



Statistics:

- Recent survey data shows that American children, ages 8 to 15 years, rate “bullying” as a greater problem than racism or pressure to have sex or use alcohol and other drugs.

— *Childhood Bullying: Implications for Physicians*, American Family Physician, 2004

- Children who are bullied are more likely than other children to be depressed, have lower self-esteem, feel lonely, anxious, and think about suicide. They are also more likely to report that they feel unwell and have more migraine headaches.

— *School-Based Health Professionals and Bullying Prevention*, National Assembly on School-Based Health Care, Susan Limber, PhD, 2003

- Young people who bully are more likely than those who do not to skip school and drop out of school. They are also more likely to smoke, drink alcohol and get into fights.

— *Nansel et al, 2003; Olweus, 1993*

What is “bullying?”

“Bullying” occurs when someone hurts or scares another person on purpose, and the person being bullied has a hard time defending himself or herself. Bullying can also happen online or electronically. “Cyber bullying” occurs when children or teens bully each other using the Internet, mobile phones or other cyber technology. Girls are about twice as likely as boys to be victims and perpetrators of cyber bullying (Kowalski et al., 2005). “Bullying” affects children directly through punching, shoving, spreading bad rumors about people, keeping certain people out of a group, teasing people in a mean way, sending mean text, e-mail or instant messages, or posting nasty pictures or messages about others in blogs or on Web sites.

— *Stop Bullying Now, U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)*, www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov

“Bullying” can happen to anyone.

Some bullies pick on people who seem different, whether it is the color of their skin, the way they talk or dress, their size, or their name. Some people are bullied because they have a disability. Sometimes bullies are mean for no apparent reason we can see.

— *American Academy of Family Physicians, 2004*, www.aafp.org

How can children handle bullies?

- Walk away
- Join clubs or take part in activities
- Tell a trusted adult
- If it feels safe, stand up to the bully
- Stay in a group

— *Stop Bullying Now, U.S. Health Resources and Services (HRSA)*, www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov

How can children handle cyber bullies?

- Count to five and relax; then decide to respond or to not respond
- Save instant messages or chat transcripts and report them to adults or service provider
- Remove yourself from the situation by signing off
- Block the person from sending messages
- Change account, screen name and phone number; and seek legal action

— *Stop Bullying Now, U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)*, www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov

Where to go for more information on bullying:

- www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov – the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services sponsors this site to educate children and adults on how to identify, prevent and intervene with bullying in schools.

AMA Alliance

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- www.aafp.org – the American Academy of Family Physicians is a professional medical member organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the science and art of family medicine and to ensure high-quality, cost-effective health care for patients.
- www.aap.org – the American Academy of Pediatrics is a professional organization committed to the attainment of optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents and young adults.
- www.csn.org – the Child Safety Network is a professional organization dedicated to making America a safer place for children to live.

The AMA Alliance, Inc. is a national health advocacy network committed to promoting better health. The Stop America's Violence Everywhere (SAVE) program assists victims of abuse, teaches children about bullies and conflict resolution and educates the public about child health and safety. All resources, including health-focused coloring books and bookmarks for children, are available at www.amaalliance.org.



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