

For Educators

Help build a school environment where students feel safe and respected. Promote positive attitudes and let your students know that bullying is not OK.



My student is being bullied

If you found out a student was being bullied, what would you do?

Safety first! Before you investigate the situation or develop an action plan, make sure everyone involved is safe.

Once you've established safety, you can make sure you have a clear understanding of what happened by having separate conversations with everyone involved. Be sure to consult and follow your school's policy on bullying for these conversations.

Ideally, your school has adopted an evidence-based approach to social and emotional learning (SEL). This type of approach helps ensure that students are developing necessary life skills, including self-awareness, self-regulation, responsible decision-making, empathy and conflict resolution.

Prevention Policy: Creating a school-wide bully prevention policy is important. Teaching emotional intelligence skills to your students is also important. With it, you can help prevent mean and cruel behaviour in the first place.

Equip students with social-emotional skills to demonstrate care and respect for self and others through the school Cyber Wellness Curriculum. By working together, everyone

establishes common goals and holds each other accountable for creating the positive climate they envision.

Reporting: It's also important to set up a clear system for reporting bullying at school. Do you have a reporting box? Let students know when and how to report bullying.

Bullying can take place anywhere and happens in many different ways — from spreading rumors to posting inappropriate photos to threatening someone. Whatever form the bullying comes in and no matter what the level of severity, it's just not OK.

The first step to helping your student is to be a *good listener* and let them talk through the problem without interrupting.

Your student needs to feel safe to be open and honest with you. Let them know you'll listen to them and don't interrupt. Give them time to tell the full story and let them know you'll help them work it out. Below are some ideas on how to start that conversation.



step | one

Prepare for a successful conversation

- 1. Take your student seriously.** If your student wants to talk to you about a bullying situation, take it seriously. If you can't talk to your student right away, make sure you set up another time to talk the same day they come to you.
- 2. Think of a good place to have the conversation.** Find a private place to talk with your student so you'll both be comfortable and your student will feel safe and free to talk.
- 3. Make sure you're calm.** Take a deep breath and get into the right mindset so that the conversation stays positive. Your student is learning how to respond to difficult situations from you — imagine how you'd feel if the situation had happened to you.
- 4. Remember, you're the role model.** Your feelings are contagious. Bullying is a challenging situation, but if you stay calm, your student will likely stay calm, too.

step | two

Talk about the problem

- 1. Be supportive.** Give your student time to tell the full story and let them know you'll help work with them on the issue.
- 2. Be empathetic.** Every situation deserves an empathic conversation whether it falls into the category of bullying or not. It'll help for your student to understand the difference between rude, mean and bullying behaviours.

Don't jump to any conclusions and never blame your student for being bullied — make sure they know that being bullied is not their fault. When offering advice, let the student know they should never fight back against a bully.

Rude and mean behaviours (e.g. saying something unkind once or twice or dismissing someone's opinion) may be upsetting, but aren't the same as bullying, which is aggressive behaviour that is repeated over time.

Help your student out whether it's a true bullying situation or not, but also help them understand that the school will most likely only take action on bullying behaviour. Rude and mean behaviour should still be addressed, but will be handled differently.

3. Lead the conversation. Kids who have been bullied or subjected to other mean behaviour often have a hard time talking about it. It's important to find out what happened, how your student feels about it and how they want to handle it.

Let your student know that you need all the details about the situation in order to help. Here are some ideas on how to start that conversation:

- "I'm sorry this happened to you, and I'm glad you told me. Can you tell me more about what happened? Is this the first time or has this happened before?"
- "How are you feeling?"
- "I'm so glad you told me. You did the right thing and I promise I will do my best to help you manage this and work on the issue together."
- "Bullying is not OK. I know it's difficult for you to talk about it. I really want to help you figure out what to do."

Your student might not want to talk about it or do anything because they're afraid of losing a relationship, making the situation worse or being bullied again. Help provide an environment where they feel safe to talk to you.

step | three

Develop an action plan with your student

- 1. Decide on next steps.** Based on what you learned from talking to your student, decide on an action plan. If the incident is serious enough to be reported, explain the school policies to your student and help them report the situation.
 - If you think the student could be in danger, reach out to the police or inform the principal immediately.
 - If you think it's appropriate for the bully and the student to talk, you can hold a conversation or a mediation session. This could be where the bully apologizes.

Some kids are afraid of getting someone in trouble. If you think that's the reason your student doesn't want to do anything, explain that tattling is meant to get someone in trouble but telling someone about bullying is not tattling, it's getting help — and that's the right thing to do.

4. Thoroughly investigate. Make sure you have a clear understanding of what happened by having separate conversations with everyone involved. This includes the student, the person accused of bullying and any witnesses. Talk to them separately, unless the student would like your help talking to the bully.

