

Does Back to School Mean Back to Bullies?

What Every Parent and Child Should Know

As a new school year is well under way, bullying is still an unfortunate fact of life. Is your child prepared? Dr. Ken Druck, psychologist, violence prevention expert and author of [How to Talk to Your Kids About School Violence](#) (Onomatopoeia, 2003), offers 10 ways to prevent school bullying.

5 Ways Your Child Can Handle a Bully

The best strategy is to avoid people and situations that are risky, but danger cannot always be avoided. Here are some ways your child can safely defend himself:

1. Stay calm and alert. Consider the options and do nothing to escalate the situation.
2. Walk away. Fighting isn't worth it. You do not have to prove yourself by fighting.
3. Take a nonviolent stand. Speak respectfully: "I don't want to fight you."
4. Report it to authorities, but discuss with them how your child will be protected from retaliation.
5. Get away. Find safety or call for help.

5 Ways to Prevent Children From Bullying Others

Parents often do not learn that their children are bullying other kids until they get a phone call from school or another child's parents. If you suspect your child is picking on other kids, here are some ways to intervene:

1. Notice if your child lacks empathy, dominates others, is selfish or refuses to accept responsibility.
2. Help your child understand that physical or emotional abuse is never acceptable.
3. Make sure your child doesn't hang out with other bullies who may be influencing his behavior.
4. Talk to your child, other parents and teachers about what is going on.
5. Your child should apologize to victims and undo any damage, such as replacing stolen or destroyed property.