

# Preventing & Responding to Bullying

Schools & Families Coming Together to Stand Up to Bullying

**Did you know?**

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## DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Georgia defines bullying as “any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that: Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1.”

**2**

## UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN JOKING, TEASING OR BULLYING



### Joking

To say funny things or play tricks on people in order to make all people involved laugh. It isn't cruel or unkind and stops before anyone gets upset.



### Teasing

To mock someone playfully saying unkind or hurtful things. It is **NOT** a routine activity; it can start friendly but can turn unkind quickly. May include small insults, or small physical bumps & pushes.



### Bullying

To repeatedly and over time be intentionally physically aggressive or verbally abusive toward another. Bullying can take place in person or by using the Internet or mobile phones.

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## IF A CHILD IS BULLYING...



Listen calmly to your child's point of view asking them who, what, when and where. Be aware children often struggle to answer “why”



Students who exhibit bullying behavior are NOT “bad kids”. Bullying can happen because a young person is frustrated, angry, feeling bad about themselves or even in retaliation. **The important thing is to begin the conversation to help a student replace the behavior with a better choice of response.**

Discuss why bullying is wrong. Roleplay a game plan for a better solution next time the child is in a similar situation. Do they need to remove themselves? Should they keep hurtful thoughts to themselves? Can they walk away if they are tempted to be physical with someone else? How can they get an adult to intervene if they have an issue with a peer?

**4**

## IF A CHILD IS BEING BULLIED...



Listen calmly to your child's and reinforce that coming to an adult is the right thing to do if ignoring and walking away didn't work. Try to establish the facts and see if joking, teasing or bullying took place. Do encourage your child to go to adults at school and don't encourage them to retaliate.



Include your child in what will happen next. Talk to them sharing information with an adult at school. If possible, find out if they want to be the one to talk or would like you to contact school. This helps a child who is being bullied regain a feeling of control. Reassure them that what happened isn't their fault.

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## HOW PARENTS CAN HELP SCHOOLS PUT A STOP TO BULLYING



For students to feel happy and healthy to learn, they must feel safe. If your child has been bullied or is bullying others, school professionals are here to help.

Bullying is often a result of young people not having yet developed the skills to handle conflict, misunderstandings or when a child isn't feeling good about themselves.

- Report the facts of what happened to the adult who was responsible for supervision when the bullying occurred
- Ask them what the next steps at school will be
- Roleplay with your child what they should do if the behavior occurs again
- If bullying occurred online, set boundaries with technology