

Reporting Bullying

When bullying happens, children can be unsure about how to get help from adults. They worry that they will be accused of tattling. (The *Steps to Respect* program teaches students that tattling is done intentionally to get someone into trouble, and that reporting bullying to an adult is done to help keep someone safe.) No one wants to be seen as a tattletale. Even worse, children worry that telling an adult won't help anything and will only make the bullying worse.

Upon launching the *Steps to Respect* program, our school staff received training in how to respond effectively to students' bullying reports. Students learn through classroom lessons to recognize bullying, and if it is safe, to refuse the bullying by speaking out assertively. Students also learn to seek an adult's assistance immediately anytime:

- They or someone else is in danger.
- Someone is touching or showing private body parts.
- Refusing bullying doesn't work.

You can help reinforce what your child is learning by doing the following at home:

- Talk about which adults at school and at home could help your child if bullying happens. Discuss what she might tell an adult when she reports bullying. Assure her that adults will try to help.
- Discuss the importance of reporting any touching or showing of private body parts.
- Reassure your child that reporting bullying to an adult is not tattling.
- Talk with your child about how he can help keep other students safe by reporting bullying.
- Show an interest in your child's social life. Ask her how things are going with classmates. This will help encourage her to talk with you as concerns come up.
- If your child reports bullying to you, make sure to tell his or her teacher or principal.

Thank you for your continued support in building your child's skills and understanding of this important topic. Our staff is proud to work with students and families to decrease bullying and create a safe, respectful, caring school climate.