Get other staff members at your school, like School Leaders, Year Heads, Discipline Masters or School Counsellors to help you handle the situation. Your school may also have policies in place to guide you on what to do next.



- 2. If you and your student both agree that the situation isn't that serious and doesn't need to be escalated, still offer to comfort and help them.**
- 3. If the bullying happened on Facebook, let them know there are ways to report and handle it on Facebook.**

Facebook tools and options:

If the bullying situation is happening on Facebook, you can help your student choose an option that's right for the situation.

- **Report the photo or post.** Facebook will review the post or photo to see if it violates the Facebook Community Standards, which are the policies that describe what's OK and what's not OK to post on Facebook. If it does violate the standards, Facebook will remove it. Facebook reports are confidential — the person who posted it will know it's been reported, but not who reported it.

If the photo or post is upsetting but doesn't violate the Facebook Community Standards, through the reporting process your student can choose to [contact the person who posted it](#) directly, or share it with a trusted friend or adult, and ask them for help.

- **Unfriend the person.** This means the person will be removed from your student's Facebook friend list. They won't see the person's posts in News Feed.

step | four

Follow up

After you follow through with your action plan, check in with your student and the bully to see how they're doing.

- 1. Is the situation resolved?** Does your student need more help or guidance? Check in with them regularly. Do they feel comfortable at school? How's their relationship with the bully?
- 2. See if everyone involved (including the bully) feels supported.** Both your student and the bully should have people they can reach out to for support. They may also benefit from meeting with a School Counsellor.

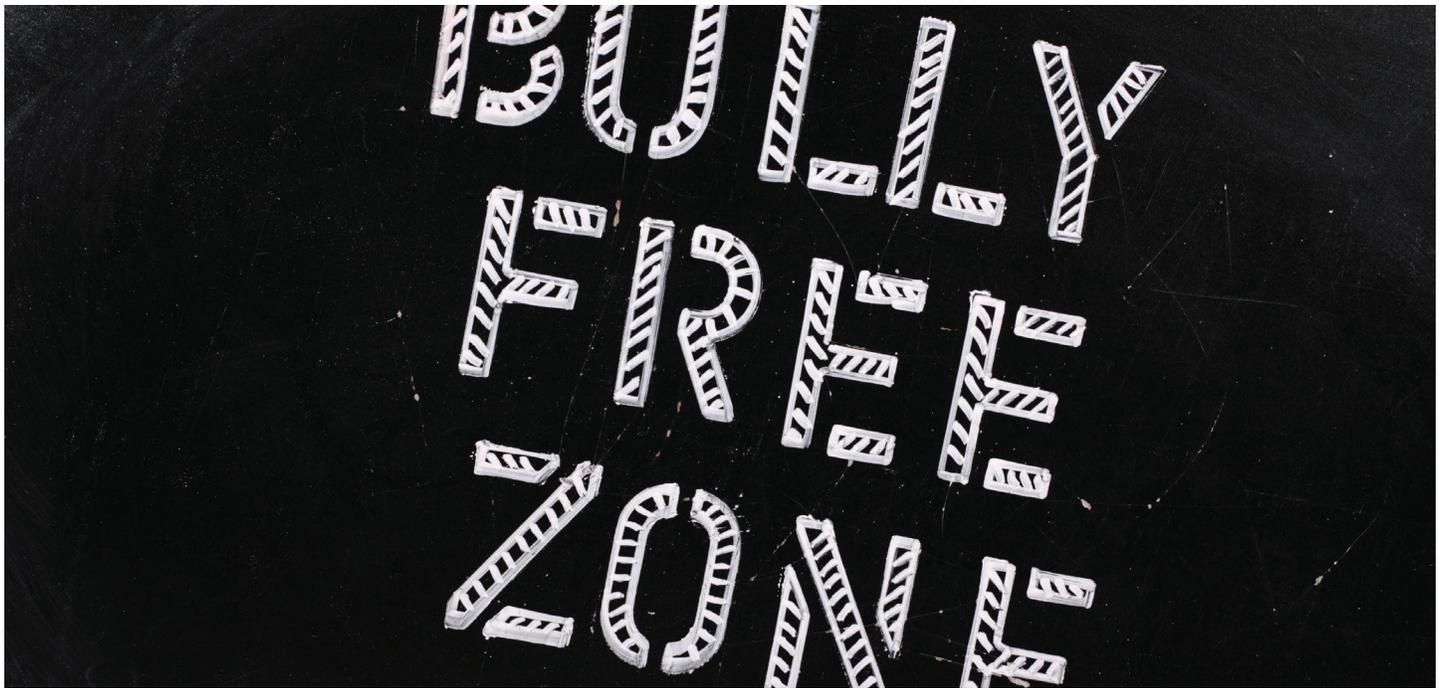
- **Block the person.** The person won't be able to start a conversation with your student or see their profile, and your student won't be able to see theirs. They also won't appear in each other's search results.

