Bullying Awareness

Compass

Don’t stand still for bullying

Wherever it happens, bullying can make a victim’s life miserable. It can occur almost anywhere, including school, work and social settings. It can occur via electronic communication such as social media and text messaging.

Regardless of its setting, bullying can have severe and long-lasting effects. Victims may feel stress, anxiety, vulnerability, depression, and a range of uncomfortable physical symptoms. The bullying can lead to retaliation violence, and sometimes even suicide.

Fortunately, more people than ever are now aware of bullying behavior—including workplace harassment—and more institutions are adopting anti-bullying policies. However, victims of bullying still often feel isolated and may not know what they can do to stop the abusive behavior.

Highlighting resources that can help bullying victims, this issue of Compass addresses:

- Bullying in the workplace, and how an employee can effectively respond.
- Bullying that occurs in school, and how children, parents and staff can work together to stop the abuse.
- Bullying that occurs via communication technology such as social media, and what victims and families should do.

Log on and learn! Access Bullying Awareness on the Magellan member website under the Library/In the Spotlight section. There you’ll find ideas on how to stand up to bullying at school, at work and online.

Bullying at work

If you believe you have been the target of abusive, harassing behavior in the workplace:

- Firmly tell the person that his or her behavior is inappropriate and may be seen as harassment.
- Document every instance of bullying behavior. Keep a written journal with the date, time and event description. Include names of any witnesses.
- Keep copies of any inappropriate memos, emails, or texts received from the person.
- Report the abuse to a manager or to Human Resources in your organization. File a formal complaint if necessary to get action.
- Do not retaliate against a bully. This could be easily misinterpreted by observers who think you’re the one at fault.
- If you have gone through your organization’s formal channels but the bullying continues, don’t hesitate to go to the next level of management.

Go Online to Access More Information!

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Bullying at school: what parents can do

Bullying behavior—whether it is physical abuse or less direct forms of intimidation—seems to have been around in schools forever. But today we know more about how common bullying is and how much it can harm victims long-term. So, it’s more important than ever to have anti-bullying programs in schools.

Look for the warning signs
Signs that your child may be a victim of bullying can include withdrawal from interaction with friends and family, hesitation to attend school, loss of interest in typical activities, decreased appetite, torn clothing, bruises, sleep problems and depression.

Keep the dialogue open
Ask your child each day about classroom activities, peer relations and any problems he or she may have. Bullied children may be too embarrassed to report abuse, so it’s vital to listen closely and step in if you suspect bullying.

Have a safety strategy
Work on equipping your child with tactics to stay safe. Teach your child nonviolent ways to deal with bullies, like walking away or talking out issues. Instruct them to immediately go to a teacher or administrator if bullied.

Work with the school
Many schools now have anti-bullying awareness events and policies. If your child’s school doesn’t have such a program, encourage the school administration to develop one.

Build resilience and confidence
If your child is struggling with the effects of bullying, a mental health professional such as a psychologist or social worker can help him or her build resilience and confidence.


How to unplug a cyberbully
To help young people combat cyberbullying (bullies using technology):

Don’t be drawn in. If someone sends a mean or threatening message, or posts something offensive, do not respond.

Document the bullying. A child should not erase bullying messages, posts or pictures. They should be saved as evidence.

Monitor your child’s network. Learn about your child’s world by joining their social media network(s).

Encourage your child to report online threats. They should tell you immediately if they see something online that makes them feel threatened.

File a complaint. Sending inappropriate language may violate the terms and conditions of communications providers and social networking sites. Notify them with copies of the offensive posts.