

EMPOWERING YOU

A STUDENT'S GUIDE: WHAT THE BULLIES DON'T WANT YOU TO KNOW

I am being bullied.

I talked to my school and nothing happened.

What can I do?

This student guide has been created to help you and your classmates make a real difference with proactive actions...

This is not your average bully guide... We will not tell you "kids will be kids" or "bullying is a rite of passage".



Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.

Both kids who are bullied and bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

www.stopbullying.gov

90% of students have witnessed bullying in their schools



Characteristics of a BULLY:

- Seeks attention and popularity
- Wants to feel important
- Bullies those they have power over
- May have been bullied in the past
- Others cheer them on
- Are rewarded for their behavior

where is everyone?...

If we take the attention and audience away from the Bully, then their **power decreases**.



HELP! WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM BEING BULLIED?

SHOULD I IGNORE THE BULLY?

Ignoring the bully can work. Keep in mind bullies are trying to bother you and get you to react, get upset or retaliate. If you don't give them the satisfaction, they may move on.

In some cases it might make sense for you to avoid the bully and avoid places you know the bully hangs out. Remember, you are not giving in to the bully; you are putting yourself first and taking proactive actions to prevent the bullying from recurring.

Tell the bully to **"STOP"**!

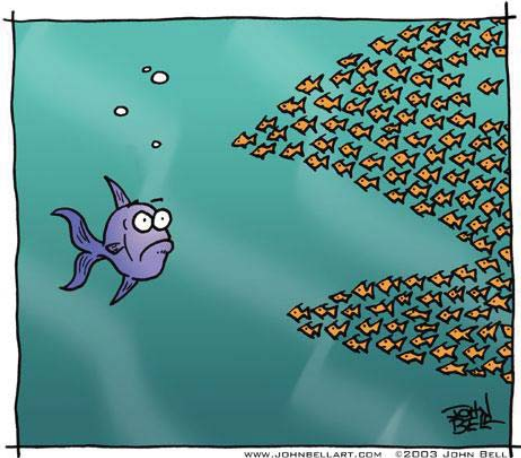
Make your wishes known.

This can be hard to do at first, but can be effective over time.

Always report your bullying incident - the bully may move on to others who don't know how to respond.



STRENGTH IN NUMBERS!



Bullies tend to pick on those who are alone. Try to hang around other people and use the buddy system when you can. If you are alone, try to identify people who can offer you safety. Stay near adults if possible. For example:

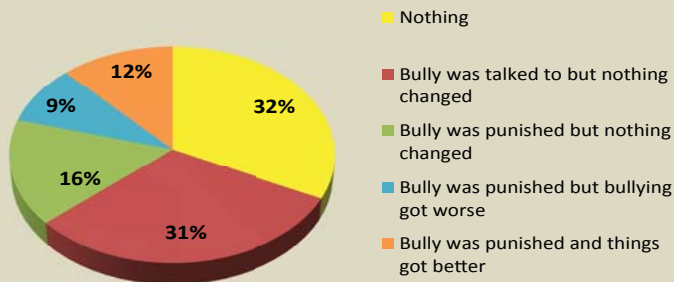
- ★ If the bully is coming up to you before or after school ask your teacher if you can sit in the classroom until school starts.
- ★ If the bully is on the bus, sit closer to the bus driver, and tell the bus driver why. The more adults you tell, the better.
- ★ If the bully is coming up to you at lunch, try to sit near an adult, or with kids that are bigger/older than the bully.

HELP YOURSELF!

- ★ Avoid places where supervision is limited.
- ★ Stay in control of yourself and try not to get physical or fight. That's the reaction the bully is wanting and will only hurt the situation. You may also get in trouble this way.
- ★ Ask a "safe" adult for help (this could be a parent, teacher, counselor, bus driver, teachers aid, parent of a friend, assistant principal, SRO, or any other adult you trust and feel comfortable speaking with.)

REPORTING BULLYING AT YOUR SCHOOL

What happened when you reported bullying?



Unfortunately, while many students try reporting bullying at school, surveys reveal only **12%** of the time is the situation **actually getting better**. How and how often you report the situation can help.

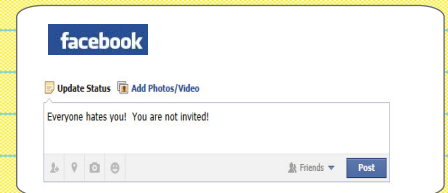
If your school has an online incident reporting solution in place, this can be a great first step.

If your school does not offer online reporting, go directly to your teacher or another trusted adult.

Remember to DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT!

Provide as many details to the school as possible. Proof is your best option. More often, administrators will come to your aid when you have concrete evidence.

