



# 10 Tips To Teach Your Kids How To Combat Bullying

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Effective strategies to combat bullying behaviors include teaching social and emotional skills to increase empathy. Strategies include:

**1** **Talking with kids** about how their behavior impacts others and encouraging kindness.

**2** Encouraging kids to **consider other perspectives** and building empathy.

**3** **Explaining how** children of different backgrounds can experience unfair treatment based on how they look.

**4** **Having conversations about feelings,** especially related to conflict, and helping kids identify and label the feelings they are experiencing.

**5** **Teaching youth self-control** also helps students decrease impulsive behaviors and consider consequences for themselves and others.

**6** Students experiencing bullying can discourage bullying attempts by first trying to **simply ignore the behavior.** Ignoring the bullies' antics will be less rewarding for the bully, who will be less likely to continue the behavior with someone who ignores them.

**7** Teaching children **assertiveness strategies and how to set boundaries** on how to tell the bully stop in a non-emotional manner is another way to disarm them.

**8** **Using the buddy system** is helpful as well; there is often safety in numbers. Encourage your child to keep a peer around them to stop bullying attempts.

**9** **Contact the school** staff to come up with a plan together. Many public schools are mandated to have a process to address bullying in their school.

**10** If there is a threat of physical harm, **contact the police.**

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**Each child's response to bullying will be different.** For some children, the psychological damage will be minimal while others will experience more significant mental health symptoms. Victims may:

- Show signs of depression and anxiety, such as not wanting to go to school, becoming withdrawn, being tearful or unusually emotional
- Experience physical symptoms such as a stomachache
- Display behavioral problems, including emotional outbursts, refusing to follow directions or participate in activities and conflict with family and peers

Sometimes, the psychological damage of bullying can last into adulthood affecting career choice, self-esteem, relationships, decision-making skills and overall success. It can also create a cycle in which victims inadvertently becomes bullies to protect themselves from future incidents of bullying. Sending a clear message about intimidating behaviors helps disrupt this cycle. Providing an open ear, educating youth on the impact of bullying and violent behavior, increasing empathy and teaching skills to combat this behavior will impact the culture of bullying in our society. We all have a role to play.

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For more information and learning resources visit [OnOurSleeves.org](https://www.OnOurSleeves.org).