This booklet is for parents of children aged 6 to 12 years who are being bullied and who are bullying others. It gives information on the reasons behind bullying and how you can help your child if they are being bullied or are bullying other children.

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INTRODUCTION

Why be concerned about bullying in your child’s life?

Years of extensive research has shown that bullying in schools and in our society is a much more damaging and dangerous experience for children than was ever suspected.

Unfortunately, it’s much more widespread and is occurring at an earlier age than ever before. Research also shows that bullying has many serious consequences for the children who are bullied, for the bullies themselves, and for the bystanders who witness it.

What is bullying?

- Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally through threats or superior force.
- Many children do get involved in fights and disagreements every now and then. Teasing and name calling can also be done in a fun way (depending upon how the child feels. If he/she feels hurt and upset, it is bullying).
- But when this type of behaviour becomes persistent and threatening and directed towards children who are unable to stand up for themselves then bullying becomes a major problem.
- Being a bully, or being bullied, can happen to anyone and can have long term effects. Bullies play with power any way they can.
- Bullying can be a single incident or pattern of significant severity involving a written, verbal, electronic or physical act intended to:
  - Physically harm a student or damage the student’s property; or
  - Cause substantial emotional harm to a student; or’
  - Interfere with a student’s educational opportunities; or
  - Be severe, persistent, or pervasive so as to create an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
  - Disrupt the orderly operation of the school.

Most definitions include the idea that an imbalance of power exists between a bully and the bully’s victim. In other words, in a bullying situation, one child has a hard time defending him- or herself. Bullying isn’t “conflict” and can’t be solved by conflict resolution or mediation, because these strategies can send the message that both children are partly right and partly wrong.

NATURE OF BULLYING BEHAVIOR

Bullying usually includes:
- deliberate hostility and aggression
- a victim who is less powerful than the bully or bullies
- an outcome which is always painful and / or distressing

Bullying is not:
- A one off fight or argument
- A friend sometimes being nasty
An argument with a friend

Bullying or Teasing?
It depends on how the receiver perceives it. This will be determined by other factors such as:
- their previous experience,
- their “personal sensitivity”
- what kind of support they get from their peers.
The giver might think they’re being funny, but if the receiver has been affected by previous bullying, he or she might not appreciate or enjoy it.

The three Forms of Bullying
According to researchers, there are three forms of bullying:

Physical: the most commonly known form; includes hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, and taking personal belongings. Causes bodily harm.

Verbal: using written or spoken words that are cruel or that put someone down. Includes taunting, malicious teasing, name-calling, and making threats.

Psychological / Emotional: involves spreading rumours, manipulating social relationships, and engaging in social exclusion, extortion, or intimidation. Causes emotional hurt and pain.

Bullying can be:
- Direct, such as hitting, teasing or threatening.
- Indirect, such as excluding, spreading rumours, Internet harassment, or psychological manipulation.

Ways in which children bully:

Girls and boys can bully in different ways. Boys may use physical strength while girls may exclude another from a group. In all cases though, the intimidating behaviour experienced can be stressful and hurtful.

Bullying behaviour includes the following:
- Name calling, taunting or belittling.
- Excluding a child from a group or activity.
- Physically targeting, from poking and hair pulling to physical attack.
- Making fun of appearance or clothing.
- Taunting a child for succeeding in class or for falling behind.
- Making up stories to get a child into trouble.
- Forcing or daring a child to do something that he or she doesn’t want to do.
- Damaging, taking or hiding belongings.
- Indulging in rough and tumble play which another child is not enjoying.
- Blackmailing or threatening behaviour.
- Writing notes or sending text messages to or about a child.
- Harassing a child when he or she is vulnerable such as in a changing room or alone at a bus stop.
- Making non-verbal intimidating gestures, for example, signalling slitting throat.
- Taunting a child about where he or she lives or the vehicle the family has.
- Making hurtful comments about family members such as an overprotective mother or a sibling with a disability.
Some children with low confidence may tag along with a child who bullies in an effort to boost their own self esteem. They may be aware that the bullying is wrong but not be strong enough to step away or speak up. As young people embrace the internet and other mobile communication technologies, cyber bullying is an issue that older children may face. It involves sending or posting harmful or cruel text or images using the internet or other digital communication devices.

