

CONVERSATIONS ON BULLYING: PROMOTING KINDNESS



Navigate STL Schools is committed to promoting the social and emotional wellbeing of all children, and this means taking a firm anti-bullying stance. We strive to be a resource for parents, teachers, and professionals in order to come together as a community to prevent bullying.

Bullying is detrimental to the school atmosphere and erodes a child's sense of safety. That sense of safety is essential to a child's social and emotional wellbeing. Use this resource to better understand the impacts of bullying, and what you can do to prevent it.

Types of Bullying

Bullying can take many different forms, and occur across many different modes. Below are common forms of bullying:

- **Physical** (punching, hair pulling)
- **Verbal/emotional** (name calling, relentless teasing, social exclusion)
- **Sexual** (unwanted touching)
- **Racial** (use of slurs, mocking, race-based violence)
- **Cyber** (use of social media platforms, often incorporates other forms of bullying)

Bullying Research

Kids who bully are more likely to experience:

- Verbal and physical violence at home
- Likely have overly-reactive or uninvolved parents at home

Kids who are bullied can experience:

- Depression and anxiety
- Decreased academic performance and school avoidance
- Physical health concerns (sleep disturbances, body aches)

WHAT CAN PARENTS/TEACHERS DO?

What NOT to Do

- Don't tell your child to stand up to the bully or fight back
 - this puts the role of addressing the bully on your child, instead of adults, and can intensify bullying
- Don't shame your child for reaching out for help
 - "Don't be a tattler" or "ignore it" are harmful, and can lead to serious harm
- Don't ignore (always be mindful of) your child's call for help. This looks different for everyone.

What You CAN Do

- Recognize the warning signs of bullying and immediately communicate with appropriate officials regarding your concerns
 - Administration, counselors, social workers, teachers, etc.
- Thank your child for sharing with you
 - this can be hard, as kids can feel embarrassed and ashamed about being bullied
- Seek mental health support for your child if you notice ongoing bullying and / or a change in behavior due to bullying

Other Prevention Tips

- Proactively engage your child / prepare them to constructively deal with bullies. For example, encourage your child to self-regulate their responses to bullies / role play with them at home
 - This will also help them become aware of and comfortable with their feelings (enough to share with someone if they feel they are being bullied)
- Role model healthy behavior / promote kindness in their environments
 - Kids often model behavior seen within their homes