

Supporting Your Child With Peer Conflict And Incidents Of Bullying: The Importance Of Working Together

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Learning and Growing Together

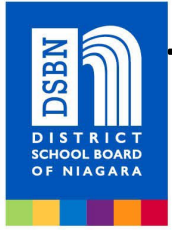
Agenda

- Introduction and setting the scene
- The importance of prevention
- Bullying or conflict?
- Types of bullying
- Cyberbullying (focus)
- Warning signs – be on the lookout
- How do I help?
- Resources



What Do Statistics Show Us?

- According to the [Canadian Health Survey on Children and Youth](#) (CHSCY), bullying remains a significant issue for Canadian youth. 71% of youth between 12 and 17 years old disclosed facing at least one instance of bullying over the past year.
- **42%** of bullied youth face it monthly, **58%** sporadically.
- **59%** experience verbal insults like name-calling.
- **34%** deal with rumor-spreading, **32%** are excluded from groups.
- Elementary students face bullying **every 7 minutes**.
- **85%** of these incidents have bystanders.
- With bystander intervention, **57%** of bullying stops in ten seconds.
- **47%** of Canadian parents have at least one child who has been a victim of bullying.
- A study conducted by the World Health Organization, which surveyed the health behaviours of school aged children around the world, found that Canada ranked in the middle of 35 countries studied for level of bullying. Intervention is a key part of stopping the bullying cycle.



The Importance Of Prevention – DSBN Social Emotional Learning Programs

- WITS – evidence based, Canadian, bullying prevention program
 - Walk Away – leaving takes you out of the conflict, do it calmly and go somewhere you feel safe
 - Ignore – often the bully wants a reaction, do not give one
 - Talk It Out – State the problem, use statements that start with “I”
 - Seek Help – This is not tattling because you are getting help for you and making school safer for all



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- **Roots of Empathy**

- Is an international, evidence and empathy-based classroom program designed for children ages 5 to 13
- Reduces aggression, increases sharing, caring, and inclusion, and promotes resilience, well-being, and positive mental health
- [Sociologist says pandemic may have made Canadian youth less empathetic, meaner \(thestar.com\)](#)



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- Mind Up
 - An **evidence-based curriculum** creating long-term impact by teaching about the **emotional center of the brain**. Each of the lessons has a **direct neurological correlate** to strengthen students' ability to regulate emotions, focus attention and build empathy
 - Demonstrated positive effects on **reducing aggression**



mindup

is it BULLYING?

When someone says or does something *unintentionally* hurtful and they do it once, that's **RUDE.**

When someone says or does something *intentionally* hurtful and they do it once, that's **MEAN.**

When someone says or does something *intentionally* hurtful and they *keep doing it*—even when you tell them to stop or show them that you're upset—that's **BULLYING.**

Teasing

- Everyone is having fun
- No one is getting hurt
- Everyone is participating

Conflict

- No one is having fun
- There is a possible solution to the disagreement
- Equal balance of power

Mean Moment

- Someone is being hurt on purpose
- Reaction to a strong feeling or emotion
- An isolated event (does not happen regularly)

Bullying

- Someone is being hurt on purpose
- Repetitive (happens regularly)
- Imbalance of power

Bullying Or Conflict?

- Sometimes, students mistakenly report bullying when they are experiencing challenges getting along with one or more peers.
- **1st Key Difference:**
 - **Conflict** is a problem or disagreement among equals; there is no real or perceived power imbalance.
 - **Bullying** occurs in situations where there are real or perceived power imbalances between individuals or groups.
- **2nd Key Difference:**
 - **Conflict** is a developmentally normative task that children and youth inevitably encounter as they learn to navigate social interactions with others and develop healthy relationships.

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- To be considered bullying, the behaviour must be **aggressive** and **repeated** - the bullying happens more than once or is likely to happen more than once.
- There is a perceived **power imbalance** involved. A power imbalance can be based on many factors, for example:
 - body size, shape, strength, or appearance;
 - age;
 - intelligence or academic success, disability or the receipt of special education;
 - peer group or social status;
 - economic status or family circumstances;
 - religion or creed, ethnic origin or race;
 - sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or gender expression.



Bullying – Taking It Further

Bullying has had increasingly high profile in recent years as people have come to understand how deeply it can wound children - and how tragic the consequences can sometimes be. Bullying is defined as "willful, repeated aggressive behaviour with negative intent used by a child to maintain power over another child." The result is "a victimized child caught in an abusive relationship."



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- The cycle of bullying often begins between the ages of 4 and 11 when children are forming their own social identities at school and through other activities. No matter when it starts, it's important to remember that *bullying is not a normal part of growing up*. It needs to be dealt with directly by adults who are willing to recognize there is a problem and take whatever steps must be taken to stop it.
- Bullying can hurt a child's body, damage belongings (clothes, toys, etc.), it can make a child feel badly about himself or herself and can make a child feel alone and not part of the group.
- Different kinds of bullying:
 - Physical – e.g. hitting, punching, kicking, pushing, stealing etc;
 - Verbal (or Psychological) – e.g. insults, name calling, threats, comments about how someone looks/talks/someone's ethnicity or culture (mocking) etc;
 - Social (or Psychological) - e.g. gossiping, rumours, ignoring, excluding etc;
 - Cyberbullying – e.g. sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, private, or malicious content about a peer using text messages, apps, social media, forums, websites, or gaming.