**Is my child being bullied? What do I need to look out for?**

Some of the possible signs that your child might be the victim of bullying:

- Being excluded from parties and class social gatherings and not invited to help organize parties or gatherings themselves.
- Suddenly appears to be afraid of going to school. Hides school clothes, books, etc.
- Refuses to walk alone to school.
- Does not bring home friends and does not spend time in classmates’ homes.
- Younger child may suddenly become aggressive with brother or sister.
- Frequently staying home with complaints of headaches, stomach aches, or other physical ailments. {Most children tend to miss school each school day because they are afraid of bullies.}
- Regularly asks about school holidays and becomes very upset when it is time to go back to school.
- Lacks a good friend to share computer, phone, and social events with.
- Comes home from school with cuts and bruises.
- Comes home with missing or damaged school bag, clothing, books or other belongings.
- Loss of interest in school. Begins to do poorly in academic work.
- Wants to avoid leaving the house. Stays close to adults and appears fearful of playing to talking to peers.
- Frequently appearing lonely, sad, or anxious.
- Frequently being chosen last in activities and teams.
- Not being able to sleep, having bad dreams, bed-wetting and crying during sleep.
- Requesting or stealing extra money.
- Behaviour changes wherein the child suddenly becomes moody or bad-tempered or is unusually quiet.
- Refuses to share what the problem is.

However, just because your child is showing one or more of these signs doesn’t mean that he or she is being bullied. It does mean that it’s time to have a talk with your child.

**Where is bullying most likely to happen?**

Bullying most often occurs in places where and when adult supervision is lowest. In schools, bullying often occurs in bathrooms, playgrounds, lunchrooms and right after school, on the bus and on the school grounds. In communities it can happen anywhere where children and teens aren’t supervised, including cyberspace, but it is more likely to occur at school than anywhere else.

Bullying happens just as often in rural schools as it does urban schools, affects affluent children as well as those living in poverty, and affects children of every race and ethnicity.

**Why do children bully?**

The reasons behind bullying can be complex. Children can bully due to a number of factors:
• Watching aggressive TV programmes or playing violent video games.

• Feelings of insecurity, low self-esteem or feeling unloved. Child may bully to achieve popularity and friends

• Being used to having their own way at home but not in school.

• As a way of coping with changes or disruptions at home such as parental separation, a new sibling or the death of a loved one.

• Acting out of frustration, having poor communication skills or impulse control.

• Feeling like they are not getting enough attention due to family circumstances, for example, living with a sibling with special needs.

• Wanting to show off among peers and feel like the leader in a group.

• Poor understanding of the feelings of others or an inability to see things from another's perspective.

• Having little understanding of the consequences of their actions.

• Experiencing inappropriate or aggressive family discipline.

• For some children, bullying is about having a sense of control or power. It may be that other aspects of their lives feel out of control and the bullying is a way of controlling a situation or feeling a sense of power.

• The child who bullies may be bullied themselves.

• The child who bullies may be unaware of why they bully and that what they are doing is wrong.

**Why are children bullied?**

Any child can be bullied. A child may be bullied for no particular reason... simply because they are in the wrong place at the wrong time. Children who bully may well invent a reason for their bullying behaviour in an attempt to justify their actions.

• Some children are bullied because they look like they can’t stand up for themselves.

• Perhaps one thing sets the child apart in the eyes of the child who bullies such as wearing the 'wrong' shoes, having a disability or speaking with a different accent.

• Children can be bullied about their families, for example, if they live in foster care or having an over-protective parent.

• A child can innocently provoke bullying. The child showing pride in school achievements may be targeted by the child who is not doing so well in school.

