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## Immediate Intervention

You may feel uncertain about how to handle bullying. Here are some tips to help you respond more effectively on the spot and make the best use of the teachable moments.

### Can You Spot Bullying?

Adult intervention is one of the best defenses against bullying. Yet research shows that educators might not recognize students identified by their peers as students who bully. They also often miss different types of bullying, especially social bullying. Parents struggle with recognizing and acknowledging bullying as well.

Despite the difficulty, both parents and educators need to recognize the **warning signs**, intervene when bullying happens and send the message that bullying is not okay.

### How to Step In

There is no set formula for the best way to intervene when you suspect or observe a bullying incident. You must consider a variety of issues, including the safety of all children, the age and gender of the children involved, the circumstances surrounding the bullying, the form and type of bullying, and the role of bystanders.

Here are some actions you may want to consider:

- **Intervene immediately.** Separate the students involved. Do not immediately ask about or discuss the reason for the bullying or try to sort out the facts.
- **Request more information.** Get the facts. Speak to students involved (participants and observers) in the incident separately and ask what happened.
- **Tell the students you are aware of their behavior.** Talk to the students involved separately.
- **Make it a teachable experience.** Helping bystanders understand what has happened and why may be important for preventing future incidents.

Remember to:

- Report the incident to the right person (the school might consider identifying an official contact, who may be the school administrator, or a member of the school safety committee).
- Consider an appropriate intervention based on the severity and history of the incident and the students involved.
- Follow up with the students involved to ensure the bullying does not continue.

what is  
**BULLYING?**

**RECOGNIZE**  
the warning signs

how do I  
**GET HELP?**



If you know someone who is bullied or experiences violence because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) youth, or others think they are, there are resources available to help.

[LEARN MORE](#)



Bullying does not just happen face-to-face. Students and young adults may also struggle with hurtful or embarrassing messages via text or online. Learn how you can prevent and stop cyberbullying.

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