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- As children get older, the type and range of bullying behaviour increases. While physical, psychological and social bullying happens among children as young as four, other bullying behaviour and forms of violence emerge as children move toward adolescence, including, sexual harassment and dating aggression.
- *Dating aggression* includes physical or verbal actions including grabbing, pushing, punching, spreading rumours and name-calling.
- *Sexual harassment* occurs when a person or group hurts another person by taunting or discussing sensitive sexual issues, creating sexual rumours or messages, making homophobic comments, rating sexual body parts or name-calling, telling sexual jokes, and initiating unwanted sexual touching.
- *Ethnoculturally based bullying* includes any physical or verbal behaviour used to hurt another person because of his or her ethnicity (culture, colour, religion).

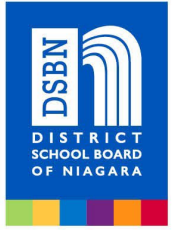
Cyberbullying

- *Cyberbullying* is the use of social media, email, text messages, websites or other electronic means to physically threaten, verbally harass or socially exclude an individual or group. Social media technologies often allow bullies to remain anonymous while distributing damaging messages/pictures to a widespread audience. Because it happens through technology, cyberbullying tactics are constantly changing.
- Cyberbullying hurts other people and can change lives. Some of the actions taken when cyberbullying occurs can also be against the law.
- Depending on the conduct of the cyberbully, those involved could be charged under Canada's Criminal Code.
- If teens are being cyberbullied, they may exhibit the signs of traditional bullying. They may also avoid discussions about their online activities. They may appear unhappy, irritable, or distressed, particularly after using the computer or viewing their cell phone. There may be a distinct change in how often they use the computer.

Common Forms Of Cyberbullying

- Making fun of someone for how they look through an online platform
- Sending mean, threatening, or harassing messages, spreading embarrassing or hurtful gossip, secrets, rumours, or lies
- Posting images, videos, stories, memes, jokes, or cartoons to embarrass, or humiliate someone
- Tricking someone into providing personal information and then sharing it
- Sharing intimate images or videos of someone without their knowledge or permission
- Excluding someone or ganging up on them through online resources
- Creating a poll that makes someone look bad
- Impersonating or logging in as someone and getting negative attention
- Screen capturing and sharing what was supposed to be private or temporary

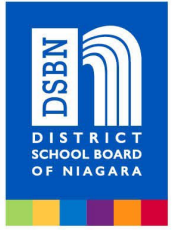




As A Parent How Do I Help?

- Many youth spend a lot of time online. There is a good chance your child has witnessed, been the target of, or even been cyberbullied themselves. There are actions you can take to prepare and protect your child in case it ever happens to them.
- Teens are often afraid to talk to parents about their cyberbullying experiences out of fear their online activities will be restricted. Reassure your teen you will not take away their phone or Internet, but if they encounter anything online that makes them feel uncomfortable, or if they receive any messages or view content that is harassing or upsetting that it is important to talk to an adult.
- **Always** be ready to listen to your teen and be their advocate. Listen to what they have to say. Make it a conversation, not an interrogation. Cyberbullying can quickly escalate and requires swift adult intervention.
- **Always** keep a record of emails, chat room history, web postings or phone messages that you can take to your Internet Service Provider or the police.
- **Always** report incidents of cyber bullying to your child's school and to your Internet Service provider. School boards have Codes of Conduct that include cyberbullying.





A Few More Suggestions (Prevention)

- **Be aware of what your child does online** - Learn what sites your child uses and what accounts they have. Talk with them about what they do online, and who they do it with. Try it yourself. Set up a social media profile, make posts and share content, play some of their games. You will have a better understanding of what your child is doing and how to talk with them about it.
- **Set ground rules for your child's online activity** - Insist your child use privacy settings and that they know how to restrict who sees the messages, images or videos they post on social media sites and apps. Let your child know you may intervene if there's reason for concern. Educate your children about passwords and how important they are. Encourage them to create different strong passwords for each site and to never share their passwords with friends. Ask younger children to give you the passwords they use. Let them know you will only ever use them in an emergency. Teenagers are more likely to see this as an invasion of their privacy.



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- **Teach your child safe online behavior** - help your child understand that once you post something online, it doesn't go away, and you can lose control over it. It can be shared and even altered by others. Even deleting something doesn't necessarily remove it from the Internet. Wait a minute before posting. Take a moment to consider who is going to see it and how others might feel about it. Do not publicly share personal information online, e.g., where you are or will be, the name of your school, phone number/email address, usernames and passwords etc. Not everyone online is who they say they are, and some people may want to harm you. Encourage them not to accept friends they have never met in person. Treat everyone with respect. Avoid saying things online you wouldn't say to someone's face. Always be careful who you trust because you cannot control what other people do.
- **Be available to help your child** - Let your child know they can always come to you – even if they have made a mistake. Assure them that you won't overreact. Your child may be reluctant to tell you if they have posted or shared something they shouldn't have because they think they will get in trouble or have their devices taken away. Remain calm and help your child. Help them remove posts, images or videos that they want to take down, and talk about what kind of things are okay and not okay to post in the future.