• Children may be bullied or taunted about their race, religion, gender, physical attributes or mental abilities.
Family Risk Factors:

- Lack of parental warmth and involvement
- Overly-permissive or excessively harsh discipline/physical punishment by parents
- Modelling of aggressive behaviour at home - use of physical and verbal aggression or force toward the child by parents, or use of physical and verbal aggression by parents toward each other.
- Lack of parental supervision
- Consistent and unresolved conflicts within the home
- Interparental conflicts
- Broken or disrupted families
- Convicted parent
- Delinquent sibling
- Large family size
- Young mother or single parent

How does bullying affect children?

The child being bullied

- Bullied children experience a range of emotions. They can be angry, fearful, powerless, isolated or anxious. Without opportunities to talk, children may become withdrawn or angry. Feelings of anger may in turn lead to the child adopting bullying behaviour themselves.
  - Victims may mistakenly feel it is their own fault and develop low self-esteem and poor self-confidence.
  - Everyday childhood experiences can be hindered by stress, anxiety and fear.
  - Schoolwork may deteriorate due to difficulty concentrating or feeling physically ill. This may show itself through stomach aches or difficulty sleeping.
  - Instead of developing social skills, children who are being bullied may spend their time developing survival strategies such as avoiding situations in school, pretending to be feeling ill (or actually feeling ill due to stress) or dropping out of after school activities.

The child who is bullying

While some children who bully are unaware of their actions and the effects they have, others may be aware of the effects of their behaviour but feel trapped or caught up in this behaviour. These children may be labelled as ‘the bully’ in social settings and find it difficult to step out of this role. Feelings of aggression may be due to unhappiness at home or in school. Children can be confused about their actions and feelings and may not have the emotional skills or adult support needed to change.

Unchecked bullying also damages the bully who learns that he/she can get away with violence, aggression and threats.
Children who bully consistently over long periods are more likely to engage in anti-social behaviour through the school years and beyond. They may have difficulty developing healthy relationships as aggressive behaviour may stunt their social skills. Bullying may become a long-term way of life in personal, social and work relationships.

**Despite their personal situation or reasons for bullying, children should be made aware that bullying is an unacceptable behaviour which is always wrong and harmful. Family support and help from school may be all that is needed to put an end to bullying.**

Maybe you have been told that your child is bullying? Spend one to one time together. You may be the only person your child trusts enough to talk about what he or she has been doing and why.

**Bystanders**

**What if my child has witnessed another child being bullied?**

Bystanders who witness other children being bullied and do not intervene or try to help the victim in some way are often contributors to the problem. Bullies gain power and attention from an audience. Most bullying happens away from the view of adults, so bystanders can, by acting on the victim’s behalf, be very important to stopping a bully.

Explain to your child there are different ways to react to bullying.

Researchers have identified at least four roles that bystanders take:

1. **Assistants:** who join in the attacks on the victims either physically, verbally, or electronically.
2. **Reinforcers:** who act like an audience and although they don’t attack the victim, support the bully’s behaviour by encouraging him or her.
3. **Outsiders:** who are aware of the bullying but do nothing lend silent approval.
4. **Defenders:** who try to comfort the victim, take the victim’s side, report the bully, or intervene on the victim’s behalf.

Let your child know there are no “innocent” bystanders, and that he/she has a choice to make when he/she sees someone getting bullied.

**How does witnessing bullying affect bystanders?**

Recent research on children who witness bullying shows that it can have negative effects on bystanders. If your child has witnessed severe bullying episodes, he or she might feel:

- Pressure to participate in the bullying behaviour.
- Vulnerable and fearful that they may be the next victim.
- Guilty for not having acted on the victim’s behalf.
- Anxious about what to do about the bullying episode.
- Sad and helpless when thinking about the victim.
ADDRESSING BULLYING

Bullying can be prevented if students, parents, teachers, and school administrators are proactive. Strategies to prevent or stop bullying include: raising awareness about bullying, improving student-to-student relations, getting involved to stop intimidation, developing clear rules against bullying behaviour, and supporting and protecting victims of bullying.

