



SUPPORT FOR A CHILD WHO IS BULLYING OTHERS

Fixit hears the phone ring and picks it up. **Fones** enters the room, laughing at the cell phone video. **Fixit** looks at the image on the phone of **Spotty**, looking miserable. **Fixit** is clearly concerned about the image. **Fones** suddenly changes expression, and when **Fixit** sees that **Fones** is feeling badly, and the two talk. **Fones** deletes the video and next day apologizes to **Spotty**.

MESSAGE

While it can be upsetting to learn that our child has been bullying others, we can let them know we are concerned about their behaviour and that we still love them. Parents play an important role in ensuring that children reflect, learn, grow and change, and discover ways to repair harm they have done.

Narrated Message

It can be hard to discover your child is bullying others.

During difficult moments with our children, it is even more important to model positive behaviour.

We can reassure them that they CAN change. These are important learning opportunities.

Helping guide our children toward reflection and making better choices shows that we believe in their ability to change. Our belief in them can mean everything.

ISSUES

- Staying calm and constructive when we learn that our children have been bullying others
- Finding the balance between holding our children accountable, while helping them understand the negative impact of their behaviour, and making sure they know we are there for them
- Trying to understand what underlying issues may have prompted this behaviour
- Allowing for the reality that all of us make mistakes and can reach out to repair harm done
- Ensuring that our children maximize this opportunity for learning, reflecting, changing and growing

STRATEGIES

- Staying calm – taking time to breathe deeply – and managing our own feelings when we learn that our child has been bullying others
- Exploring the situation, using empowerment listening strategies to get a fuller understanding of the behaviour
- Helping children consider how the target of their bullying might be feeling right now
- Encouraging our children to change and repair the harm done
- Believing in our children’s capacity to change
- Encouraging children to come up with their own ideas for next steps, including how to resolve the situation, while staying sensitive to the needs of the child who is being targeted
- Making use of this important learning opportunity

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

Parents

1. What are some of the messages this vignette offers?
2. What are some of the emotions you might feel if you learned your child is bullying? Who could you go to for support?
3. What listening strategies would be useful for understanding your child’s behaviour?
4. How could you let your child know you dislike their behaviour but still care about them?
5. What questions could you ask to help your child find ways to identify their own ideas to repair the situation?

School Staff

1. What are some of the challenges you face when you have to let a parent know their child has been bullying others?
2. How can you, and your school, provide support to a parent in this kind of situation?
3. What strategies have you found beneficial in helping a student who has been bullying understand the impact of their behaviour and repair the situation? How do you help other children involved?
4. Does your school have any ongoing anti-bullying programs or processes in place? If yes, what kinds of activities, interventions and support do you offer students who have been bullying others?

RESOURCES

- How to Address Bullying
www.brightfutures.org/mentalhealth/pdf/tools.html#families
- Teaching Kids not to Bully
www.kidshealth.org/parent/emotions/behavior/no_bullying.html
- Your Child Bullying Others
www.raisingchildren.net.au/articles/bullying_-_your_child_bullying.html
- What to Do if Your Child is Exhibiting Bullying Behavior?
<http://www.adl.org/assets/pdf/education-outreach/What-to-Do-if-Your-Child-Exhibits-Bullying-Behavior.pdf>

SCHOOL STAFF

- Responding to a Student who Bullies
www.safeatschool.ca/index.php?q=plm/bullying-prevention/healthy-communication/problem-solving/responding-to-a-student-who-bullies
- Children who Bully
www.education.com/reference/article/Ref_Children_Who_Bully

