

Bully Prevention Tips for Parents

1. Do you suspect that your child is being picked on by bullies? If so, ask him/her. Many children are ashamed and embarrassed or even afraid to tell you on their own, so don't wait till they bring it up. Write down details of what they tell you.

If you suspect that your child won't want to talk about being bullied, try asking questions like:

“ Is there a bully in your school?”

“ How do you know that person is a bully? What does he or she do?”

“Who does the bully pick on?”

“Does the bully ever choose you to pick on?”

“How does the bully pick on you? What does the bully say to you?”

2. If your child tells you that he or she is being bullied, believe your child. Ask for specifics and write them down.

3. Contact your child's teacher right away and request a private meeting, away from any other students. Bring your written notes of what your child has told you about being bullied. Ask for the teacher's take on the situation. Also, request a copy of the school or district's anti-bullying policy. Be sure to stay calm and be respectful; confrontation will not be helpful.

Ask how the teacher will address the situation. Ask for specifics. You want the teacher to:

- make the bullying stop
- have specific consequences for bullying in place, and apply them to the bully
- monitor your child's future safety
- keep you posted regarding actions taken

Important: Remember that bullying often takes place out of sight or right under the noses of teachers. Sadly, your child's teacher may be oblivious to the situation. Try to be patient. The teacher will need to talk with your child, talk to the bully, talk with other children who might have witnessed the bullying, talk to the principal, and then decide what is best to do for everyone involved.

Important Do's and Don'ts

- Many parents of bullies are in denial (MY child wouldn't do anything like that) or don't understand “what the fuss is about,” so DON'T confront the bully or his/her parents. Go through the school.
- Most bullies are looking for a victim, not a fight. They most often are bigger and stronger than

their victims. Consequently, be very careful about advising your child to fight back physically. Your child could get hurt and traumatized further, Adult intervention is what's required.

● Never blame your child for what's happening to him/her. Bullying is never the victim's fault. On the other hand, consider whether your child might be doing something that encourages bullies to pick on him or her. Is there a behavior your child needs to change? Does your child dress or act in ways that might provoke teasing? Watch how your child interacts with other kids, and ask your child's teachers for their insights and suggestions.

● Help your child develop bully resistance skills by discussing the various strategies they learn in their self-defense program. Role-play with your child what to say and do when confronted by a bully. Also ask your child for suggestions. It's great if your child comes up with an idea, tries it, and it works!

● Enrolling your child in a long term martial arts program is an excellent way to help them develop the skills and strategies to avoid potential danger situations and to defend themselves when the need arises. At Chon-Ji Martial Arts Center, our classes aren't about fighting. They're about avoiding conflict through self-discipline, self-control, and improved self-confidence.

● Put your child's names on all their belongings with sew-in labels or permanent marker. This way, things are less likely to be "lost" or stolen. Be sure to keep the names in a spot that's not readily visible to prevent potential abusers from using your child's name to become overly familiar with them.

● "What's more important- you or your stuff?" Remind your kids that safety is always more important than possessions (books, CD players, toys, cloths, money, etc.). If your child is robbed by a bully, he or she should let the bully take the possession and tell an adult (you and/or the teacher) immediately.

● Follow up with your child frequently about how things are going. If the situation has been resolved, ask less frequently. However, be alert to any changes in behavior that might indicate the bullying has resumed.

● Be sure that you as a parent LEAD BY EXAMPLE! Parents who can't control their temper are teaching their children that it is okay to yell, scream, and use physical violence to get their way. Many children who bully others come from homes where their parents bully them.

Adapted from The Bully Free Classroom by Allan L. Beane, Ph.D

COMPLEMENTS OF:
CHON-JI MARTIAL ARTS CENTER
201 East Main Street, Alice, Texas 78332
(361)207-1028 www.chon-ji.com