

Information for Adults

DISABLIST BULLYING



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WHAT IS BULLYING?



Bullying is deliberate behaviour intended to hurt, humiliate or intimidate. It can be:

- Physical - hitting, kicking, taking things
- Verbal - name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- Indirect - spreading nasty rumours or stories, excluding from social groups, sending malicious emails or text messages.

Bullying is not two people having a disagreement or falling out over something. It is not a one-off incident - it has to happen several times.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED:

Bullying is often a problem for children who have a learning or physical disability. Bullies sometimes see children with a disability as an easy target. This could be because they may not be able to defend themselves, or they may not be able to communicate what has happened to them. This means the levels of bullying are higher for children who have a learning or physical disability. There are signs which may suggest your child is being bullied.

SYMPTOMS TO LOOK FOR INCLUDE:

- Reluctance to go to the centre or setting - including frequent complaints of headaches or stomach ache
- Anxiety or irritability
- Becoming withdrawn
- Self harming



HOW YOU CAN HELP:

If you believe your child is being bullied, you should:

- Talk to your child calmly about what is happening



- If your child does not use speech, you could make up a sign, symbol or picture that your child could use to show they are being bullied
- Reassure your child he or she has done the right thing by telling you about it
- Make a note of what your child tells you
- Encourage your child to report anything to the adults who work with them
- Let the adults who work with your child know as soon as possible
- Talk to them about the bullying

WHEN YOU TALK TO THE ADULTS WHO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD ABOUT BULLYING, YOU SHOULD:

- Stay calm - the adult may not be aware your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened, using the notes you made
- Make a note of what the adult says and ask if there is anything you can do to help
- Stay in touch with the staff and let them know if things improve or problems continue.

Ultimately the responsibility for dealing with the bullying lies with the centre or setting. We all have an obligation to promote and safeguard the welfare of all children and have responsibilities regarding bullying and disabled bullying. Parents should take the following steps, as necessary, if they are concerned that the bullying has not stopped.

- Ask to see the anti-bullying policy for the centre or setting - are they doing what it says they will?
- Make an appointment to see a senior member of staff
- Keep a record of that meeting. If this does not help, write to the Manager explaining your concerns and outlining what you would like to see happen.

Working together will help stop the bullying.



HELPFUL CONTACTS

Childnet International

www.childnet-int.org
www.childnet-int.org/safety/parents.aspx

Parentline Plus

For support for parents
Telephone: 0808 800 2222
www.parentlineplus.org.uk

Kidscape

A helpline for parents and carers of bullied children
Telephone: 08451 205 204 Monday to Friday 10.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.
www.kidscape.org.uk

Mencap

www.mencap.org.uk/

USEFUL INFORMATION

Safe to Learn DCFS (Schools)

www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tackling_bullying/safetolearn/

Anti-Bullying Alliance

Advice to parents and carers
www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/

November 2010

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