(Adapted from Public Safety Canada)

What Do I Need To Look For?

- Children who are being bullied might:
 - not want to go to school or may cry or feel sick on school days – school or (specific) class avoidance, resulting in academic decline;
 - not want to take part in activities or social events with other children (pay close attention to situations that they once enjoyed and now do not);
 - act differently than they normally do;
 - unexpectedly lose money or belongings;
 - come home with injuries, torn clothes, broken possessions
 - Changes in eating and/or sleeping habits.
- As well, you might see an impact on - self-esteem, mental health, trust and academic issues, health issues and substance use... An overall change in baseline behaviour.



What Can I Do?

- **Listen to your child:** Let your child know that you are there to listen and support them – ask how they are feeling. Encourage them to talk openly and honestly about what they are experiencing. Youth usually go to adults with these problems only as a last resort
- **Take the issue seriously:** Bullying can have serious and long-lasting effects on a child's mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Make sure your child knows that you take the issue seriously and that you are committed to helping them.
- **Build your child's self-esteem:** Provide reassurance that being bullied was not their fault. Bullying can have a negative impact on a child's self-esteem, so it's important to help your child build their confidence and self-worth. Encourage them to participate in activities they enjoy and to spend time with friends who support them. Praise accomplishments.
- **Work with the school:** Talk to school staff about what's been happening and work with them to address the situation. They may be able to provide additional support or interventions to help your child feel safer at school.
- **Teach your child coping skills:** Help your child develop coping skills to deal with bullying. Encourage your child to stand up for themselves/report incidents of bullying. Encourage them to practice relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing and teach them how to respond assertively to bullying behaviour.
- **Seek professional help:** If your child is experiencing significant emotional distress as a result of bullying, consider seeking professional help from a therapist or counsellor who specializes in working with children who have been bullied.
- **Be a positive role model:** Model positive behaviour for your child by showing them how to be kind, respectful, and empathetic to others. Help them develop healthy and positive relationships with friends and family.

What Can I Say?

- **If your child is being bullied**

"Stay calm, try to show you won't get upset. Anger can make things worse."

"As soon as you get bullied, find an adult you trust and tell the adult what happened. It is your right to be safe."

"If you are afraid to tell an adult, ask a friend to go with you."

"Stay close to friends or children you know will stick up for you."

- **Assurances you can give your child**

"Despite how it seems, it is not a hopeless situation. Something will be done to stop the bullying, I will help you."

"There is always someone who you can talk to about bullying, whether it's me or another adult at school."

- **If the child sees someone else being bullied**

"Speak out, you can help by telling the bully to stop - nobody deserves to be bullied."

"If you are afraid to speak out alone, ask a friend or many friends to do it with you."

"Comfort the person who was hurt, tell them they don't deserve what happened."

"If you are afraid or telling them doesn't work, find an adult you trust to help you."

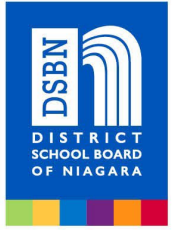
"Help children who are bullied. Invite them to participate in your school activities - this will help them not feel like they are alone."

Working With The School Team – Keep Calm

- **How can I as a parent/guardian/caregiver report bullying to my child’s school?**
 - If you are concerned that your child is involved in bullying, contact your child’s teacher to determine whether they are aware of the situation. Provide the teacher with as much information as possible about the bullying incident(s) – **date, time, place, people involved, specifics of the incident(s), as well as what your child has done to interrupt the bullying thus far. Share how this has impacted your child.**
 - Continue to work with your child’s teacher to create a plan to ensure that the bullying is addressed. If working with your child’s teacher is not successful in stopping the bullying, contact the school principal/vice principal to discuss the situation further and review what more can be done at the school.
- **What can I expect from my child’s school following a serious incident of bullying?**
 - Following a serious incident of bullying, the school principal/vice principal will contact the parents/guardians/caregivers of the students who have been involved, to inform them about details related to the incident and support available.

Questions?





Resources/References

- [Bullying in Canada: Facts, Solutions and How to Prevent \(safecanada.ca\)](https://safecanada.ca)
- [BullyingCanada — giving bullied kids a brighter future](#)
- [MindUP](#)
- [Home - Roots of Empathy](#)
- [prevent bullying and discrimination, promote kindness \(witsprogram.ca\)](https://witsprogram.ca)
- [Find mental health resources in our tag cloud - Kids Help Phone](#)
- [What Kids Need to Know | PREVNet](#)
- [What Parents Need to Know | PREVNet](#)
- [Help protect your child from cyberbullying - Canada.ca](#)
- [Cyberbullying for Youth - Canada.ca](#)