

TAKE A STAND AGAINST BULLYING

Please take time to discuss with me the following ways we can help safeguard against potential bullying situations: Bullying in any form, be it physical or verbal, should never, ever be tolerated. Girls, boys and adults bully. Sometimes words said or written are just as harmful as being beaten up. **VERBAL BULLYING IS AS SERIOUS AS PHYSICAL BULLYING!** Lifelong consequences are often the case for the victim and unless the bully gains a sense of self worth and a concern for others, he/she will continue into adulthood harming others as well. Bullies lack confidence and need good friends and kind people who care about them too.

- 1. Children need to project a sincere positive self-image. The image you have of yourself is often how** other people see you as well. Something as simple as keeping your head up as you walk around with a smile on your face will have a huge impact on how people, even bullies see and treat you. Body language can be your best line of defense. Being friendly and kind helps others around you to want to do the same thing.
- 2. Look people in the eye** as you walk past with a pleasant happy attitude. Do not give them the evil eye or it might invite trouble. Avoiding looking at someone may give the impression that you are afraid. Fear is a bully's biggest, most often used weapon.
- 3. Pay attention to your surroundings.** Walk with confidence and have the mind set that you know exactly where you are going, not only right now, but in life as well. Keep in mind that nothing could possibly stop you from getting there. Having confidence will translate into your everyday walk and attitude and this alone may be enough to make the bully think twice before picking on you.
- 4. Project confidence.** Even if you don't feel totally confident in yourself, pretend you do, even if you are alone. Hold your head up and in your mind think "I am an amazing person...I know where I am going...I feel good about myself! The more you put this practice to work the better you become at it. Soon you will BE the confident person you want others to think you are. Remember: Bullies are looking for victims...not opponents. A bully keeps his or her eyes open for any weakness in others that can be exploited. Bullies have no interest in someone who projects confidence because picking on a confident person would be more effort than they want to expend, and more than that, they can't take the chance of looking weak themselves. They like the easy victories. (Taken in part from ksl.com. "Four Ways to Prevent Bullying" by Eric Sachs.)
- 5. Be a good friend.** Show others that you care about them. If you see anyone treating others unkindly, don't join in the laughter or just walk away, kindly approach the victim saying something kind to them and be their friend. i.e. Let's go to the cafeteria or hey, did you finish that math assignment? Both of you walk away and seek help if needed. However, whenever possible try to include bullies in fun activities to help them feel important. They desperately need friends and positive experiences just like we all do. Consider reading "Beauty and the Beast" together.
- 6. Tell a teacher, principal, parent or guardian if bullying continues.** No one wins in a bullying situation. Not even the bully. Bullying can lead to tragedy. Put an end to it and NEVER, NEVER, BE THE BULLY!
- 7. Social networking and cyber bullying can be extremely dangerous.** Review school rules for Internet usage and why those rules apply. Encourage children to review with parents their home rules for Internet safety.
- 8. Ask the child to honestly answer in their minds this question.** "Do I ever bully other people and do I ever bully myself?" Sometimes we are mean to ourselves. If you start to belittle yourself, start singing... "I am amazing!" and believe it!!!