I’m worried my child is being bullied, but I’m not quite sure.
You may be concerned about changes in behaviour, but your child may be unwilling to talk. This could be due to threats made during bullying.
Try some of the following:
• Spend quality time alone together doing things that your child likes to do. He or she may be more likely to talk when there are no distractions like a younger sibling.
• Ask about school but don’t expect answers straight away. Choose a time when you are both relaxed and free to talk such as when homework is done or on the way to school or a shop. Choose a time and place that is best for your own family.
• Instead of general questions like ‘How was your day?’ ask open ended questions that focus on specific parts of the day to help/support your child in communicating with you. Examples are:
  - Tell me about your sports period today.
  - Who did you sit with on the bus?
  - How is your friend such and such?
  - What did you like about your day?
  - Was there anything you didn’t like?
• Comment that he or she sometimes ‘looks worried’ or ‘thoughtful’, but avoid adding pressure. Too many questions may have the opposite effect and prevent your child from opening up.
• If you or your family have been through changes, talk about your feelings, ‘Sometimes I miss our old house’ or ‘When we all lived together…’ etc. By sharing your own feelings, your child may feel like opening up. Remember, however, to always talk at an emotional level that your child is able to manage.
If you are concerned that your child is doing the bullying, some of the above strategies may help you to get to the root of the problem and support your child in changing behaviour.

Finding out that your child is being bullied is a stressful and distressing experience. It is natural for a parent to feel anger, confusion and upset.

My child is being bullied. What can I do to help?
• You may be shocked however, remain calm. Showing that you are upset or angry may distress your child further. Listen and be supportive.
• It is never helpful to ignore the situation. Take what your child says seriously and give praise for the courage shown in talking about the problem. Bullies often intimidate victims into silence, and it could be very difficult for your child to talk about what is going on. Real listening means that you will:
  - Take whatever time it takes. This could be one of the most important conversations you have with your child.
- Turn off the television and other distractions. Have this conversation in a safe, quiet environment.
- Try to see the situation from your child’s point of view. Don’t assume that you really know how your child feels.
- Gather information. After the conversation, write down what you heard. Check with your child to make sure you got it right. Try to better understand your child’s world.
- Be approachable. Let your child know that you are available to stop everything and talk about bullying whenever he or she needs your help.
- Be patient. Older children and teens have a harder time talking about these subjects because it means admitting that they really do need adult help at a time when they are trying to be independent.

The most important thing you can do is to be there to listen to and support your child.

- Don’t blame either yourself or your child. Reassure your child that it’s not his or her fault.
- Have a conversation with your child. Find a comfortable place where he/she feels safe and ask him/her to tell you about what is going on. Show your child that you care for him/her that you can be trusted with his/her feelings and that you won’t judge him/her harshly. Be on your child’s side. You could say things like:
  - “Is everything OK at school? You seem kind of down about things. Do you want to talk?”
  - “I’m worried about you. Is there anything you want to talk with me about?”
  - “How are things going at school? Do you have friends to hang out with? People you feel comfortable with?”
  - “When I was in school there were some mean kids who made things hard sometimes. Have you had to put up with any kids like that?”
- If bullying is present, calmly explain that what is happening is wrong and needs to stop.
- Openly discuss with your child what you plan to do next. Your child may panic now that things are out in the open and fear that the situation may get worse. He or she will need regular reassurance that the situation needs to and can be dealt with.
- Ask your child if he or she understands the harm being caused and what the consequences may be for everyone involved.
- Ask your child if he or she can think of ways to stop what is happening. Praise your child when he or she plays cooperatively.
- Explain to your child what bullying is, give examples. Talk about its effects on others.
- If you know that the bullying occurs in school, contact your child’s teacher as soon as possible. Keep regular checks on how things are going at school. Remember some children worry that the bullying will get worse if the school speaks to those who are doing the bullying. Hence, always talk to your child before speaking to the school.
- Keep a diary of dates, exact locations and the names of the children involved. You could make use of the Bullying Checklist provided in this booklet (pg.14). If your child is old enough, he or she may want to write a diary expressing his or her feelings. This could have therapeutic benefits for your child.

