



“Do not train a child to learn by force or harshness; but direct them to it by what amuses their minds, so that you may be better able to discover with accuracy the peculiar bent of the genius of each.”

~Plato



BULLYING AMONG CHILDREN

No one deserves to be bullied!!

What is bullying?

Bullying is repeated, negative acts committed by one or more children against another. Implicit in this definition is an imbalance in real or perceived power between the bully and victim. A child may encounter bullying attacks that are:

- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching and other forms of violence
- **Verbal** - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, threats
- **Emotional** – exclusion, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact, abusive comments
- **Racism** - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Online/cyber** - setting up hate websites, sending sms, emails and abusing victims via mobile phone

Possible signs of bullying

Children may indicate by their behavior that they are being bullied. If your child shows some of the following signs, bullying may be responsible and you might want to ask if someone is bullying or threatening him/her. Children may:

- Be unwilling to go to school - feel ill in the mornings
- Come home regularly with clothes/books destroyed and possessions missing
- Become distressed, fearful and anxious
- Cry themselves to sleep, have nightmares
- Have unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches

Persistent bullying can result in depression, low self-esteem, shyness, isolation and/or poor academic achievement.

Why does bullying thrive?

- Adults say nothing can be done
- Considered 'normal'
- Children have too much power
- No private way to get help
- Telling is discouraged - bullies threaten victims
- Environment and attitudes support/encourage bullying

How can bullying be reduced?

- Supportive environment – tell children that bullying is not tolerated in school, talk about bullying
- Co-operation between teachers and parents

- Clear guidelines - if something happens, parents/teachers deal with it immediately
- Rewards & sanctions - encourage kids to be assertive and speak out against bullying

How parents can help?

- If you are worried that your child is being bullied, ask directly
- Be aware of the signs and symptoms of bullying
- Talk with teacher, if it is school bullying
- Protection from continued bullying
- Teach child assertiveness skills
- Give your child a chance to vent feelings about being bullied
- Get other parents together and discuss ways to stop the bullying
- Arrange to meet your child, if the bullying is happening on the way to or from school
- Ask that the bullies be kept at school until everyone has had a chance to get home
- Invite children over to help your child make friends

Why do some children bully others?

- Like the feeling of power
- Are spoilt and expect everyone to do what they say
- Feel insecure, inadequate, humiliated
- Have been abused in some way (are scapegoats or bullied at home)
- Are under pressure to succeed at all costs
- Don't fit in with other kids
- Feel no sense of accomplishment

How to help a bully?

- Remain calm - don't overreact
- Find out why the child is bullying but don't interrogate incessantly
- Get help from child psychologist/counsellor, GP, parents, people who have contact with the child
- Set realistic and firm rules—clear consequences
- Awareness of their actions
- Teach empathy skills. How the other person feels about their actions.
- Ensure that the child apologises (in person or writing) to the child he/she bullied.
- Teach difference between aggressive and assertive behaviour.

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CLM CHILDREN SERVICES

CLM Children Counselling Unit is dedicated to provide care and hope to struggling children to meet their psychological and social-emotional needs.