- ★ Take pictures. Always important.
- ★ If you are being cyber bullied, you may want to take screenshots of the messages sent or of the Facebook posts.
- ★ Make copies of your cell-phone text message logs.
- ★ If you have been physically assaulted, take pictures (or video) of your injuries.
- ★ Keep a log/diary. Document the date/time of all attacks and as many details as possible.
- ★ Find allies within the school that have witnessed bullying and can back up your allegations. Have your friends draft written statements and make reports about the situation.
- ★ It might also be helpful to video yourself discussing the events. Do this as soon as possible. You will be surprised at how quickly you forget the details.
- ★ Have your school explain the anti-bullying/harassment policy to you (ask your teacher, principal or counselor). Use words from the school's own policy to help you in your case.



Only 1 or 2 out of every 10 incidents are reported. This is NOT ACCEPTABLE.

KEEP REPORTING...DO IT EVERY DAY IF BULLYING IS STILL HAPPENING.

Start with your parents, teacher, then principal, then superintendent, then school board. If bullying persists and no actions are taken by your school, contact your church, the police, your local media. If all else fails, consult an attorney.

USE YOUR VOICE...IT IS A POWERFUL TOOL. Keep reporting incidents until someone takes proactive actions - you never know what that might mean to someone!

I'M SCARED TO COME FORWARD...

It may be difficult, but it is important for you to tell someone. Start by telling just one person (a friend, parent, teacher, etc.) about how you are feeling. Once you have the courage to talk about the situation and know you are not alone, report the bullying to a trusted school official or fill out an anonymous incident report so your school can help stop the bullying behaviors from continuing.

In your report, make it known that you are scared. Explain how the bullying is affecting your life, if you are scared to come to school, if you can't concentrate on homework, if you dropped out of activities, etc. These details help explain how serious your situation is and will help motivate School Officials to take action.

It may take some time to build up courage, but continue to focus on your daily goals. If you need to stand up to the bully, tell yourself that you are worth it. You can build a network of supporting individuals by taking small steps of action to gradually overcome your fears. Once you start taking action, you will feel better and others will notice you are happier and more comfortable being who you are. Then you can confidently help other classmates who are scared to come forward as well. Helping others is a great way to let others know that you are an advocate for anti-bullying. The bully will be less likely to bother you!

HOW TO OVERCOME YOUR FEAR AND DEAL WITH YOUR FEELINGS.

It is easy to give into fear, but fear is just a state of mind. Worrying about it won't help. To change the situation for the better, take control of your fear. You have the strength! Remember, you are not in this alone; let your network help you.

Identify your fear - Are you afraid?

- o no one cares or reporting won't make a difference?
- o the bullying will get worse if you tell someone?
- o you will embarrass yourself or lose friends?
- o what the bully does, or how the bullying makes you feel?

Share your feelings

- o It is okay to be scared; others are too!
- o Talk about your fears and feelings with family, friends, a school counselor
- o Start a journal; write your feelings down

BE CONFIDENT.

★ Bullies tend to pick on those "they think" are weak. Be strong, be yourself and be proud of who you are.

★ Don't blame yourself or ever think you deserve it.

This is not your fault!

★ You are unique in your own way and that should be celebrated, not shunned. If a bully cannot see that, it is their problem, not yours.



GAIN CONTROL OF THE SITUATION.

Many times, schools will turn reports of bullying around and make the bullied child the problem. Keep this in mind. Respond to bullying appropriately. Don't lose your cool....take a deep breath and think about your next step. Don't become the bully.

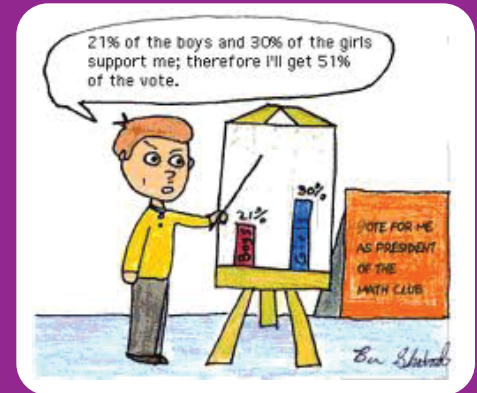
You have the right to feel safe at school, but you can't fight a battle that you don't understand. Know the schools policies on bullying. Learn your state laws at bullypolice.org.

Figure out what YOU want to happen...and seek that help.

LOOK FOR SUPPORT OUTSIDE SCHOOL

Turn to these people. They may be able to help or provide you with the guidance and strength you need.

- ★ Youth Groups
- ★ Church Leaders
- ★ Psychologists
- ★ Police Officers
- ★ Judges
- ★ Other Parents
- ★ Social Workers



You may also consider joining a group, club or sport team for support. Drama club, band, student council, Future Christian Leaders of America, karate, dance, volunteer groups, etc.

