

## Bullying: Myths and Realities

True or False:

- \_\_\_\_ 1. Bullying is a male behavior.
- \_\_\_\_ 2. Other children should stay removed from the bully/victim conflict or they'll get bullied as well.
- \_\_\_\_ 3. Bullies come from families representing all socio-economic levels.
- \_\_\_\_ 4. Bullies are usually failing in school.
- \_\_\_\_ 5. Most bullying involves physical aggression.
- \_\_\_\_ 6. Fighting back against a bully will stop the behavior.
- \_\_\_\_ 7. Most bullying happens at school.
- \_\_\_\_ 8. Bullies are insecure and have low self-esteem.
- \_\_\_\_ 9. Targets of bullies are children with physical differences.
- \_\_\_\_ 10. Bullying is just a part of growing up.

According to noted child psychologist, Nathaniel M. Floyd, Ph.D., when adults work together, the worst effects of bullying—such as long-term victimization—don't have a chance to take hold.

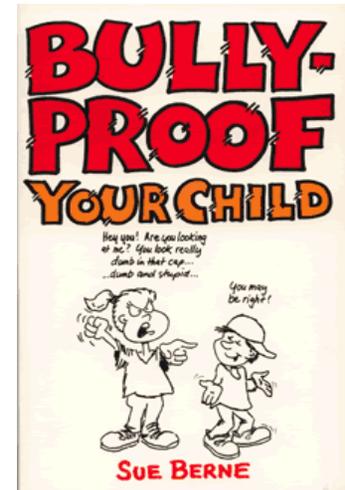
He encourages parents to pay attention to these four R's:

- **Recognize** what's happening. Maybe your child is being teased or physically attacked; or perhaps just repeatedly shut out of a group. Your first step is to listen to the facts—all of them. Don't flinch—just listen. This is a crucial first step in helping your child overcome victimization.
- **Relate** to the school. Tempting as it may be to withdraw, don't. Establish a relationship with the school. Get involved...and identify a staff person with whom you trust. Your school is not the enemy; bullying behavior is. Therefore, make the school your ally.
- **Report** incidents. When your child describes any kind of bullying, you have a responsibility: report it. Try not to blame or get defensive, but don't back away either.
- **Record** what has happened and how it was handled. Schools keep discipline records, but you need them too. Write down times, dates, and actions—and don't hesitate to pull out the list and bring it back to school if something happens again.

Recognize  
Report **R** Relate  
Record



## Characteristics of Families That Produce Bully-Proofed Kids



Dr. Alan Lee  
Superintendent

Dr. Pam Henson  
Director of  
Instructional Support

## What Can Parents do to Bully-Proof Their Kids?

### 1. Parents develop for their children a network of support through six critical life messages each day:

- I believe in you.
- I trust you.
- I know you can handle life situations.
- You are listened to.
- You are cared for.
- You are very important to me.

### 2. Democracy is learned through experience.

Family meetings help children to see their own wants and needs in relationship to others'. Children are taught to work together as a group, to honor the differences in others, and to utilize conflict resolution skills.

### 3. An environment is created that is conducive to creative, constructive, and responsible activity.

Positive behaviors are modeled and taught. Mistakes are seen as learning opportunities.

### 4. Discipline is handled with authority that gives life to children's learning.

Disciplining with dignity (show what was done wrong, give ownership of the problem to the child, and offer solutions) allows children to develop self-discipline that enable them to be decent, responsible, caring people.

### 5. Rules are simple and are clearly stated.

Constantly increase opportunities for the child to make his/her own age-appropriate decisions, responsibilities, and boundaries.

### 6. Consequences for irresponsible behavior are either natural or reasonable.

Consequences are simple, valuable, and purposeful with no need for threats, bribes, or punishment.

### 7. Children get second opportunities.

This second opportunity to try again occurs after the child has experienced consequences for the mistake made.

### 8. Children are motivated to be all they can be.

While being accepted as they are, the children are encouraged to be more than they thought they could be. In an atmosphere of acceptance and high expectations, learning will take place.

### 9. Children receive lots of smiles, hugs, and humor.

These are given freely and with no conditions attached.

### 10. Children learn to accept their own feelings and to act responsibly on those feelings through a strong sense of self-awareness.

Children learn to acknowledge and honor their own feelings and learn that they don't need to act on every emotion felt. They will learn to empathize with others and to respond in a way that will ease the pain of others without being overcome with the emotions of the other person.

### 11. Competency and cooperation are modeled and encouraged.

As the ability to do a variety of tasks is demonstrated, children learn new skills making them competent, cooperative, and decisive. They will learn that competition is a part of life and they will celebrate their success while empathizing with those who lose.

### 12. Love is unconditional.

Children must know that they have dignity and worth to be able to understand differences and care for others.

### 13. Children are taught how to think.

Children are encouraged to listen to their own intuition, be spontaneous, creative in thoughts and actions, and to reason through problems that arise. They are also taught how to develop a good plan of action when facing a moral dilemma.

### 14. Children are buffered from the possible impact of a bully, or from the need to become a bully, by the daily reinforcement of the messages that foster a strong sense of self.

- I like myself.
- I can think for myself.
- There is no problem so great it can't be solved.

### 15. The family is willing to seek help.

Parents need to recognize when they need advice and seek it with an open mind and heart.



### Contact Information

**Ms. Patrice Davis**  
**Intervention Supervisor**

**1091 B Avenue**

**Loxley, Alabama 36551**

**Phone: 251.972.8525**

**Fax: 251.972.6868**

**Email: pdavis@bcbe.org**