

# Bullying Prevention

**It's Up to All of Us**



**Information Guide  
for Parents  
and Guardians**

2010



Halton  
District  
School  
Board



## Preventing Bullying

### What is bullying?

Bullying is typically a form of repeated, persistent and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.

**Bullying can be engaged in by individuals or groups and can include many different behaviours such as:**

#### Physical Bullying

Hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, beating up, stealing or damaging property.

#### Verbal Bullying

Name-calling, mocking, hurtful teasing, humiliating or threatening someone, racist or sexist comments.

#### Social Bullying

Excluding others from the group, gossiping or spreading rumours, setting others up to look foolish and damaging friendships.

#### Cyber Bullying

Using e-mail, cell phones, text messages and the Internet to threaten, harass, embarrass, exclude or damage reputations and friendships.

## How can parents/ guardians help?

Watch for signs of your son/daughter being bullied. They may include:

- A fear of going to school or participating in other activities.
- Appearing anxious or fearful.
- Complaining of feeling unwell.
- Losing things, needing money and reporting being hungry.
- Appearing isolated from their peer group.



## Tips For Sharing



If you're being bullied...

If you're standing by...

If you're bullying...

## If your son/daughter is being bullied, sharing these tips with him/her may help:

- If it's difficult for you to stand up for yourself, ignore the bullying and walk away...**then tell an adult.**
- If you're scared to talk to an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you.
- Go to areas where you feel safe.
- Stay close to students who will stick up for you.
- Be assertive, not aggressive...fighting back often makes the bullying worse.
- Remember, no one deserves to be bullied.

## **If your son/daughter is standing by to watch someone being bullied, sharing these tips with him/her may help:**

- Talk to someone who can help like a parent or a teacher...remember, telling is not tattling.
- If you walk away and get help, you are part of the solution...if you stay and watch, you are part of the problem.
- The best thing you can do for children/youth who are bullied is to be their friend and supporter.
- Speaking out helps. Bullying back doesn't help.

## **If your son/daughter bullies others, sharing these tips with him/her may help:**

- Talk to someone who can help like a parent, teacher, or coach. They can help you find ways to stop bullying behaviour.
- Understand you may not like everyone around you but you must treat them with respect.
- Some children/youth join in on bullying because their friends are doing it. Put yourself in the shoes of the child/youth who is being bullied. Imagine their hurt, fear, embarrassment and anger. Bullying is destructive – these feelings can cause serious and long-lasting harm.



**You're Not Alone**

## **Other important ways for parents/guardians to become involved:**

- Encourage your son/daughter to report incidents of bullying. Given the hidden nature of bullying and the fact that children/youth are usually afraid to come forward, parents are often unaware of bullying situations.
- Let your son/daughter know you want to hear about every incident of bullying and encourage them to talk to you or another adult they trust.
- Explain the difference between tattling and telling: tattling is what you do to get someone into trouble, telling is what you do to get someone out of trouble.

## **Be ready to listen:**

- If your son/daughter reports being bullied, be ready to listen right away. Don't put it off.
- Thank your son/daughter for being brave enough to come forward and explain it is his/her right to feel safe.
- Be willing to respond to all reports, even the seemingly trivial ones such as name calling. Consistency matters!

**Speak Up!**



## Be your son's/daughter's champion.

Once your son/daughter has come forward, it's your turn to take action:

- Arrange a meeting for you and your son/daughter with the teacher and/or principal/vice-principal.
- Bring with you the specific information you've gathered about the bullying incident(s) (e.g., who, what, where, when, how).
- Work with your son/daughter and school personnel on a plan to address what your son/daughter needs right now in order to feel safe; what he/she can do to avoid being bullied and to stand up to any future bullying; and who he/she can go to for help.
- Recognize the school may need some time to investigate your concerns.
- Keep the lines of communication open between school and home. Arrange a follow-up meeting or phone call.

The information in this pamphlet has been adapted from PREVNet: Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence Network web resources: [www.prevnet.ca](http://www.prevnet.ca)



The Kids Help Phone Line has trained counsellors to answer student and parent questions and provide advice about bullying.

**1-800-668-6868**

**<http://www.kidshelpphone.ca/en/home.asp>**

Ontario Ministry of Education Bullying Prevention brochure is available in 22 languages:

**<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/bullying.html>**