OTHER WAYS YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

- ★ Write an editorial in your school paper about bullying and how it is affecting you and your classmates
- ★ Write a blog about your feelings or about what is happening in your school
- ★ Start the ESW1 Project school club (found at www.everythingstartswith1.org under ESW1 Project)
- ★ Bring ESW1 to your school (contact us at info@everythingstartswith1.org to learn how)
- ★ Participate in surveys about bullying and student safety (found at www.everythingstartswith1.org)
- ★ Ask your school or community to show 'Bully' film (www.thebullyproject.com)
- ★ Know stats and current data on bullying. Knowledge is Power!
- ★ Educate others about the effects and consequences of bullying
- ★ Rally your friends together to create awareness, groups or clubs that will help your school take action
- ★ Help get your school administrators on board with bully prevention programs and actions
- ★ Help to create a climate in your school that supports safety and equality
- ★ Write your state officials; Make them aware of the effect bullying in your community has on you

The Viking Way - Northwood Kensett, IA

The Viking Way is our anti-bullying group. A few weeks ago we had David and Tina Long come to our community to speak and watched the Bully Movie,

We started a program called Character Counts dealing the 6 pillars of Character. Our student led Viking Way group helps plan activities to get students involved. At Homecoming the Viking Way created a parade float and handed out pamphlets to the crowd. They had a table with information during parent-teacher conferences.

The Viking Way has become very visible in the school and the community. We are headed in the right direction. I believe all this awareness about bullying has started to bring the problem down. We are off and running with a GREAT group of students in The Viking Way and we want to continue in this direction.

Remember "Everything starts with one!"



BE INFORMED...BULLYING HURTS.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I WITNESS BULLYING?

If you hear a rumor or see something hurtful and you do not feel powerful enough to be an upstander, report it. It is important that you always confidentially alert a school employee about the bullying behaviors of others. Don't fuel the fire; ignore the bully to show you will not participate in that behavior and then report.

Just knowing you care and understand how the victim is feeling is a huge help. Talk with him/her and help him/her tell an adult.

Be an Upstander

- If you know someone being bullied
- ★ Be a friend
 - ★ Include them in activities
 - ★ Sit with them at lunch and on bus
 - ★ Hang out with them
 - ★ Walk with them in hallways

Consequences of Bullying; long-term effects include:

- ◆ Depression
- ◆ Anxiety
- ◆ Truancy/Dropouts
- ◆ Suicide/Bullycide
- ◆ Low self-esteem
- ◆ Fear
- ◆ Violence
- ◆ Poor Student Achievement

For youth between the ages of 10 and 24, **suicide** is the third leading cause of death

64% of students have witnessed or experienced cyberbullying



65% of victims said bullying was **not** reported by them or others to teachers or school officials.

160,000 kids stay home from school every day due to fear of bullying.



Bullied teens are 2.5 times more likely to think about suicide

Helping Adults Recognize the Signs Of Bullying

- ◆ Unexplainable injuries
- ◆ Lost or destroyed clothing or other personal items
- ◆ Frequent headaches, stomach aches, or faking illness
- ◆ Changes in eating habits or skipping meals
- ◆ Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- ◆ Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork
- ◆ Not wanting to go to school
- ◆ Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social activities
- ◆ Feelings of helplessness or decreased self esteem
- ◆ Self-destructive behaviors (harming themselves)
- ◆ Talking about suicide

When you report bullying, explain how it is directly affecting you or your friends at school.

I don't want to get in trouble.

I can handle it on my own.

I am too embarrassed to tell my parents what they said.

I am scared...I don't want to be a tattletale.

No one cares about me.

NO ONE DESERVES TO BE BULLIED.

Everyone has the right to live, work, study and play in an environment free from bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence.



Remember, bullying is only temporary. Hurting yourself makes it permanent.

YOU CAN AND YOU WILL GET PAST THIS. When you are out of school, going to college, getting a job, or getting married...you will look back and realize the bullying was just a temporary challenge that you were able to conquer in your journey of life.

If you are a student and need help from a counselor right now, please call :

- ▶ National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255).
- ▶ www.yourlifeyourvoice.org Teens can email, live chat, or call for help.
- ▶ Boys Town National Hotline: 1-800-448-3000
- ▶ North American Alliance of Child Helplines (NAACH) - 121help.me

Additional resources:

- ▶ Everything Starts With 1 Your Voice Parent Guide; www.everythingstartswith1.org
- ▶ The Bully Project; www.thebullyproject.com
- ▶ www.nclld.org
- ▶ www.abilitypath.org
- ▶ www.tipsprevent.com
- ▶ www.everythingstartswith1.org
- ▶ www.bullypolice.org
- ▶ The Bully Action Guide by Dr. Ed Dragan
- ▶ The Bully, The Bullied, and The Bystander by Barbara Coloroso

Co-created by: Everything Starts with 1 and Awareity, Inc.



