassing phone calls or text messages, harassment, stalking, hate crimes or child pornography

