

## Bullying Prevention Tips for Parents

### Because children learn how to get along by watching adults ...

- Model appropriate ways of getting along with others: showing empathy for others, managing feelings, accepting differences and coping with peer pressure.
- Monitor your child's television watching. Discourage TV programs that model antisocial and aggressive behaviour.
- If your child witnesses violence on television, discuss the situation and help them understand the fictitious situation in relation to real life.
- When you get angry, use it as an opportunity to demonstrate and discuss appropriate ways to express anger without verbally or physically hurting others.

### Because children learn by doing ...

- Help your child think of and practise quick verbal responses to use when peers are teasing or being verbally abusive.
- Teach your child how to stick up for herself or himself through assertive, not aggressive, behaviour.
- Encourage and expand your child's interests and abilities so they gain confidence in themselves.
- Involve your child in group activities that will enhance her or his interpersonal skills. Invite your child's friends to your home and help them identify interesting things to do. Children who are not actively engaged in positive activities are more likely to engage in negative behaviours, including bullying. Discuss with your child examples of bullying that he or she notices on TV, in video games, or in the neighbourhood. Talk about the consequences of this bullying.
- Teach your child problem-solving skills and acknowledge when he or she uses them.
- Help your child accept and celebrate individual differences.

This appendix adapted from British Columbia Ministry of Education and Ministry of Attorney General, *Focus on Bullying: A Prevention Program for Elementary School Communities* (Victoria, BC: British Columbia Ministry of Education and Ministry of Attorney General, 1998), pp. 29–30. Copyright © Province of British Columbia. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission of the Province of British Columbia. [www.ipp.gov.bc.ca](http://www.ipp.gov.bc.ca)

## Because children need adults ...

- Ask your child about his or her relationships with friends and peers.
- Encourage your child to tell you or another trusted adult if she or he is bullied or sees another child being bullied.
- Keep lines of communication open. Encourage your child to always let you know where and with whom he or she will be. Get to know your child's friends.
- Intervene in bullying incidents. Make it clear to all the children involved that bullying is not acceptable. Ensure that those being bullied are safe.
- Inform school staff if your child tells you about bullying happening at school.
- Learn more about the topic of bullying and share your knowledge with your child. Check your local library and the Internet. There is a wealth of information for parents and children.
- Talk with other parents.
- Get involved in bullying-prevention efforts at your child's school.
- Foster your child's self-confidence. A strong sense of self-worth can be a good defence against being pressured or bullied by peers.
- Be alert to signs that your child is being bullied or may be bullying others, such as torn clothing, mysterious bruises, falling behind in school work, returning home to use the washroom, changes in behaviour (e.g., behaviour problems, lack of friends, reluctance to go to school). Talk with a school counsellor or teacher about your concerns.
- Talk to your child about what she or he is learning in school about bullying.