Always discuss with your child before you take action. No doing so may damage your relationship with your child.
• **Do not promise to keep the bullying a secret.** However, reassure your child that you will keep him or her informed as to what will happen next.

• Educate your child about bullying, placing the responsibility for the behaviour on the person who is bullying. This helps your child not to take it personally. Regularly reassure that no one deserves to be bullied.

• Tell your child not to fight back as he or she could get hurt or be blamed for the fighting.

• Have your child practise appearing calm. Explain that by not reacting, the child who bullies may get bored.

• Encourage your child to stay in a group and avoid situations where he or she may be alone and targeted.

• Encourage your child to talk about his or her feelings, write about it or draw a picture. Explain that it is important not to bottle things up.

• Help to build your child’s confidence. Ask what he or she could say when bullied and (if appropriate) have your child practice this. Reinforce your child’s ability to deal with bullying situations by playing “What would you do if ....” situations, e.g.,
  a. What would you do if someone demanded your lunch/snack money?
  b. What would you do if someone said you were a ‘chicken’ because you did not agree to trouble another child along with them?

• Maybe you and your child can come up with some clever responses together; being funny could put the other child off. Again, practise this through role play or using a mirror until they are able to perform more automatically and with confidence. Remember though to make sure your child is not hurtful to others.

• Help to equip your child with the tools needed in resolving conflict. Encourage him or her to express feelings and ideas confidently and to listen to and negotiate with others in problem solving. This work can begin at home, between you and your child and between siblings. As parents YOU can role model how to resolve conflict appropriately – your child will observe how you solve problems and negotiate with each other as parents.

• If bullying has been going on long term or has been very stressful for your child, you may need extra family support. Your child may further need a more therapeutic intervention such as play therapy or one-to-one work. Peer groups such as after-school clubs, friendship groups and activity clubs may be an additional support. If possible, allow your child to bring friends home to reinforce suitable relationships.

• Encourage your child to make new friends. A fresh start in a new setting will be a positive experience so look into other activities your child could attend such as a drama class or a local youth group.

• Listen to your child. He/she may need your support in recognising or naming their feelings, for example, ‘Are you feeling unhappy, upset, hurt about what has been happening?’

• Spend quality time together as often as you can, giving your child undivided attention.

• By engaging in physical activities your child will develop physical coordination and become less physically tense. This will result in increased self-confidence and improved peer relationships.

• Your child may need to work on social skills or how he or she relates to other children. Ask your school or other professionals for support or advice.

• Nurturing self-esteem is a key factor in dealing with and overcoming bullying. Identify and encourage your child’s positive attributes. In turn, this will build self-confidence.
My child is bullying. What can I do to help?

