

BULLYING IS NOT JUST A SCHOOLYARD RIGHT-OF-PASSAGE



Bullying is a physical or emotionally abusive behavior that includes an imbalance in power and is repeated over time. Nationally, 1 in 5 teenagers have experienced being bullied¹, and 16% of high school students say they were cyber-bullied, through text message, email, video games, or social media. More girls than boys report cyber-bullying².

BULLYING CAN HAVE NEGATIVE AND PROFOUND LONG-TERM EFFECTS.

- Kids who are being bullied report higher rates of depression and anxiety, sadness, loneliness, and loss of interest in activities. They may have more health complaints and decreased academic achievement. They are more likely to miss, skip, or drop out of school.
- Kids who bully others are more likely to engage in risky behaviors, such as alcohol and substance abuse, early sexual activity, intimate partner violence, and have criminal convictions.
- Bystanders can also feel the negative emotional impact of bullying. They may not know if it is safe to intervene or may experience secondary trauma.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

There are many strategies to help your child overcome and avoid bullying behavior.

- **Communication is key** – Talk to them about what bullying is and let them know how to get help from you or another trusted adult. Find them a therapist, if needed—there's help even if you don't have private health insurance, through the Children's System of Care (call 1-877-652-7624).
- **Redirection** – If your child is being bullied or acting as a bully, connect them to hobbies and interests that they love. Hobbies can refocus their attention and help them make friends.
- **"Do Unto Others"** – Model treating others with kindness and respect. Young people learn from adults.
- **Safely Stand Up** – Teach your children how to stand up when someone is being bullied. Talk to them about safe strategies to defuse bullying with humor, or to say "stop" directly and confidently, and then to walk away. Teach them what to do if it escalates.

WHAT OTHER RESOURCES ARE OUT THERE?

[Stopbullying.gov](https://stopbullying.gov) has great resources to learn more about the effects of bullying, and how you can make a difference in your children's lives.

[Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying \(HIB\)](#) allegations can be reported to **any** school district staff member. If you have specific concerns about bullying in your child's school, you can talk to any staff. Each school district is required to implement [the New Jersey Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights](#).

NJ Statewide Student Support Services (NJ4S) has many resources to prevent bullying, and support for youth being bullied. Talk to your child's guidance counselor about connecting your child to NJ4S supports today!

Learn more at nj4s.nj.gov.

¹ 2019 School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, National Center for Education Statistics and Bureau of Justice
² 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

STOP THE BULLYING



NJ STATEWIDE STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

LEARN MORE AT NJ4S.NJ.GOV