

How to Deal With Bullying

The topic of bullying has been in the news quite a bit over the last few months, but it is not a new problem. According to Prevent Child Abuse America, every day nearly 160,000 children in the U.S. stay home from school because of bullying.

People sometimes say that bullying is a normal part of childhood. It may happen more frequently than it should, but bullying isn't "just part of growing up." Every child deserves an environment where they can develop without fear of aggression or cruelty.

At All Faiths, we work with families dealing with all aspects of bullying. Some of the children we serve are bullied because they are poor and don't wear "cool" clothes. Some are excluded or teased because they are extremely reserved due to the trauma that they have experienced. Some kids are made fun of because their parents are incarcerated or addicted to drugs. On the other hand, some of the children we serve are the actual bullies because of the extreme abuse they have suffered or witnessed.

Whether a child is being bullied or is a bully, we take it very seriously. Either way, it can have a lasting effect on the victim, the bully, the school and the community.

How to Prevent Bullying

Prevent Child Abuse America lists some ways parents and adults can help prevent the long-lasting effects of bullying.

1. Spend quality time with your child. Talk and listen to your child.
2. Be a positive role model. Respect others and stand up for yourself when people don't respect you.
3. Teach your child not to be a bystander. Encourage your child to tell the bully to stop, or to walk away and get help from an adult.
4. Help your child feel good about him- or herself in a healthy way. Encourage your child to set and reach goals.
5. Use positive discipline and teach nonviolence. Teach that using violence to solve problems or deal with anger only makes things worse.
6. If you're worried about your child or yourself, seek help from school counselors, school support groups, private therapists or your family health-care provider