- Remain calm and talk to your child. Showing that you are upset or angry may distress your child further. Listen and be supportive.
- Reassure our child that you love them and are going to help them.
- Expect that your child could deny it at first, blame someone else or try to make light of the situation, claiming ‘I’m only teasing’. You may need to explain the differences between teasing and taunting to your child. {Please refer page 4 of this booklet for difference between bullying and teasing}
- Never ignore the situation. It won’t go away by itself and may get worse. Take what the school says seriously. Your child needs your help and the help of the school to change his or her behaviour.
- Try to get to the root of the problem by talking with your child. Explain that you want to help. Spend one to one time together discussing the problem.
- Ask your child if he or she understands the harm being caused and what the consequences may be for everyone involved.
- Ask your child if he or she can think of ways to stop what is happening. Praise your child when he or she plays cooperatively.
- Explain to your child what bullying is, give examples. Talk about its effects on others.
- Teach your child the consequences of his or her negative behaviour.
- Avoid using terms like ‘a bully’ or ‘the bully’. It is important not to ‘shame’ your child by labelling in this way as it may result in withdrawal or telling lies to hide what has been happening. Instead, refer to the specific actions like name calling or hurting others. This will help your child see that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable, not the child themselves.
- Find out if there are others involved. Explain that he or she should never join in when someone else is being bullied and should help by always reporting incidents of bullying.
- As a parent you are your child’s most important teacher. Be a model of appropriate behaviour for your child by displaying respect for others, open communication and appropriately managing your own anger.
- Direct your child’s behaviour into positive pursuits such as sports or joining a youth group. This will offer him or her a fresh start and opportunities to channel leadership skills in a positive manner. In turn, it will build your child’s self-esteem and foster a sense of pride in activities.
- Encourage your child to take on responsibility or ‘caring activities’ such as looking after a pet or doing household jobs. Such activities encourage independence, develop self-esteem and will help your child to think about the needs of others. Positive experiences instilled at home will carry over into your child’s wider social settings.
- Quite often, the child with behaviour problems is the child with unmet needs. Ensure that you spend some time every day giving your child undivided attention. Spend quality time listening to and talking with your child, learning about what’s important for him or her, what has been happening in his or her life and developing communication between you. If you have a busy schedule or more than one child, develop a routine whereby each child gets to spend quality time alone with you regularly throughout each week. For example, the older child has one to one time with you when a younger sibling has gone to bed.
• Help to equip your child with the tools needed in resolving conflict. Encourage him or her to express feelings and ideas confidently and to listen to and negotiate with others in problem solving. This work can begin at home, between you and your child and between siblings. As parents YOU can role model how to resolve conflict appropriately – your child will observe how you solve problems and negotiate with each other as parents.

• Encourage your child by giving positive attention and feedback when he or she behaves appropriately. This can help change your child’s behaviour and build self-esteem. Be specific when you praise your child’s behaviour, for example, ‘You worked really hard at sharing with your little brother and played nicely today. You should feel good about yourself.’

• Make sure the child accepts responsibility for his or her behaviour. Have him or her take ownership by reporting their behaviour themselves. If the bullying was anonymous or committed by a group that included your child, make sure your child owns up to his or her role. Expect them to explain that they were responsible for what happened, to the victim, the school and, if necessary, the authorities.

• Insist that your child make amends. Besides accepting consequences, your child should apologize and find a way to take ownership for the damage that he or she has caused. Just apologizing, in the case of bullying, isn’t enough. He or she should be required to make a plan to right the wrongs that he or she has committed.

• Get help if you need it. Bullying behaviour can and often is an indication that your child is experiencing emotional turmoil that may be beyond your skills as a parent. It may be time to get help from a mental-health professional.

• Create opportunities for your child to do a good deed. This will help make them feel good about themselves. One way to help your child is to teach him or her the merits and importance of giving to others. Expect your child to volunteer or to participate in helping a charity, or at the very least, to helping a family member. Expect them to help heal by giving to others rather than hurting others.

• Teach your child to be a good friend. Talk with your child about what it means to be a good friend and how to better relate to people, particularly those who are different or unique.

Remember that you are acting as a role model for your child. If you behave in a calm, assertive manner when dealing with bullying, it will help them to understand how to react to challenging situations.

The Bullying Checklist:

Listen carefully to your child’s description of what happened. Ask the following questions and write down the answers:

• What happened?
• Who was involved?
• Where did it happen? Date and time
• Who saw it?
• Were any adults present?
• What was said and done?
• Who were the bystanders?
• How did your child respond?
• How did it affect your child at that time?
• Were there any later effects?
• How long has this been going on?
• Who has been told about the bullying?
• Did you tell the school?
• What did the school do?
• Did things improve or did they get worse?

How can I link with my child’s school?

Schools have an important role and responsibilities relating to the wellbeing of pupils and will be as keen as you to resolve the issue.

