



Milestones Learning Center Family Minutes

A resource from our family to yours

October 2023

October is National Bully Prevention Month



Bullying is a topic that many parents are not prepared for at preschool ages. Yet, bullying can happen in preschools between three and five years old and for those who are bullied at these critical years of development, it can have a serious negative impact on their self-esteem.

What does bullying look like in preschool?

Preschool bullying might not be a physical interaction but rather an emotional assault. Children at this age will use name calling, teasing, and leaving someone out of a game. Taking things or breaking things that belong to someone else, tattling when there was no reason just to see another child get upset.

What should I do if I think my child is being bullied?

Listen.

It is important to slow down and truly listen to what your child says. Listening actively to what they are telling you. Allows you to ask questions about what happened next? What did they say to the other child? How did they feel about this event?

Stay Calm.

Bullying comes with strong emotions. It is important to show your child that strong or big emotions are not the way to problem solve. By remaining calm you will not present safe space for your child. They do not want to see you angered or upset. Avoid negative comments about the other child or your child's initial response in the situation.

Praise Your Child.

It is important that as a parent you encourage your child to tell you when they do not feel safe. Expressing to them that they can

share with you their feelings even if it is not easy to do will create a connection for strong communication at all ages.

Continued





Ask a teacher for help.

It is never a good idea to confront another child or their parents. This can make the situation worse. Teachers are trained to recognize bullying from a lack of proper communication or social skills. Often a teacher can help a child learn how to correct an aggressive behavior before it develops into bullying behavior. They are also skilled in speaking with parents about behavior concerns and can help prevent the situation from escalating. Keep in mind that just because a child is not kind from time to time does not make them a bully. A bully is someone who acts with intent, repeats their actions and does so to gain power over someone else.

Is my child a bully?

Being kind is a learned skill. As a parent you have probably seen your child not be kind to a friend or family member. These are teachable moments and opportunities to role model for your child how you wish them to act socially. So, when do you start to worry that your child is the class bully? Ask yourself these questions:

- Do they often have things that do not belong to them?
- Do they talk negatively about a specific child or group of children?
- Does your child point out or see the negative or fault in others?
- Is your child obsessed with fitting in and being accepted by others?
- Do they have others do their bidding for them?
- Do they lack empathy?
- Have you had a number of conversations with teachers about your child upsetting or hurting others with intention?

How can I prevent my child from being bullied?

All parents want to protect their children and ensure their child's safety even when absent. Learning that a child has been or is being bullied can be heartbreaking for a parent. The most important thing a parent can do is have open communication with their child about bullying. This will empower a child to recognize bullying when it occurs to them or they witness it

at school. Parents also play a key role in how their child treats others. Parents can and should be a role model for positive social interactions by being inclusive and respectful to others. As an adult it is important to not be a bystander to bullying when it occurs but instead to stick up for victims. Parents are their child's first teacher and children will look to their parents for guidance on how to treat others.

FAMILY TIME BOOK

There are many books to share with your child on how to be kind, have empathy and to not be a bully. The book "Strictly No Elephants" by Lisa Mantchev is a wonderful story of inclusion that demonstrates the emotions a child can experience when not being accepted.

<https://www.amazon.com/Strictly-No-Elephants-Lisa-Mantchev/dp/1481416472>



References

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<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/advice-and-support/advice-parents-and-carers/how-can-i-help-my-child-if-they-are>

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