

Could your child be a Bully??

Bullying is a problem that occurs in social settings. Bullying behaviors can occur at school, in a peer group, or anywhere a child interacts with their peers. Most bullying behaviors occur at the school setting where there is less adult supervision, such as in the hallway or the cafeteria. In addition, cyber-bullying or bullying a child on the internet is also occurring at an increased rate and there is extensive research in this area. What are the characteristics of a bully:

- 1.) Bullying usually occurs at school and not on the way to and from school
- 2.) Boys most likely are the bullies and tend to be more physically aggressive; however bullies that are girls tend to spread rumors and are verbally aggressive
- 3.) Bullying is the most prevalent in elementary school, however bullying is prevalent in middle and high school as well.
- 4.) Bullying by boys declines substantially after age 15. Bullying by girls declines significantly after the age of 14.
- 5.) Schools in disadvantaged areas tend to have higher bullying rates by research findings. Also, schools where there is a higher prevalence of children that have behavioral, emotional, or learning disorders, the bullying rate is also higher. In classroom settings where the children are of at least average intelligence, there tends to be less bullying behavior
- 6.) Bullies often tend to have a below average level of intelligence and a lower reading level than their peers.
- 7.) In schools that have a high level of parent/teacher and principal involvement, the bullying rate is lower
- 8.) Girls tend to bully girls through gossiping, spreading rumors, giving the girl the “silent treatment” or refusing to talk to her and getting a group of girls to also not talk to her. Boys tend to be more physically aggressive and boys will bully both boys and girls.
- 9.) Most bullies do not “operate” alone. They want a group of people on “their side”.

A bully tends to be a child that is aggressive, dominant and tends to have little remorse for their actions or whether or not they hurt others. Unfortunately, parents are often unaware of the problem or their child’s actions towards other children and as a result the parent has never discussed bullying behaviors with their child. A number of researchers believe that a bully comes about or is cultivated through a combination of their interactions with their adults, peers, and their teachers. A bully tends to focus on peers that are chronic victims and their peers that they see do not react well to any form of aggression.

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