• Remember, if you were unaware of the bullying, the chances are that your child’s school is too.
• Make an appointment and meet with the class teacher. You can even speak with a member of staff whom you trust. Remember that it isn’t the school doing the bullying. They may like you not even be aware of the situation.
• Explain the situation calmly and clearly, giving as much information as possible including times, dates, nature of bullying etc.
• Ask for the teacher’s suggestions as to the best solution to the problem. Discuss how you can both help stop the bullying.
• Ask for monitoring of the situation and make arrangements for an update meeting. Keep regular checks on how things are going at school.
• Remember, the school will have to take into account the child who bullies, other students, the school policy and management issues as well as your child, hence solving the problem may be a slow process.
• If your concerns continue, put them in writing to the school principal or the school’s Board of Management.
• Ask what information the school can give you about bullying. Look for books, agencies or services that can help.
• It is important that you inform the school as soon as possible to ensure your child’s safety and the safety of others. When teachers are made aware of the situation, supervision will be increased.
• NEVER criticise someone else’s child’s behaviour directly. If there’s a problem, speak to an appropriate member of staff in private, or ask the school to host a meeting between you and the child’s parent.
• Let the school know immediately if your child is unwell or upset and give a phone number at which you can be contacted.
• Make every effort to attend parent-teacher meetings and progress report days. Maintain a regular dialogue with the school.
Useful Websites

For more information, visit the Web sites listed below:

- http://www.bullybeware.com/tips.html. This Web site was created by a group of teachers who have dedicated their careers to studying the subject of bullying. All hold advanced degrees in education and have written books on the subject of bullying based on both practical experience and research.

- http://www.antibullying.net/. This is the Web site of the Anti-Bullying Network, a part of the Positive School Ethos Program that is based at the Moray House Institute of Education, University of Edinburgh. The Anti-Bullying Network offers research-based newsletters on bullying, conferences, and training sessions for teachers and other education professionals.

- http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed407154.html. This article, entitled “Bullying in Schools,” is from the Eric Clearinghouse on Elementary Education. The author offers a survey of the current research on bullying and the most effective solutions to the problem.

- http://www.gold.ac.uk/euconf/. This Web site contains summaries of the keynote addresses at the European Conference on Initiatives to Stop School Bullying. Educators, psychologists, and youth professionals from countries across Europe came together to discuss the problem of bullying and the methods that scholars from their countries had found most effective in combating the behaviour.

- http://www.successunlimited.co.uk/bulycide/school.htm. This is the official Web site of school bully on-line, a part of the U.K. National Workplace Bullying Advice Line. The Web site offers research-based tips on combating bullying as well as suggestions of other bullying resources.

- http://www.childsafetyexperts.com/school/school-bullies.shtml. This page appears on the Web site of the Child Safety Experts organization, which offers safety advice and information for parents from child experts. The page offers general guidelines on handling bullying, and also offers a recommended reading list of books on bullying by child experts.

- http://www.coolschoolbullyfree.ie
- http://www.staysafe.ie
- http://www.kidscape.org.uk
Useful Books

**Who’s Afraid of the Big, Bad Bully**  
Teddy Slater  
**Ages 6–8**  
In this easy-to-read chapter book, big, mean Bertha threatens everyone, especially Max. Max learns self-defence, but he is reluctant to stand up to the bully until she tries to take his dog, Fang. Max is assertive and, along with his friends, refuses to hand over his puppy. At the end of the book, the children are getting along with the reformed bully.

**The Berenstain Bears and the In Crowd**  
Stan and Jan Berenstain  
**Ages 6–10**  
In this Berenstain Bears tale, Sister Bear is teased by the new cub in town, Queenie McBear. Queenie steals Sister’s Double Dutch partners before the big jump rope tournament and excludes Sister from their fun. The tournament proves to be a success for Sister as she learns how to deal with being left out.

**What a Wimp!**  
Carol Carrick  
**Age 7–10**  
Barney and his family move from the city to the country where his Mom said that people were so friendly. But, he soon becomes the target of Lenny Coots who targets Barney as his easy, smaller, and younger victim. Lenny waits for Barney daily after school. Although his teacher, mother, and brother are sympathetic and intervene, Barney learns he must face up to Lenny and do something on his own.

