



Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders OAFCCD

Help Your Child Stand up to School Yard Bullies!!

Children who look different, have a disability, or difficulty talking are sometimes the target of teasing or bullying by other children. We can't always be with our child to protect them and it is very important that we empower our children by giving them the skills to stand up for themselves.

Bullies know they can get their rewards by teasing kids who are quiet and non assertive because they'll get away with it. Bullies also pick on kids who'll give them a reaction - they want that control, to make you perform for them.

Parents can help by teaching kids to be assertive, but not aggressive. Kids can stand up for themselves with positive body language - standing tall, making eye contact. This lets the bully know the child will not tolerate being bullied. Children also need to have a plan; to know what they are going to do and where to go for help.

If your Child is being bullied, here's how you can help:

- ✓ Teach your child how to be assertive and to communicate messages with the body - through eye contact and tone of voice.
- ✓ Teach your child not to get into conversation with the bully (who wants a reaction). Your child can say two words - "Yeah, whatever" - and walk away.
- ✓ Help your child work out a plan. For example: if the bully follows, turn around and respond calmly, then walk toward an adult.
- ✓ Remind your child that when a bully sees that you won't react, teasing will be less fun for the bully and he will stop. Remember that others are also watching and learning from what you are doing.
- ✓ Remind your child that kids get teased for everything and anything. Physical differences are the most obvious, but kids tease others to get reactions and attention. It doesn't mean there is something "wrong" with you. Bullies just want to figure out what button to press to make you react.
- ✓ Notice positive things your child is doing. Use every single opportunity to acknowledge and talk about positive behaviours. This will build and re-enforce the child's self-esteem.

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