

Common Views and Myths about Bullying

In spite of the significant impact that bullying can have on a target, our society often views it as acceptable behavior. There are many misconceptions that characterize bullying, all of which can lead to minimizing the behavior. **Here are a few of these common misconceptions, followed by the facts.**

“Bullying is a natural part of childhood.”

FACT: There is nothing natural about being bullied. Bullying is often considered a normal part of childhood because it is such a common experience. Physical or emotional aggression toward others should not be tolerated as a normal part of childhood.

“Words will never hurt you.”

FACT: Even though words don't leave bruises or broken bones, studies have shown they may leave deep emotional scars that can have lifelong implications. Children learn at a very early age that words can hurt other children.

“Some people deserve to be bullied.”

FACT: No child's behavior justifies being hurt or harmed in any manner. All children deserve to be treated with respect and consideration.

“Bullying will make kids tougher.”

FACT: Bullying does not make someone tougher. Research has shown it often has the opposite effect and lowers a child's sense of self-esteem and self-worth. Bullying often creates fear and increases anxiety for a child.

“Telling a teacher about bullying is tattling.”

FACT: Children need to know the difference between tattling and telling. Tattling is done to get someone in trouble, telling is done to protect someone. The secrecy of bullying only serves to protect the bully and perpetuate the behavior.

“It's only teasing.”

FACT: Most children are occasionally teased. When teasing does not hurt a child, it isn't considered bullying. Teasing becomes bullying when a child does not understand that he or she is being teased and the intent of the action is to hurt or harm.

“Boys will be boys.”

FACT: The implication here is that bullying is acceptable, and that it is normal for boys to be physically or verbally aggressive. However, research indicates aggression is a learned behavior, not a natural response.

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