

Actions Mentors Can Take to Help Eliminate Bullying

The latest research shows that one in three children is directly involved in bullying as a perpetrator, victim, or both. And many of those who are not directly involved witness others being bullied on a regular basis. No child is immune— kids of every race, gender, grade and socio-economic sector are impacted. As a mentor, you have the power to help reduce bullying.

Here are some summarized actions you can take to **help prevent and eliminate bullying**:

1. **Talk with and listen to your mentee** about his/her social life and day-to-day. If your mentee already talks to you about his/her social life, he/she is more likely to approach you about a tough situation like bullying.
2. **Model effective communication techniques:** Use challenging circumstances or moments when you are frustrated or angry to set a good example of kindness and leadership.
3. **Learn the signs of being bullied:** if you notice behavior changes in your mentee, or common signs such as missing belongings, not feeling well, avoiding school or social activities/recess; talk to your Case Manager, mentee's parent/family, etc.
4. **Help your mentee develop healthy anti-bullying habits:** Point out and address "teasing" or "mean" behaviors if/when your mentee is engaging in them – ask questions like "How would you feel if that happened to you?" Teach and talk about skills like kindness, empathy, fair play, and turn-taking. Teach what to do when witnessing or experiencing bullying behavior: say "no," get an adult, ask the bully to stop, walk away, etc.
5. **Teach your mentee how to be a good witness or positive bystander:** Although your mentee should never put him/herself in a dangerous situation, he/she may be able to be an ally and speak up by saying something simple like "Stop, you're being disrespectful," or "Hey, that's not cool." Report to an adult!
6. **Teach your mentee that cyberbullying exists,** including sending mean/threatening messages, private information, pretending to be someone else, excluding others, etc.
7. **Teach your mentee that bullying should not be a normal part of childhood.**

Here are some tips that may be helpful **if your mentee is bullying others**:

1. **Have honest and firm conversations with your mentee:** Help your mentee understand behaviors that aren't ok and that are considered bullying – he/she may just be mimicking behaviors he/she has witnessed and may not understand the impacts he/she has on the victim, witnesses, and even him/herself. Talk to your mentee about the importance of respect, empathy, diversity, and kindness in our community.
2. **Tell your mentee's parent/family and Case Manager:** While you can help role model for your mentee, this is a bigger issue that deserves and requires additional support.
3. **Role model positive behaviors:** Do your best to model respectful, kind and empathetic communication and avoid aggressive, intimidating, and abusive behaviors – even during disagreements. Point out examples of positive communication to your mentee.

Here are some actions you can take **if your mentee is being bullied**:

1. **Make it safe for your mentee to talk to you:** Try to avoid having an emotional reaction. Ask questions until you understand the situation. Don't place blame on the bully, but remind your

mentee that everyone has the right to feel safe and happy (at school), and acknowledge the courage it took to speak up. Be honest with your mentee about where you can and will go together for help: Case Manager, parent/family, etc.

2. **Teach your mentee to say "Stop!" and/or go find an adult:** Research shows that most bullies stop aggressive behavior within 10 seconds when someone (victim or bystander) tells them to stop in a strong/powerful voice.
3. **Encourage your mentee to engage in social activities outside of school to help build a positive support system:** Your mentee's Case Manager can suggest ideas.
4. **Encourage your mentee to stick with a friend at key moments in the day,** such as recess, in the hallway, on the bus ride home, etc.
5. **If cyberbullying is an issue,** encourage your mentee to show an adult rather than respond.
6. **Help your mentee build confidence** through identifying and developing strengths, skills, talents, or other positive characteristics.
7. **Engage others** from your mentee's Case Manager, to parents/family.

Adapted from:

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<http://www.education.com/topic/school-bullying-teasing/>

See more information here:

<http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/themes/51e1be8f9670a42080000002/attachments/original/1377636619/2.10TipsforParents.pdf?1377636619>