

## ***My Child is Being Bullied What Can I Do?***

- ***Talk to your child*** and be available for them to engage you in conversation. **Don't over-respond.**
- ***Model pro-social behaviors*** for your child. Appropriate dress, personal space, good table manners, good hygiene make your child less likely to be a victim.
- ***Monitor your child's behavior and whereabouts, including computers and cell phones.***
- **Provide the most *stable environment* possible for your child at home. Practice emotional regulation.**
- ***Nurture your child's talents.*** Children who feel confident are not good bully victims.
- **Encourage your child to *make friends* and to get involved in activities at school and in the community.**
- **Volunteer to *chaperone school activities* on occasion.**
- **Teach your child *confident body language*: “Stand strong, speak strong, shoulders back, eye to eye contact- this is not natural for some, practice.**
- ***Listen to how your child interacts with friends, and redirect them if you hear exclusionary or belittling comments.***
- ***Practice role playing* responses to hurtful words or actions. Use humor to defuse. Have the child visualize the bully with a remote control. Do not let the bully “watch the show” they want to see.**
- ***Ask your child to name a trusted adult at school to report continued bullying behavior.***

## **Bullying Resource: The Remote Control Game**

Children as young as two years old understand the concept of a remote control. They know the device can be used as a tool to change the boring old news into an engaging and fun-filled cartoon! The remote control can be used as a teaching tool to help children who are dealing with bullying.

In order to introduce the remote control game, leave the whole bully conversation out of the game. For younger children, make a list of TV shows they like to watch, for most older children, they will be able to recall them from memory. Choose one person to be the TV; parents should take their turn. One person will then point the remote control at the "TV" person and call out the name of a show. The TV has to act out that show until the channel is changed. The person with the remote will then pretend to change the channel and call out another show, the TV person will quickly change activities to act out the new show, the sillier the better.

Depending on the child, you can immediately follow up the game with a discussion about bullies. For some children, you may need to play the game a few times for them to understand the abstract concept of a remote control changing a person rather than a TV show.

When you are ready to start discussing bullying, talk about how the bully gets his enjoyment out of making people behave in certain ways – crying, getting embarrassed, frustrated, angry, yelling. They have favorite channels and shows they like to watch. For example, watching the Sherri Show on the Crying Channel is one of their favorite things to do. If Sherri is not on, then watching Ben on the Turn Red and Yell channel is the next best thing. The main thing though is that the bully is always in charge of the remote. The bully pushes the remote control buttons to get the behavior and show he or she is looking for. So what can a child do who does not want to be controlled by a bully? Simple, take the batteries out of the remote.

When the bully starts "pushing the buttons" have the child visualize the batteries falling out of the remote. Rather than responding to the bully have the child pretend to be "out of batteries," no response. Talk with your child about what will happen next? The bully will push harder! What do we do when the remote won't work? We bang it! We get frustrated. But if we find that the remote still won't work, we will lose interest and stop trying. If there is no show to reward the bully, the bully will get trained to stop using his remote.