



# Wellness Today

For Teachers

## Warning Signs of Bullying

### Signs a Child is Being Bullied:

- Unexplained or faked illness
- Unexplainable injuries
- Lost or destroyed possessions
- Sudden loss of friends
- Avoidance of social settings once enjoyed
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Worsening grades or disinterest in going to school
- Self-destructive behaviors such as self-harm or talking about suicide

### Signs a Child is Being a Bully:

- Has friends who bully others
- Instigates or participates in aggressive physical or verbal fights
- Is overly competitive
- Blames others for personal problems
- Doesn't accept responsibility for actions
- Has unexplained extra money or new belongings
- Obsesses over popularity or reputation

## Preventing and Responding to Bullying in the Classroom

Bullying is repeated, unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance (using strength to control or harm others). Bullying can be verbal, social, or physical.

Unfortunately, bullying is all too common. As a teacher, you are in a position to take action.

### How to Prevent Bullying

- **Talk about bullying.** With your students, go over what bullying is and review the school policies about bullying. Discuss how to get help if bullying occurs and how to stand up for themselves and others being bullied. Emphasize that bullying is not acceptable behavior.
- **Make sure you know how to enforce the school/state rules if bullying occurs.**
- **Create a safe environment.** In the classroom, set a tone of respect. Bullying is less likely to occur in well-managed classrooms.

Outside the classroom, be on the lookout for bullying behavior in other places where there are fewer adults, such as in the cafeteria or in bathrooms.

### How to Respond to Bullying

- **Intervene immediately.** Separate the bully and the victim. Make sure they and bystanders are safe.
- **Talk to individuals separately to find out what happened.** Report the incident to the school administrators and counselors.
- **Support all those involved.** Be sure the victim knows the bullying isn't his or her fault and that the bully knows the behavior will not be tolerated. Talk with bystanders about what they can do in bullying situations to help the victim.
- **Get help immediately** if bullying involves serious threats, bodily harm, weapons, illegal acts, or sexual abuse.

Visit [stopbullying.gov](http://stopbullying.gov) for more information on how you can stand against bullying.