**Joshua T. Bates Takes Charge**  
Susan Shreve  
**Age 7–10**  
Joshua T. Bates struggles with the biggest decision of his life as he decides whether to disclose who is victimizing the new kid in fifth grade, Sean O’Malley. No stranger to bullies, Joshua flunked third grade and knows what it is like to be the target of Tommy Wilhelm and his gang, the Nerds Out. An excellent book that tells what it is like to be an outcast and what it takes to be a hero.

**Bully on the Bus**  
Carl W. Bosch  
**Ages 7–11**  
Written in a “choose your own ending” format, the reader decides what action to take while dealing with a bully. The reader can choose from many alternatives that include ignoring, talking to an adult, confronting the bully, fighting, and reconciling. There are many options and opportunities for excellent discussions with this book.

**Finding the Green Stone**  
Alice Walker  
**Ages 7–11**  
In this tale set in a friendly rural neighbourhood, Katie and her brother Johnny each possess an iridescent green stone with special powers. When Johnny loses his stone, he accuses Katie of stealing it. Later, he tries to steal her stone, and the stone immediately loses its lustre. When he finds the stone, Johnny learns that it embodies his character and integrity. The stone loses its power and radiance as a result of its owner’s failings and mean-spirited actions.
Mitch and Amy
Beverly Cleary
Ages 8–12
In this amusing book, twins Mitch and Amy put aside their squabbles and rivalry and join together to deal with a neighbourhood bully, Alan Hibbler. Mitch and Amy try various ways of dealing with Alan, even choosing fist fighting. There are numerous opportunities to discuss the benefits and consequences of all of the possible ways to handle Alan.

Bullies are a Pain in the Brain
Trevor Romain
Ages 8–13
Funny and easy to read, this book describes truths about bullies and offers advice on how to effectively cope with them. For bullies, this book also helps explain how to get along with other kids and feel good about yourself. The book is loaded with practical suggestions for kids to help them gain the confidence to handle themselves and become more “bully proof.”

Fourth Grade Rats
Jerry Spinelli
Ages 9–12
A light-hearted Spinelli story about some boys recently promoted to fourth grade. The narrator, Suds, who acquired his name because he enjoys taking warm baths to relax, is having a difficult time complying with his friend Joey's demand that he grow up and follow the familiar chant, “First grade babies. Second grade cats. Third grade angels. Fourth grade rats!” Suds learns that he doesn't have to be a tough guy in order to grow up.

Crash
Jerry Spinelli
Ages 9–12
Crash is a seventh grader who loves football and tormenting his geeky neighbour. The story follows Crash as he grows from an obnoxious teenaged jock into a more mature and accepting young man. Spinelli deals with real issues like bullying and illness in a light-hearted but realistic manner.

Useful Publications

For Parents
- Help - I’m being bullied (with chapters for adults & children) Dr. Emily Lovegrove (2006) Accent Press, UK
- The ABC of Bullying (available at NCRC) Marie Murray, Colm Keane (1998) Mercier Press, Dublin

For Children
● Is it Because...?
● Little Wise Guides ‘All about bullying’
● The 7 Day Bully Buster
● Who’s a big bully then? 4u2read.ok
  Michael Morpurgo (2005) Barrington Stoke, Edinburgh

For any further information, please feel free to email me at babanianeesha84@gmail.com

  REMEMBER TOGETHER WE CAN STOP BULLYING!
If your child is involved in Bullying, consider getting outside help for him/her. Bullying can and often does put children at risk for emotional problems. It may be a good idea to have your child see a counselor, a clinical social worker, or a family therapist who can help you and your child deal with the emotional effects of being bullied. Bullying can leave emotional scars; if your child is showing signs of depression, having trouble sleeping, or showing other signs of stress, it may be time to get some help from a mental-health professional. Your school counselor can help with this.

**Key messages to get across to your child:**

- It’s not their fault that they are being bullied
- They don’t have to face this on their own
- It is unfair and wrong to bully others
- Tell your children you love them and do what you can to make their lives outside school fun and interesting