4. If your student is being physically threatened, inform the Discipline Masters or Principal — escalate the situation immediately. Let them know that you'll do everything you can to ensure their safety.

5. If your student expresses emotional distress or feelings of self-harm, get help for them immediately. Your School Leaders, Year Heads, Discipline Masters or School Counsellors can help you with this. Make sure your student is not left alone. Learn more about the available [self-harm resources](#).

You can also share the Teens section of Facebook's Bullying Prevention Hub with your student, so they can get more information and resources to help manage the situation.

- 3. Does your student have a support network of friends and family?** You may setup a peer support system in your class and assign a peer to show care and concern for the affected student.
- 4. To help prevent bullying situations in your classroom, make sure your students know what behaviours are acceptable.** Promote positive relationships and consider teaching conflict resolution skills.



My student is bullying others

If you found out a student was bullying others, what would you say or do?

Safety first! Before you investigate the situation or develop an action plan, make sure everyone involved is safe.

Once you've established safety, you can make sure you have a clear understanding of what happened by having separate conversations with everyone involved. Be sure to consult and follow your school's policy on bullying for these conversations.

Ideally, your school has adopted an evidence-based approach to social and emotional learning (SEL). This type of approach helps ensure that students are developing necessary life skills, including self-awareness, self-regulation, responsible decision-making, empathy and conflict resolution. If not your school hasn't done this yet, a bullying incident might be a good time to talk about bringing this type of program to your school.

Reporting: It's also important to set up a clear system for reporting bullying at school. Do you have a reporting box? Let students know when and how to report bullying.

Bullying can take place anywhere and happens in many different ways — from spreading rumors to posting inappropriate photos to threatening someone. Whatever form the bullying comes in and no matter what the level of severity, your student needs to know that it's just not OK.

The first step to helping your student is to be a good listener and let them talk through the problem without interrupting. Give them time to tell the full story and let them know you'll help them work it out.

step | one

Prepare for a successful conversation

- 1. Take your student seriously.** If your student wants to talk to you about a bullying situation, take it seriously. If you can't talk to your student right away, make sure you set up another time to talk the same day they come to you.
- 2. Find the best time and place to have the conversation.** Find a private place to talk with your student so you will both be comfortable and your student will be safe and free to talk.
- 3. Make sure you're calm.** Take a deep breath and get into the right mindset so that the conversation stays positive.

If you're having strong emotions and feel like you might say something you might regret, wait until you calm down. Avoid saying something that puts down your student's character.

- 4. Remember, you're the role model.** Your feelings are contagious. Your feelings are contagious. Bullying is a challenging situation, but if you stay calm, your student will likely stay calm, too. Again, you're upset about the situation, you may want to hold off on talking about it until you can calm down.

step | two

Talk about the problem

- 1. Be supportive.** Your student needs to feel safe to be open and honest with you. Let them know you'll listen to them and don't interrupt or criticize. Give them time to tell the full story and let them know you'll help them work it out.

You will likely have judgments about what happened, but it's important for you not to express those judgments in a critical way.

- Try your best avoid statements like, "What's wrong with you?" or "What were you thinking?"
 - Instead, try something like "I'm disappointed that this happened, and this is serious. It's not OK for you or anyone else to spread rumors/say mean things/threaten someone/etc."
- 2. Find out what happened.** It's important to find out what happened, how long it's been happening, and if anything else has happened since you found out about it. If the bullying happened online, have them bring a screenshot of the post or photo.

Let your student know that you need all the details about the situation in order to help.

Here are some ways to talk to your student:

- Be a good listener. Don't put words into your student's mouth or jump to conclusions. Be careful about giving advice based on the way you feel about the incident — it may be different than what your student feels.

- Use a calm and steady voice throughout the conversation. Avoid using harsh or accusatory language. This can result in your student either shutting down or becoming more aggressive.
 - Calmly let your student know that even if it's a first-time offense, bullying is unacceptable and consequences may be severe.
 - Don't make promises you can't keep, but let your student know that you will work with them on the issue.
 - Remind your student why kindness, respect and empathy are important, and that they need to behave in a way that reflects that. Explain the school's policy around bullying.
- 3. Lead the conversation.** Let your student know that bullying behaviour is unacceptable and that there will be consequences.

Here are some ways to start a conversation with a student you think might be bullying someone:

- "Tell me about what's been happening between you and _____."

If your student comes to you and admits to bullying someone:

- "It took courage for you to tell me this when you know how upsetting it would be for me and that there will be consequences. It's never OK to say mean things/spread rumors/etc. Let's sit down and talk through the situation so we can figure out the best way to handle this."

4. Thoroughly investigate the incident. Make sure you have a clear understanding of what happened by having separate conversations with everyone involved. This includes the student, the person accused of bullying and any witnesses. Don't talk to the bully and the student being bullied together, unless the student wants to.

