

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS BULLYING OTHERS?

IT IS VERY DIFFICULT FOR PARENTS AND CARERS IF THEIR CHILD IS ACCUSED OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR. THE IMPORTANT THING TO REMEMBER IS THAT ANYONE IS CAPABLE OF BULLYING AT TIMES- AND YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD CHANGE THEIR FUTURE BEHAVIOUR.



STAY CALM

If you are told that your child is bullying others, stay calm. Don't immediately dismiss the idea ('What? My child - never!') or rush into punishing your child severely. Try not to call them a 'bully' - a label can stick, and we are all capable of bullying others at times.

1

TALK TO YOUR CHILD

Listen to what your child has to say about the situation. When you talk, stay calm and remind them that you love them - it is their behaviour that you do not like or approve of. Make it clear that you do not tolerate the use of disrespectful and hurtful language and behaviour as a family. It's vital that you your child sees this is the case at home.

2

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

It may be that your child's current friendship group is having a negative effect on their behaviour - in which case, you should talk about what it means to be a friend, and gently encourage them to form more positive relationships. Your child may also feel that they are bullying others in retaliation for bullying they have suffered. Find out if there is a wider culture of bullying in their class or year group. Contact your child's teacher if they reveal further information.

3

REFLECT ON THE IMPACT

Talk to your child about how the victim of their bullying feels. They may not realise how much they are hurting, frightening or upsetting the other child. Depending on your child's age, stories, TV programmes, puppets and toys may help them put themselves in the other person's shoes- take a look at our 'Anti Bullying Books' list for some ideas to get you started.

4

RESIST PEER PRESSURE

Help your child to realise that nobody has the right to pressure them into something they don't want to do. This includes bullying others. Acknowledge how hard it can be to 'make a noise' about bullying and go against what your friends are doing, while discussing the vital importance of being brave enough to speak out.

5

REBUILD CONFIDENCE

Help your child to develop confidence and encourage them to make friends who will be kind to them and support them in making good choices at school. Happy children don't need to bully others! Avoid letting your child label themselves as a 'bully', and consider which activities might support their happiness, emotional regulation and self-esteem.

6

ULTIMATELY YOU ARE NOT THE FIRST, AND YOU WILL NOT BE THE LAST, PARENT TO HAVE TO FACE THIS. DON'T BLAME YOURSELF - TODAY IS THE PERFECT TIME FOR CHANGE.