



What can parents and caregivers do about bullying?

New Jersey's Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights, which was enacted to counter bullying in New Jersey schools was signed into law.

Among its many provisions, the law requires annual reporting directly to the Commissioner of Education on bullying instances. It will also grade each school on how it handles bullying, harassment and intimidation. Significantly, the law extends bullying protections to off-school grounds and covers college and university students as well.

In light of this news, NCADD offers parents and caregivers some suggestions regarding what they can do if a child is being bullied or is the one doing the bullying.

What To Do If You Think Your Child is Being Bullied?

- First, focus on your child.
- Never tell your child to ignore the bullying. What the child may "hear" is that you are going to ignore it. If the child were able to simply ignore it, she likely would not have told you about it.
- Don't blame the child who is being bullied. Don't assume that your child did something to provoke the bullying.
- Listen carefully to what your child tells you about the bullying. Ask her to describe who was involved and how and where each bullying episode happened. Learn as much as you can about the bullying tactics used, and when and where the bullying happened.
- Empathize with your child. Tell her that bullying is wrong, not her fault, and that you are glad she had the courage to tell you about it. Ask your child what she thinks can be done to help. Assure her that you will think about what needs to be done and you will let her know what you are going to do.
- Do not encourage physical retaliation as a solution. Hitting



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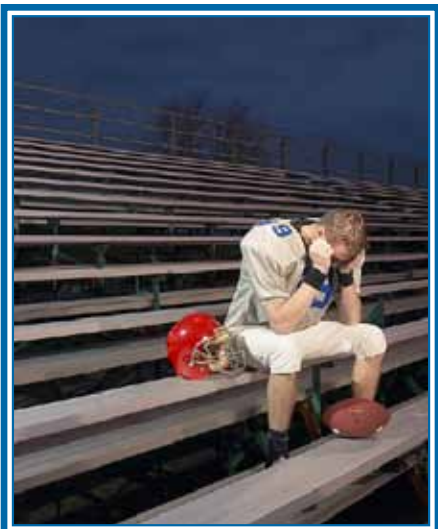
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another student is not likely to end the problem. It could get your child suspended, expelled or escalate the situation.

- Check your emotions. A parent's protective instincts stir strong emotions. Although it is difficult, parents are wise to step back and consider the next steps carefully.

Contact your child's teacher or principal

- Parents are often reluctant to report bullying to school officials, but bullying might not stop without the help of adults.
- Ask the teacher to talk with other adults who interact with your child at school to see whether they have observed students bullying your child. Emphasize that you want to work with the staff at school to find a solution to stop the bullying, for the sake of your child as well as other students.



- If you are not comfortable talking with your child's teacher, or if you are not satisfied with the conversation, make an appointment to meet with your child's guidance counselor or principal to discuss your concerns.
 - Do not contact the parents of the student(s) who bullied your child. This is usually a parent's first response, but sometimes it makes matters worse. School officials should contact the parents of the child or children who did the bullying.
 - Commit to making the bullying stop. Talk regularly with your child and with school staff to see whether the bullying has stopped. If the bullying persists, contact school authorities again.
- hostile consequences for rule violations.
 - Spend more time with your child and carefully supervise and monitor his activities. Find out who your child's friends are and how and where they spend free time.
 - Build on your child's talents by encouraging him to get involved in pro-social activities (such as clubs, music lessons, or non-violent sports).
 - Share your concerns with your child's teacher, counselor, or principal. Work together to send clear messages to your child that his bullying must stop.
 - If you or your child needs additional help, talk with a school counselor or mental health professional.

What Should I Do If My Child is Bullying Others?

- To stop bullying, make it clear to your child that you take bullying seriously, and you will not tolerate this behavior. However, this cannot be done in such a manner that could reinforce bullying patterns.
- Develop clear and consistent rules within your family for your children's behavior. Praise and reinforce your children for following rules and use non-physical, non-

NCADD offers presentations on the subject of bullying which are available for schools, PTAs, and other organizations. In addition, our Jason Surks Memorial Prevention Resource Center makes literature and videos available on the topic of bullying.

If you are interested in having a presentation for your school or organization, or if you would like resources to share with your child and other adults, call us today at 732-254-3344.

Surgeon General: Any Exposure to Tobacco Smoke Can Damage DNA Immediately, Lead to Illness

Tobacco smoke causes immediate damage even at the lowest levels of use. Cigarettes are designed to be addictive, according to the 30th tobacco-related report of the U.S. Surgeon General.

The report, which is the first on tobacco from current Surgeon General, Vice Admiral Regina M. Benjamin, M.D., stated that hundreds of the 7,000 or so compounds in tobacco smoke are toxic. At least 70 of the compounds cause cancer, and no level of exposure to tobacco smoke is safe.

The lining of the lungs becomes inflamed upon first exposure to cigarette smoke, and the smoke can cause diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

Heart disease is another common effect of cigarette smoke, including exposure to secondhand smoke. Diabetics who smoke may have more difficulty in controlling blood sugar.

The chemicals in tobacco smoke reach the lungs quickly every time a smoker inhales causing damage immediately. Inhaling even the smallest amount of tobacco smoke can also damage DNA, which can lead to cancer.

Today, more than ever, according to the report, cigarettes deliver nicotine to the user more quickly and effectively than was the case years ago.

Matthew L. Myers, president of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, said in a statement

that the report “sends an unmistakable message to elected officials at all levels that reducing smoking is one of the most effective actions we can take to improve the nation’s health and prevent some of the most deadly and costly diseases in our society.”

“This report makes it clear -- quitting at any time gives your body a chance to heal the damage caused by smoking,” the Surgeon General said. “It’s never too late to quit, but the sooner you do it, the better.”

The full report, “*How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease: The Biology and Behavioral Basis for Smoking-Attributable Disease*,” was published on www.surgengeneral.gov



The above report was provided by Join Together, a program of the Boston University School of Public Health and the nation’s leading provider of information, strategic planning assistance, and leadership development for community-based efforts to advance effective alcohol and drug policy, prevention, and treatment. To learn more about this organization and to subscribe to their newsletters, please go to the Join Together website at www.jointogether.org.

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Average TV-Watching Teen Sees One Alcohol Ad a Day

Fueled largely by an increase in distilled spirits advertising on cable television, the growth rate in youths' exposure to televised alcohol ads is outpacing that for adults, according to a report by the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth (CAMY) at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

The report indicated youths' 12 to 20 exposure to alcohol ads on U.S. television increased 71 percent from 2001 to 2009. The average TV-watching youth saw 366 alcohol ads in 2009.

The center said the latest numbers were an indication of the failure of voluntary marketing standards in the alcohol industry, under which companies place ads in programming with a youth audience no higher than 30 percent. The report found that 13 percent of youths' exposure to alcohol ads last year occurred during programming with more than a 30 percent youth audience.

Moreover, 44 percent of the exposures occurred during programming where youths were more likely than adults to be watching on a per capita basis. The five television networks where this viewing was most likely to occur were Comedy Central, BET, E!, FX and Spike.

The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD) of Middlesex County, Inc. is a private, non-profit, community-based health organization providing prevention, education, information and referral services to county residents, businesses, schools, faith-based organizations, municipal alliances, and social service agencies since 1980.

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