



## **Help your child deal with bullying**

### **Learn positive strategies to empower yourself and your child**

For middle school students (grades 6-8)

Bullying is unfair and one-sided. It happens when someone is hurt, frightened, threatened or left out on purpose.

Here are some quick facts about bullying:

- every seven minutes someone is bullied on the playground
- every 25 minutes someone is bullied in the classroom
- every day in Canada, thousands of youth are afraid to go to school because they fear being bullied

### **Keep yourself informed**

You can help your child deal with bullying by keeping lines of communication open and by paying attention. As a parent you should:

- be a good listener and observer
- ask direct questions
- trust your instincts when something "doesn't feel right" about your child's behaviour
- closely monitor what your child is watching on TV, what types of music he listens to and what programs or games he accesses on the computer
- maintain positive communication and working relationships with your child's school
- use humour, if appropriate, to defuse a situation
- keep a diary or journal to document all information (e.g. time, date, place, names) related to an incident

### **Proactive parents**

If your child has seen or been involved in a bullying incident, she can be troubled and confused. Talking to your child about the incident will help her understand what has happened.

Discussing positive strategies can help your child deal with bullying before it happens. Here are some tips to consider:

- Make a plan of action with your child.
- Stay calm and avoid others by remaining objective.
- Involve your child in a social skills program to build positive self-esteem and self-confidence.

### **Help your child understand bullying**

You can teach your child skills that will help empower him. Here are some tips to consider:

- Teach your child how to be assertive using body language, facial expression, tone of voice and eye contact.
- Encourage the use of "I" messages. She can say: "I don't need this," "I'm out of here" or "It stops here and now."
- Arrange a buddy system with other parents so that pairs or groups of children walk to and from school together.
- Encourage your child to tell someone if he's bullied. The person should be a parent, teacher, principal or anyone else in an authoritative position.

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