

Bullying: Tips for teachers

It might be useful to have students complete a survey on the topic of bullying at school and hold parent and staff meetings to raise awareness and understand the extent of the issue.

A more effective staff supervision during playtime or lunch (lunchroom) might be useful to protect potential victims. These are the hot spots for bullying behaviour.

In general, **older students bully younger ones**. School staff may consider the idea of separating them at breaktimes, changing location or time.

Praise, rewards and sanctions may help to improve the behaviour of more aggressive children, but are not the only instruments available.

Bullied children are often afraid or ashamed to tell what is going on. Therefore it might be very useful to set up an **anti-bullying help line** for parents and victims.

Teachers may create "**anti-bullying ballot boxes**" where students may report any bullying episodes they have witnessed or experienced; identify leaders among the students to help the victimized children; open a helpdesk providing psychological assistance to kids and adults.

Together, in class, students can come up with **rules for appropriate behaviour against bullying**. Rules should be brief and clear and easily visible, and every one must undertake to obey them.

Silence and secrecy are bullies' powerful allies. It is important to get children to speak up, without hiding the truth.

If a teacher witnesses a bullying episode, he/she should approach the children involved (the bully or the victim) immediately and talk about what is happening.

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