

How to Talk to Your Kids About Bullying

No one knows your child better than you do, but even so, parents need help talking about difficult subjects with their children. Here are a list of questions you can use to get the ball rolling.

Ways to initial conversation indirectly:

1. Oh my! That looks like it hurts. How did you get all those cuts and bruises?
2. You seem more quiet than usual, why is that?
3. Why do you think bullying happens?
4. What kind of cliques are there at your school?
5. So, I want to find out what you would do if you or your friends were being bullied. Here's a hypothetical situation...
6. I used to be bullied. (Tell own story, what happened...Ask the child what they think you did about it. Or ask them what they thought about the story. If you could have handled it better, ask them: how could I have handled it better?)
7. What was one good thing that happened today? Any bad things?
8. What is lunch time like at your school? Who do you sit with? What do you talk about?
9. Would you feel like a "tattletale" if you told that someone was bullying you or a friend?

Ways to initiate conversation directly:

1. How did you get hurt?
2. Did you tell the other child it hurt?
3. How often do they hurt you?
4. How do you feel when this happens to you? What do you think about their behavior?
5. Are there any spots on campus where students regularly get picked on?
6. Are any of your friends getting bullied at school?
7. Have you ever been bullied in the past?
8. Have you ever felt scared to go to school because you were afraid of bullying? What ways have you tried to change it?
9. What is it like to ride the school bus?

If you think your child might be the bully, or even know he/she is picking on other children, it can be scary to talk to your child about his/her behavior. We have some suggestions:

1. What does bullying mean to you?
2. Have you ever called anyone else names? Do you think that was bullying? Tell me more about that.
3. Do you or your friends ever leave other kids out of activities? If so, why?
4. If you knew a friend was a bully, why do you think it would be important to stop them from hurting others?

Even talking to your child for 15 minutes a day can help them learn to trust that their parents/ guardians will be there to listen if they need it. Some alternatives to asking about problems would be to ask about what is going right in your child's life:

1. What are you good at? What do you like best about yourself?
2. What was the best thing that happened today?
3. If you could sit down with the most powerful person in the world and give that person advice, what would it be?
4. What is a skill you wish you had? Why?
5. What makes you laugh?
6. What do you love about school/work*? (*If your teenagers have jobs outside the home)

Write some of your own questions below or on the back!



1670 Market Street, Suite 300
Redding, CA 96001
24-Hour Crisis Hotline:
530-244-0117

