








Take Action against Bullying

By definition, four characteristics qualify a situation as bullying: the behavior has to be **intentional**, be **repetitive**, be **hurtful**, and involve an **imbalance of power**. Even if you can't remember the exact definition of bullying, you'll probably recognize it when you see it. And when you know that bullying is taking place, it's time to take action.

Everyday STEPS for Preventing Bullying:

-  **Travel in Groups** – It can be more difficult to face a bully alone.
-  **Be Calm and Direct** – Directly and respectfully stand up to bullies, even if you aren't the person being picked on. Stay calm and let the bully know that unkind behavior is not okay.
-  **Avoid Fighting** – Speaking up is the right thing to do, but being verbally aggressive or using physical force will likely make the situation more dangerous.
-  **Report the Situation** – Tell adults what is going on. If an adult is not available during the situation, be sure to report it later. Parents, teachers, and counselors can help you stay safe and solve the problem.

Steps for Parents:

-  **Be Informed** – Learn about your school's policy toward bullying. How do staff members respond to these situations? How can families be involved in solutions?
-  **Reach Out** – Get in touch with professionals who understand bullying. Talk with teachers, program staff, and counselors who have experience with this issue.
-  **Speak Out and Connect**- with other parents or community members who care about creating a safe, positive environment for kids.
 -  **Be Alert** – When the circumstances are violent or dangerous, involve law enforcement officials. Some adults are hesitant to take this step, but it can be necessary for preventing violence and breaking the cycle of bullying.