Consult others at your school (e.g. School Leaders, Year Heads, Discipline Masters, School Counsellors) to help you handle the situation. Your school may also have policies in place to guide you on what to do next.

step | three

Develop an action plan with your student

1. Based on what you learned about the situation, decide on an action plan to help resolve the situation. Make sure it follows your school's policy, and involve the school Principal, Discipline Masters, or School Counsellors if necessary.

- If you think the incident doesn't need to be reported, work with your student on the best way they can apologize. Decide whether your student can do it alone or if they'll need your help with writing an apology or coming up with the right words if they want to apologize in person.

5. Stay firm. If your student resists talking about it, let them know that their behaviour is not acceptable and that there will be consequences. Let them know that these consequences were created to value and protect everyone in the school community. You need to stay firm and follow through with the consequences you explain.

- If the bullying involves content on Facebook, show your student how to remove the post or photo from Facebook.
- If there's any reason to believe that a student is in danger, report the incident immediately to the Discipline Master in your school. Seek help and make sure everyone involved is safe.

2. Be clear about the consequences and follow through. If the behaviour violates school policy, make sure the consequences are appropriate. If the behaviour does not violate policy, set classroom expectations for the way students treat each other.

step | four

Follow up

After you follow through with your action plan, check in with both the bully and the person who was bullied to see how they're doing.

- 1. Is the situation resolved?** Does your student need more help or guidance? Check in with the student regularly. It's important to know how their relationship is with the student who was targeted by the bullying behaviour.
- 2. See if everyone involved (including the bully) feels supported.** Both the bully and the person who was bullied should have people they can reach out to for support. One or both may also benefit from meeting with a School Counsellor.

3. It might also be helpful to follow up with the bully's parents/guardian. Reach out to them weekly for the next month or two to share observations about the student. Find out if there are more ways that you can support the student, like finding opportunities in the community.

4. To help prevent bullying situations in your classroom, make sure your students know what behaviours are acceptable. Promote positive relationships and consider teaching conflict resolution skills. Encourage positive bystander behaviours in your class and let students know how to stand up and support those who have been bullied.

Bullying Prevention

Create an environment where it's understood that bullying of any kind isn't cool.



1 Remind students to ask for help (and help others):

- Empower kids to speak up if they see bullying happening.
- Let students know they can trust you, that you will listen to their concerns about bullying and will take them seriously. You'll do something about the problem and help fix it.
- Reinforce positive messaging in the classroom, by posting signage in the computer lab or each computer station, for example.
- Look for educational opportunities to teach/talk about bullying. This could be, for example, in literature or during Civic Lessons.
- Let students know that your school has created policies to protect everyone's well-being. Make it clear to students, parents and staff that these behaviours are unacceptable and there are consequences for them.

2 Create an "I promise" list. Have your students agree to an anti-bullying list. Here are some ideas of what to include.

- If we know that somebody is bullying or disrespecting others, we will tell a teacher at school and an adult at home.
- We will not use social media to humiliate or embarrass other people.
- We will treat others online with the same respect that we do in person.

- We will do our best to help students who are being mistreated.
- We will not post any videos or photos of anyone else without their permission.

3 Create a school safety policy.

- Talk with your School Leaders before a bullying incident even occurs to find out what actions you should take, and find out what you could be liable for — like not properly preventing or responding to online bullying.
- Include procedures that ensure the safety and protection of the student being bullied.
- Be clear in defining bullying and intimidation.
- Have a reporting system. This allows students and teachers to feel safe about reporting instances of bullying.
- Develop a formal procedure for investigating incidents of bullying.
- List and describe disciplinary consequences for bullying incidents and make it available for students.
- Include site-blocking and content monitoring programs on school computers.
- Know when the school can intervene and help resolve in bullying incidents, like:
 - If a student violated school policy by using school property, like a school computer, to bully another student.

- If incidents happening outside of school are disrupting the school environment.
- If the incident doesn't fall under the school's policy, tell the parents/guardians of the students involved.
- Look at the scope of bullying at your school to see if it's a problem or not.

4 Create an internet safety educational program.

- Help students learn:
 - About acceptable computer use and internet safety
 - How to keep their passwords safe.
 - How to recognize and respond to bullying.
- Provide teacher training on recognizing and intervening in bullying issues.
- Assign classroom time for the topic of bullying.
- Educate your school community about responsible internet use.
 - Raise awareness through things like school assemblies and in-class discussions.
 - Invite specialists to talk to staff and students.
 - Sponsor a community education event.
 - Provide referral resources and tip-sheets about bullying to students and parents. Check out cyberbullying.us for examples.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE CHECK OUT THE LINKS BELOW:

Media Literacy Council
medialiteracycouncil.sg

Facebook Family Safety Center
facebook.com/safety