



Bullying Behaviors

What is Bullying?

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) states that bullying consists of three parts:

1. Intent to hurt, meaning that the aggressor, or bully, is seeking to cause physical, emotional, or social harm.
2. Repetition, highlighting that the bullying behavior is recurrent from the aggressor.
3. Power Imbalance, referring to the victim feeling inferior or less powerful than the bully.

Even though bullying is most reported in school buildings, it can also occur on the playground or school bus, in the students' neighborhood, or on the Internet.

Warning Signs Include:

- Unexplainable bodily injuries
- Frequent stomach-aches or headaches
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- Feelings of helplessness or low self-esteem
- Self-destructive behaviors





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Bullying & Trauma

Bullying is considered an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE), meaning that it is a potential traumatic event that can negatively impact a child's development, how they interact with others, and how they function in the school setting.

Research from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network shows that children and teens that have been exposed to trauma or violence may be more likely to bully or be bullied by others. It is important to approach bullying in a trauma sensitive manner in order to best help the student.

Parents, teachers, and trusted adults can help students experiencing traumatic stress from bullying by:

- Ensuring the student's safety and finding ways to prevent future bullying experiences
- Talking about the event, validating emotions, and addressing misconceptions about their role in the traumatic event
- Teaching coping mechanisms, like relaxation techniques, for stress management

How Schools & Teachers Can Help

Schools can adopt a trauma-informed approach by training school personnel how to handle and recognize traumatic stress or other signs of trauma. With this training, schools can help prevent bullying and trauma in schools, and work to provide a positive school culture for both students and staff.



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