

Topic

Bullying

- People bully because of power. Sometimes these kids are well-connected socially, and they use that power to bully and harass others.
- Sometimes kids bully because they themselves have been bullied or feel powerless in some way.
- Half of all bullies are bullied at home by parents or siblings.
- Bullying is “the most frequently occurring form of violence in American schools, and it really is the engine driving the majority of school violence.
- The stereotype is that the bully will be a large, physically menacing kid - but this is not necessarily true. Bullies just need to have power in some other way - socially, academically, or otherwise.
- Targets of bullying are comprised of others who are perceived to be different in some way: overweight, shorter, new to the school, behind in puberty, those who dress differently, those who are perceived as being different (gay, bisexual, poor, trans, a different race or culture than is predominate in the school.
- 55.5 percent of LGBTQ+ felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation.
- 37.8 percent felt unsafe because of their gender expression.
- Over 60 percent of LGBTQ+ students avoided school functions and extracurricular activities because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.
- About one-third of all teenagers who use the Internet say they have been targets of a range of annoying and potentially menacing online activities.

Suggested Do's and Don'ts

- 1) If your child has been threatened (either verbally or via technology) or assaulted by a bully, contact the police immediately.
- 2) If the situation is less severe or less time sensitive, the first thing to do is to get a copy of the school's anti-bullying policy. Gather evidence and go over what happened with your child, writing it all down.
- 3) Be sure to tell your child that what happened wasn't their fault, and don't blame them if they handled the situation the wrong way.
- 4) Schedule a face-to-face meeting with your school's principal. Take notes of the meeting, and what actions the principal says the school will take. Follow-up with an email to the principal thanking them and reiterating what your understanding of the outcome.
- 5) The next step is to follow-up with your child to see if the harassment has stopped after the meeting at the school. If the bullying hasn't stopped, you will need to file a complaint with your school superintendent, your school board, and your local police as well.