

If you would like further help in managing bullying, then speak to your GP or Health Visitor. You can also contact First Steps directly, who are here to help;

For more information, help, and advice, please contact:

First Steps
Early Intervention & Community Psychology Service

Hackney Ark
Downs Park Road
London E8 2FP
Tel: 020 7014 7135
Fax: 020 7014 7251

Further information is also available at:

KIDSCAPE

Helpline for parents of bullied or bullying children.

www.kidscape.org.uk

2 Grosvenor Gardens, London, SW1W 0DH.

Phone: 020 7730 3300 Fax: 020 7730 7081

Helpline: 08451 205 204

The helpline is for the use of parents, guardians or concerned relatives and friends of bullied children.

If you are a child and are experiencing bullying problems, then please visit or ring [Childline](http://www.childline.gov.uk) 0800 1111.

If you have any issues or concerns please contact:

Patient Advice and Liaison Service
(PALS): 020 8510 7315/7728

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Clinical Psychologists
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What to do if your child is being bullied....

An information leaflet for parents



Incorporating hospital and community health services, teaching and research.



The information provided in this leaflet is from our knowledge and experience of working with children and families.

What is bullying?

Bullying is deliberate behaviour that is intended to hurt another person. It can be hitting, pushing, spitting, tripping up, name calling, teasing, spreading rumours, leaving someone out, ignoring them, nasty looks, threats, racism, taking or ruining someone's things.

**Bullying is NOT a natural part of growing up.
It does NOT prepare children well for the future.
Bullying is wrong and should be stopped.**

How do you know if your child is being bullied?

Victims of bullying are usually scared to tell anyone what is happening. They will often have been threatened that if they do 'tell', things will get worse. If you notice several of the signs below, you should consider bullying as a possible cause:

- Not wanting to go to school (e.g. feeling ill regularly or truanting)
- Wanting to be driven or not wanting to use the bus
- Not doing as well in school work
- Coming home with unexplained injuries (e.g. scratches)
- Coming home with clothes or belongings destroyed
- Coming home hungry (bully has taken dinner money)
- Asking for money or starting to steal
- Crying themselves to sleep, bedwetting, having nightmares
- Becoming quiet or withdrawn, or losing confidence
- Becoming distressed/anxious (e.g. stop eating or over-eat)
- Becoming aggressive, sulky, or surly towards others.

What can you do if your child is being bullied?

- 1. Listen:** One of the most important things a parent can do is to listen. Be sympathetic to your child. Be prepared for your child to get upset. Praise them for having the courage to talk to you.
- 2. Take all bullying seriously:** Do not ignore the problem or leave your child to deal with it.
- 3. Keep your own feelings in check:** Try not to overreact in front of your child – he or she may worry about what you will do. This could make them less likely to come to you again.
- 4. Make a plan:** Ask your child if he or she has any ideas about how to change the situation. Make a plan of action together.
- 5. Talk to the school:** All schools have an anti-bullying policy. Ask the school what this means and how they will deal with it.
- 6. Teach your child strategies for dealing with the bullying:** Practice pretend situations and try out some of the following strategies - Ignoring the bully, Using humour, Saying NO and walking away, Showing your child how to stand like a 'hero' (up straight, holding their head high and taking deep breaths). Bullies will be less likely to target someone who doesn't seem to get upset by their behaviour.
- 7. Build your child's self-esteem:** Assure your child that the bullying is not their fault (in fact it's bullies who have the problem). Encourage your child to develop new interests, which could increase their confidence and provide an opportunity to develop supportive relationships with new friends.
- 9. Talk to the parents:** This may be hard to do, but if you feel confident enough it might be helpful to contact the bully's parents.
- 10. Review the situation:** Give it time to change. If you are not happy with the progress being made, seek professional support.