

Parent's Handout

Signs a Child is Being Bullied for Parents

Children may:

- Be frightened of walking to and from school
- Change their usual route
- Not want to go on the school bus; beg you to drive them to school
- Be unwilling to go to school
- Feel ill in the mornings
- Begin to skip school
- Begin doing poorly in their school work
- Come home starving because the bully has taken their lunch or money
- Become withdrawn, start stammering, lack confidence
- Become distressed and anxious
- Have appetite problems- eating too much or too little
- Threaten or attempt suicide
- Cry themselves to sleep; have nightmares
- Keep "losing" possessions or money
- Ask for money or start stealing money (to pay the bully)
- Refuse to say what is wrong due to fear of retaliation by the bully
- Have unexplained bruises, scratches or cuts
- Begin to bully other children
- Become unreasonable and aggressive
- Give improbable excuses to explain any the above

If Your Child Is Being Bullied

- Ask your child directly if he/she is being bullied
- **TAKE THE PROBLEM SERIOUSLY- CONTACT THE SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY**
- Listen to your child without interrupting or judging. Let them tell you what is happening. Ask questions that help get all the facts, but don't interrupt
- Keep telling your child you love them and are 100% on their side
- **ASSURE THEM THAT THE BULLYING IS NOT THEIR FAULT.** Tell them "there is nothing about you that makes you deserve to be treated that way."
- Help them learn assertive- not aggressive- ways to react to the bully and explain why.
- Practice assertiveness techniques with your child
- Help your child to think up simple responses to the bully
- Help your child minimize opportunities for bullying
- Remind your child that keeping safe is more important than possessions
- Make time to sit down with your child and listen to their feelings and ideas
- Discuss alternatives with your child; encourage them to see themselves as having options
- Praise your child when they accomplish something, remind them of these accomplishments when they are feeling helpless or hopeless
- Make opportunities for children to succeed
- Help children develop social skills. Make opportunities for children to practice. **START SMALL and BE PATIENT!!**
- Help children take up a hobby, activity or sport, or volunteer together
- Consider enrolling your child in a self-defense class to build confidence, not to fight back
- Encourage your child to join new groups, and lend support until he/she feels comfortable
- Work with the school to eliminate the problem