

IF YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED

- Be prepared to work with your school. Understand your school's policy and work with them.
- Don't call the other parent. Trying to resolve the situation yourself almost never works.
- Don't encourage your child to fight back. This may put your child in further danger.
- Don't blame your child for the bullying. The bullying isn't his/her fault. Don't add to your child's feeling of helplessness. Be a Support.

IF YOUR CHILD SEES BULLYING

- If safe, stand up. He/she can say, "Stop, don't bother him/her," or can remove the target of the bullying by saying, "C'mon let's get out of here."
- Report the bullying - to you or to an adult at school or anonymously.
- Be a friend. Include the child being bullied in social activities; reach out in friendship.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BULLYING

- Talk with your child. Teach him/her that bullying is wrong.
- Set limits on your child's behavior. Make your expectations clear.
- Provide clear consequences. For any acts of aggression/bullying you see or become aware of. Enforce those consequences.
- Seek help. If the bullying doesn't stop, talk to your child's school counselor/administrator for additional help.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Attorney General's Office
Bullying and Cyberbullying
www.mass.gov/ago/bullying

Massachusetts Department of Secondary & Elementary Education:
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Resources
www.doe.mass.edu/bullying/

Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center
At Bridgewater State University
<http://marccenter.webs.com/>

Massachusetts Bullying & Cyberbullying Prevention
www.stopbullyingma.org/

iKeepSafe
www.ikeepSAFE.org/

Stopbullying.gov
www.stopbullying.gov/what-is-bullying/

National Bullying Prevention Center
www.pacer.org/bullying/resources/

Cyberbullying Research Center
www.cyberbullying.us

BULLYING



A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

THE MASSACHUSETTS
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

ONE ASHBURTON PLACE
BOSTON, MA 02108
(617) 727-2200
www.mass.gov/ago/bullying



WHAT IT BULLYING?

Bullying is defined as repeated and deliberate acts which result in physical and/or emotional harm and in which the target has difficulty stopping the behavior directed towards him/her.



Verbal: teasing, calling names, or through written or oral communication

Social: spreading rumors, excluding others, breaking up friendships

Physical: inflicting intentional physical harm to another student; hitting, punching, shoving, etc.

Cyber: using technology to harm others, i.e. the Internet, texting, email, and/or creating a blog/website

Six out of 10 American teenagers report that they witness bullying in school once a day. (National Education Association. 2013).

KNOW THE LAW

School districts in Massachusetts are required to have a bullying prevention policy and plan in place including:

- Procedures for students, staff, parents, guardians and others to report bullying or retaliation.
- Procedures for promptly responding to and investigating reports of bullying or retaliation.
- Procedures (consistent with state and federal law) for promptly notifying the parents or guardians of a target and an aggressor, including actions taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

It is also important to understand that school administration is not allowed to discuss any disciplinary action taken against another student.

HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD

- **Be supportive.** Tell your child that you believe him/her and that he/she did not deserve to be bullied and you are glad that he/she told you.
- **Gather information.** Read the school bullying prevention plan (often posted on school website or in the student handbook) to understand the procedures and steps to take.
- **Don't confront.** Confronting the child or parents/guardians of the child(ren) who is bullying is not advisable and will often make things worse.
- **Talk to your school.** Ask for help! Let your child know that you are going to talk to someone you trust (such as a teacher, counselor or administrator) so the adults can create a plan to stop the bullying.

CYBERBULLYING



Technology has made connecting and sharing information easier than ever. Unfortunately, social networking sites, smartphones, and the Internet are also used to send cruel messages that can be degrading or threatening.

"95% of all young people ages 12-17 are now online" -iKeepSafe

CYBERBULLYING TIPS

Look for warning signs. If your child's Internet use becomes obsessive or if they become withdrawn from regular activities, they may be a victim of cyberbullying.

Tell your child not to respond. It is better to ignore distressing e-mails, messages, and comments.

Tell your child to "block" bullies. If harassment is via e-mail, social networking sites, IM, and/or chat rooms, delete or suspend your child's current account and create a new one or block the bullies.

Save the evidence. Preserve/print/take screenshots or photos of comments and images sent via e-mail, websites or text messages. Note the date and time when the cyberbullying occurred.

Remove hurtful websites. Review your Internet service provider (ISP) or cell phone provider's policy and follow the procedure to have any webpage created to hurt your child removed.

Get your child's school involved. Learn the school's policy on cyberbullying and ask for guidance on how to handle repeated incidents.

Become familiar with social media sites. Don't be afraid to monitor your child's use of the Internet and social media sites.