

RAISING RESPECT

TAKE A STAND AGAINST BULLYING

FAMILY NEWSLETTER ISSUE 4

Middle Level

NOVEMBER'S CHARACTER CONNECTION:
ACCEPTANCE, EMPATHY, KINDNESS, COMPASSION

BE COMPASSIONATE Bullying affects everyone

During November, we are talking about the emotional impact of bullying. Bullying has been shown to have negative emotional consequences that last for years after the bullying takes place. This applies to everyone involved in the bullying, whether as the bully, a victim of the bully, or a bystander who witnessed the bullying. Discuss your student's feelings about bullying and the importance of taking a stand to stop it. Use the tips and tricks below to get started!

Tips and Tricks

- Everyone wants to feel accepted. This is especially true during the middle school years. Sometimes, people bully to gain **acceptance** from their peers. Your student can help stop bullying by refusing to witness or participate in bullying. Explain that your student can:
 - Say "NO" if pressured to join in with bullying behavior.
 - Ask the victim to walk away with him or her.
 - Report the bullying to an adult.
- **Empathy** means understanding the feelings of other people. Is your student able to gauge the emotions of others? Make a habit of asking your student to judge which emotions other people are experiencing by considering body language, words, tone of voice, and by placing him or herself in the other person's shoes.
- Remind your student that making a daily choice to be **kind** to others goes a long way toward creating an accepting environment in which everyone feels comfortable. Victims of bullying are more likely to seek help from a peer or an adult if they believe they will be treated with **compassion**.

Table-Talk Topics

- Why do you think people bully?
- How do victims of bullying feel?
- What can you do to help victims of bullying?

85% OF BULLYING
is observed by other people.

Plan and Practice

Present the following scenarios to your student:

- There is an overweight student in your physical education class. He has trouble keeping up with the rest of the class. When it is time to select teams for a game, the captains never pick this student. Today, you are a captain. The rest of your team is urging you to not choose this student.
- There is a student in your school with a severe allergy to peanuts. She sits at a peanut-free table in the cafeteria. Other students are allowed to sit there if they have peanut-free lunches. The

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allergic student sits alone every day because no one wants to go to the “trouble” of packing a safe lunch.

For each scenario, ask:

- Is this bullying?
- What would you do in this situation?
- How would you feel in this situation?
- Has something like this ever happened to you?

Learn More!

Check out these resources to learn more about how to prevent and stop bullying:

- *When Your Child Is Being Bullied*
By J.E. DiMarco and M.K. Newman
- <http://www.solutionsforbullying.com/>
- <http://www.stopbullyingnow.com/parents.htm>