After their son Tyler's Bullycide in 2009, David and Tina Long have worked to stop bullying and make schools accountable for our children's safety. They have traveled the country to promote awareness of the severity and damage that bullying can cause. David and Tina have appeared on The Ellen Show, 20/20, Nightline, and many other programs. They both spoke at a caucus on bullying in Washington, D.C. As David states in the film Bully, "My voice is not going to fall silent. I will go to my grave until a difference is made."



Rick Shaw is the founder and CEO of Awareity, Inc. with over 30 years of experiences in risk mitigation and prevention involving cyber security, physical security, business continuity, compliance and threat assessment. Rick is passionate about student safety, campus safety and public safety and working to prevent preventable tragedies and incidents by eliminating hundreds of dangerous gaps and disconnects.

Contact Us:

www.everythingstartswith1.org
www.facebook.com/everythingstartswith1
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www.tipsprevent.com
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www.AWAREITY.com

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Dear Student,

Our son, Tyler, died from peer abuse driven bullycide on October 17, 2009.

As Tyler's parents, we don't want another family to lose a child to this epidemic. We would give anything to have Tyler back. We wrote this guide to give you strength and support. As parents, we don't always get it right. But, with your help, we can make a difference.

In doing research for this guide and talking to students across many schools, we realized there aren't simple answers for most of you. We wish we had magic pixie dust to make the bullying go away. We don't.

However, maybe we can give you a few ideas you haven't thought of. Or maybe the inspiration to make things better. It's not easy....but remember your life is worth so much more than you realize.

Many of you feel you won't be belived, you don't want to worry anyone, your voice doesn't matter or won't make a difference, or in some cases you don't want to make things worse. We can not tell you how many of Tyler's fellow students have contacted us and said they wished they had told someone. Keep talking until someone listens! It is important to find someone you can trust that will take proactive action...

Your voice matters. You CAN make a difference.

Everything starts with one student, one voice, one hero.



David and Tina Long,
"Bully" Movie

We don't have all the answers. If you have information that would be helpful in this guide, please email info@everythingstartswith1.org

Kaleigh - My Survivor Story

I was bullied my senior year of High School. I was popular throughout high school. I was the head football coach's daughter, a straight A student and captain of the soccer team. My senior year it all turned. My dad quit his job, and I lost a lot of friends and my boyfriend. **What was supposed to be the best year of high school turned into three failed suicide attempts, fifteen self-harm burn marks, and crippling depression.** I was threatened every day through social media and at school. I was yelled at publicly, hit, humiliated, and shunned. Teachers always said there wasn't enough proof or there wasn't enough against the bullies; that if they did one more thing, then they would get them. Well, that never happened. I had ISS three times for standing up for myself which administration always saw, but they never witnessed the actual bullying.

I almost didn't make it. I didn't want to make it; if I would have been a junior, I wouldn't have. **I had to find a light, a light at the end of the tunnel.** Something to focus on, something to keep going, to keep pushing on. My light was college. I clung to the knowledge that everything would change when I got away from these people that knew everything about me and studied me under a microscope. I would be able to start again. One day my mother said it was time for a break, and we traveled down to the college I wanted to go to for a tour. When I stepped onto the campus I burst out in tears and turned to look at my mom and said, "This is my reason to press on." **That kept me waking up every morning.** I had to do good so I could get into the college I wanted. I absorbed myself in my studies. That's not to say that the tormenting stopped; if anything it got worse and the sad truth is my dad (who was part of the school administration) even started to turn a blind eye. Looking back now it doesn't hurt any less, but at least I know that now I am free to be me. No one cares in college like they did in High School. I still look down at my wrist and thigh and cry remembering the hurt, but also they show my strength.

If I could say anything to someone considering suicide, it would be...In this moment everything may seem hopeless or unbearable, but do not let the world win. **Find your anchor and hold on to it.** Our life is precious and there is no better revenge than success. Move on, taking each day by itself and keeping yourself moving by setting little goals like just getting dressed or taking a shower. Find your life goal, your anchor and set little goals in place to reach that goal. This is how you move forward. The pain may still follow, but never let the bullies win. You are in control of your life; do not let them take that from you. I made it through, but I cannot say the pain goes away, I cannot say the emotions ever soften. I cannot say someone is always there.

If you know someone is being bullied, be there for them. A smile, hug, kiss, or even a kind word can mean life or death. Kindness is what saves.

Send your survivor story to:
info@everythingstartswith1.org