



October 2007



Beating the Bully...

Teasing can be a part of growing up when it's done in a friendly and mutual way. Unfortunately for many kids, the simple teasing has been replaced by an aggressive behavior: bullying. Bullying is difficult to define and extends much further than taking someone's lunch money or pushing on the playground. Bullying can come in various forms including physical and verbal threats, emotional intimidation, and racial taunting. Bullying is usually relentless and can put a child in a state of constant fear.

Many bullies act the way they do because they are looking for attention, trying to get popular, trying to get what they want or to make themselves feel important. While you begin dealing with the issue with teachers and other school officials, try teaching your child these tactics to help them deal with the bullying situation:

Use the buddy system. Have someone with you on the bus, in the hallways, or at recess — wherever the bully is.

Hold the anger. It's natural to get upset by the bully, but that's what bullies thrive on.

Practice not letting them see you react with crying or looking red or upset - it's a useful skill for keeping off of a bully's radar.

Act brave, walk away, and ignore the bully. Firmly and clearly tell the bully to stop, and then walk away. Eventually, the bully will probably get bored with trying to bother you.

Remove the incentives. If the bully is demanding your lunch money, start bringing your lunch. If he's trying to get your music player, don't bring it to school.

Practice confidence. Practice ways to respond to the bully verbally or through your behavior. Practice feeling good about yourself (even if you have to fake it at first).

Talk about it. It may help to talk to a guidance counselor, teacher, or friend — anyone who can give you the support you need.

Find your true friends. If the bullying consists of rumors or gossip, find one or two true friends to talk to. Hearing a friend say, "I know the rumors are not true" can help you realize most people see gossip for what it is — petty, rude, and immature.

Bullying is to be taken very seriously. If it continues, encourage your child to let you or another adult know. Sometimes bullies stop as soon as a teacher finds out because they're afraid that they will be punished by parents. Teachers, principals, parents, and lunchroom helpers at school can all help to stop bullying.



PowerSource

Ask God:

1. To protect your child from bullies and the fear of them.
2. Give your child confidence to stand up for what is right even when he/she is afraid.
3. Help your child learn to love the unlovely.
4. To give you and your child's teachers a discerning spirit in order to help protect children from bullying.

Healthy Parenting...

Since bullying doesn't carry visible signs, it can be difficult to see. If your child exhibits some of the following warning signs, they may be a victim of bullying.

- Asking for stolen possessions to be replaced
- 'Losing' lunch money
- Falling out with good friends
- Being moody and bad tempered
- Being quiet and withdrawn
- Wanting to avoid leaving the house
- Not doing as well in schoolwork
- Insomnia
- Anxiety

If your child is reluctant to talk to you about your suspicions, PBS has developed a great interactive website that not only helps equip them with dealing with a bully, but may help in creating healthy discussions.

(pbskids.org/itsmylife/friends/bullies/)

OpenTheBook

"Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing."

1 Peter 3:9 (NIV)

Teachable Moments:

One of life's most difficult lessons can be learned from this verse. Our natural instinct is to repay insult with insult. Sometimes it is hard to take an insult without lashing back at the person, but this verse tells us to repay an insult with a blessing.

So how can you teach your kids to be a blessing in these situations?

Teach your child that the best way to bless someone, especially someone who is being cruel is to **PRAY** for them. Remind your kids that there is power in prayer. Prayer helps soften the heart of others and yourself.

Spend some time this month praying with your child about anyone who may have hurt their feelings or even a time when they hurt someone else's feelings.



"Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds... Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk **Along the Road when you lie down and when you get up."**

Deuteronomy 11:18-19

Chances are if your child hasn't dealt with bullying in some form or fashion themselves, he or she probably has seen it happen to a friend. Try talking to your kids using these questions:

1. Do you feel safe while you are at school?
2. Have you ever experienced bullying yourself? How did it make you feel? What did you do to make it stop or to deal with it?
3. Do you think Jesus or anyone else in the Bible was ever picked on? Look in the Bible to see how some of the characters dealt with bullies.

Healthy Habits: Stranger awareness...

The majority of kids can verbally define what a stranger is, but when faced with actually identifying one, many aren't able to do so. It is important to teach our children how to distinguish between safe or potentially harmful strangers. Go over some of the following with your child:

Does your child know what a stranger is? Yes, a stranger is someone the child does not know, but it is also more than that. Potentially harmful strangers can be nice and very friendly to the child. Let them know that it is ok to say "hello" to a stranger when they are with another adult, but to never go to or with them.

Does your child know what to do if approached by a stranger? Give them an idea of what to do if a stranger approaches them and they are uncomfortable. Teach them to trust their instincts. If they are uncomfortable, tell them to run away and scream for help.

Does your child know where to go for help? Review different scenarios so that your child will have an idea of a safe place to go for help if they ever need it. Teach them how to spot a police officer, or an adult working in a store, or which neighbors are safe, etc. so that they will already have a plan in their minds should they ever need it.

Get creative with safety! Have a password that only you and your child know and teach them never to go with anyone unless that person knows the password. Work together to come up with other safety measures.



Stay in tune with how the media is targeting your kids. Here are just a few of the products being directly marketed to kids.

What's Out on DVD/Video...

Movie: "R.L. Stine's Haunting Hour: Don't Think About It"

Genre: Horror

Network: Universal Studios

Release Date: September 4, 2007

Cast: Emily Osment, Brittany Curran, Cody Linley

Warnings: Rated **PG** for scary content and thematic elements. This film also contains flirting, creepy violence, monsters, and jealousy and conniving among girls.



What Music has released...

Album: Jonas Brothers

Artist: Jonas Brothers

Label: Hollywood Records **Genre:** Pop

Contains: "This appealing, energetic, tween-friendly CD is from a trio of cute, young heartthrobs who are in heavy rotations on Radio Disney and are also touring with Hannah Montana." Nice-guy image is consistent throughout the album.

(commonsensemedia.org)

What Games are out Now...

Title	Rating	Content	Age	Platform
High School Musical: Makin' the Cut	E	Features songs and characters from the two High School Musical movies	7+	Nintendo DS
Guitar Hero Encore: Rocks the 80's	T	Lyrics contain some sexual references/innuendos, and potentially offensive lyrics	10+	PS2
DiRT	E	Alcohol reference, language, and mild violence	10+	PS3, XBOX 360, Windows



Family Fun Night:

Sometimes talking to older, more "experienced" people can give much insight and wisdom into life and how to handle different situations that arise. Try this family activity and see what your kids and you can learn:

Have each family member interview someone. It could be another family member or some other older adult.

Come up with some questions about their childhood in regards to teasing or bullying. Some examples could be: Did you ever bully anyone? Why? Were you ever picked on? How did it make you feel?

After everyone has interviewed someone, come back together and discuss what each member discovered.

This is a great way to learn about communication and life. It is also a good lesson in empathy and learning from others experiences and even mistakes. The best part is you are spending time with your family!

October 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			