

Bullying ... What Really Matters

What We Need To Know

We need to be aware of, and look for, the signs that a child is being hurt or is mistreating others. If a child is being affected, then we must respond. Children who are being mistreated may have lower self-esteem and have difficulty coping with life's challenges. Children who hurt others may experience mistreatment within their own relationships with peers, family members and parents/caregivers.

If your child is being mistreated, they may show a combination of the following signs:

- ✓ Afraid to go to school or other activities
- ✓ Appears anxious or fearful
- ✓ Low self-esteem and makes negative comments
- ✓ Complains of feeling unwell (headaches and stomach aches)
- ✓ May appear isolated from their peer group
- ✓ Lower interest in activities and lower performance at school
- ✓ Loses things, needs money, reports being hungry after school
- ✓ Injuries, bruising, damaged clothing or articles
- ✓ Appears unhappy, irritable
- ✓ Trouble sleeping, nightmares
- ✓ Threats to hurt themselves or others

If your child is mistreating others, they may show a combination of the following signs:

- ✓ Aggressive with parents, siblings, pets, and friends
- ✓ Low concern for others' feelings
- ✓ Bossy and manipulative behaviour
- ✓ Unexplained objects or money
- ✓ Secretive about possessions and activities
- ✓ Holds a positive view of aggression
- ✓ Easily frustrated and quick to anger
- ✓ Does not recognize impact of their behaviour

If you see these signs, talk to your child. Ask your child's school staff or adults from other organizations such as coaches, or group leaders about your child.

(Adapted from Prevnet.ca/bullying/signs)

What to do:

Start a discussion with your child and raise the topic often.

Listen to what children say and respond caringly. Let your child know you'll help solve the problem.

Be sure to let children know that it is okay to ask an adult, they trust, for help.

Monitor and check your child's social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)

You may need to talk with adults from school or other places to better understand the problem and make a plan together if needed.

Encourage those who are mistreating others to think about how other people feel, and help them find ways to use their influence more positively.

Make it clear that you think mistreating others is wrong.