

Practical strategies when talking with your child about bullying.

1. Stay Calm and Composed

Be Empathetic but Keep Calm: Keep your emotions in check to avoid escalating the situation. Reacting with extreme anxiety or anger can make your child more anxious.

Provide Reassurance: Let your child know that they are safe and that you will work together to address the situation.

2. Create a Safe Space for Discussion

Choose the Right Moment: Find a quiet, private time to talk when your child feels comfortable and safe.

Be Patient: Give your child the time they need to express themselves without rushing them.

3. Listen Actively and Empathetically

Show Genuine Interest: Make eye contact, nod, and use affirming gestures to show you are engaged.

Validate Their Feelings: Acknowledge their emotions and experiences. Phrases like "That sounds really tough" or "I can see why you feel that way" can be helpful.

4. Avoid Judgmental Comments

Focus on Your Child's Experience: Avoid making negative comments about the bully or other children involved. Instead, concentrate on your child's feelings and experiences.

5. Ask Open-Ended Questions

Encourage Detailed Responses: Use questions that require more than a yes or no answer, such as "Can you tell me what happened next?" or "How did that make you feel?"

Explore Solutions Together: Ask questions like "What do you think we could do to make things better?" or "How can I support you?"

6. Highlight Strengths & Friendships

Remind your child of their positive qualities and past successes to boost their self-esteem.

Encourage Friendships: Support your child in building strong, positive friendships with peers who are kind and supportive. Look at friendships out of school.

7. Plan Next Steps

Create an Action Plan: Develop a plan with your child on how to address the bullying. This should include talking to a teacher.

8. If Cyberbullying is an Issue, Monitor Online Activity

Set Clear Rules for Technology Use: Establish guidelines for internet and social media usage.

Be Involved: Know the apps and websites your child uses and monitor their online interactions for signs of cyberbullying



Talking to Your Child About Strategies

Establish a Support Network:

Make Friends: Try to build friendships with supportive peers who can offer companionship and stand by you in difficult situations.

Seek Trusted Adults: Identify adults you trust, such as teachers or family members, who you can talk to about bullying.

Stay Calm and Composed:

- **Control Your Emotions:** Try to stay calm and not show that you are upset, as bullies often seek a reaction.
- **Deep Breathing:** Use deep breathing techniques to stay calm during stressful situations.

Avoid Bullying Hotspots:

- **Stay in Safe Areas:** Stick to areas where you feel safe and where there are adults or peers who can help if needed.
- **Travel in Groups:** Whenever possible, walk or hang out with friends rather than being alone.

Use Humour:

Deflect with Humor: Sometimes, using humor can defuse a tense situation. For example, responding to a teasing comment with a light-hearted joke can show that you are not easily bothered.

Ignore and Walk Away:

- **Don't Engage:** If it's safe to do so, ignore the bully and walk away. Bullies often lose interest when they don't get the reaction they want.
- Find a Safe Adult:** If you feel threatened, find an adult or authority figure to help.

Report the Bullying:

- **Tell Someone:** Don't keep bullying a secret. Report it to a trusted adult, such as a teacher, school counselor, or parent.
- **Keep Records:** If bullying persists, keep a record of incidents, including dates, times, and details, to help adults take appropriate action.

Practice Safe Online Behaviour:

- **Privacy Settings:** Use privacy settings on social media to control who can see your posts and personal information.
- **Think Before You Post:** Be cautious about sharing personal information online and avoid engaging with cyberbullies.

