



Halton Regional Police Service Take A Stand Against Bullying



Bullying is an imbalance of power between individuals that is intended to cause emotional and/or physical harm or pain. Contrary to popular belief, bullying is not about anger or conflict: It is about contempt, entitlement and intimidation.

Bullies often display an angry behavioural style, stronger personality, and a 'chip on their shoulder' approach to everyday dealings.

Understanding Bullying:

Bullying is a learned behaviour. It is manifest by an imbalance of power or strength between peers. It is a conscious, wilful, deliberately demeaning act meant to harm or induce fear through the threat of further aggression, humiliation or targeting. Bullying tends to escalate and happen more frequently over time.

Types of Bullying:

There are three types of bullying: physical, verbal and relational. Each has distinct characteristics and associated behaviours.



Physical Bullying:

- Accounts for about 30 per cent of bullying
- Includes slapping, hitting, choking, kicking, poking and punching
- Most troubled of all bullies: Are more likely to advance to more serious criminal offences

Verbal Bullying:

- Accounts for 70 per cent of reported bullying
- Quick and painless for the bully but can be devastating to the victim(s)
- May involve false or malicious rumours and/or accusations, including name calling, taunting, belittling, racial slurs, and sexually suggestive or abusive remarks



Relational Bullying:

- Most difficult to detect; Most frequent type of bullying overlooked by adults
- May involve ignoring, shunning, spreading rumours, excluding or isolating
- Used to alienate a peer and/or ruin friendships
- Most powerful in the middle school years

Potential Targets:

Victims tend to be sad, anxious and often fearful - especially in the face of social demands. Usually, those who 'don't fit in' are deemed to be different. Some victims are perceived as being vulnerable (i.e. angry outbursts and/or crying). Students who have trouble making friends tend to be targeted more frequently by bullies.

As much as 80 per cent of taunting by children ages nine to 11 has to do with standards of appearance and hygiene.

What Parents Can Do:

Parents can help prevent their children from being bullied or becoming bullies by:

- Challenging their children's stereotypical beliefs and/or comments
- Encouraging their children to make friends with those from different ethnic groups
- Keeping their home free from inappropriate language, put downs and jokes about people who are perceived to be different
- Creating an environment where everyone is valued for their contributions/experiences

Cyber-bullying: Why Kids Bully Online:

The anonymous nature of the Internet and ease of information sharing creates an almost infinite source of targets for bullies. Statistics show bullies know their victims rarely disclose they are being bullied, thereby perpetuating the bullying cycle.

Signs Of Cyber-bullying Victimization:

A child who is being bullied over the Internet may:

- Act in a secretive way
- Complain of headaches, stomach aches or other ailments to avoid school and/or social functions
- Lose sleep and/or show signs of withdrawal from friends and events
- Be reluctant to walk alone in public or talk about their day at school
- Eventually suffer from depression

What Parents Can Do:

- Create an environment with little to no unstructured or unsupervised time
- Talk openly with your child about your belief that bullying is neither acceptable nor tolerated
- Assure your child that you love and support them and that they can come to you about anything
- Establish a set of rules governing computer use, including time and off-limit sites
- Discuss your child's Internet activities with them and let them know about online dangers

For more information, contact:
Halton Regional Police Service
905-825-4747 ext. 4901
www.haltonpolice.ca