

Is your child victim of a bully?



Answers from Janie

by Janie Simpson, L.C.S.W.

Bullying has been a problem for a long time, so why is there such a focus on it now? What is bullying, why does it happen, what are the effects, and what can be done to prevent it?

There are several reasons we hear more about bullying today: the violent and destructive nature of bullying has increased, as well as the frequency. U.S. students report 15 to 25 percent are bullied

with some frequency.

Bullying occurs when one person hurts or scares another on purpose and that person has a hard time defending him/herself, and when it happens again and again. Bullying can include physical hurt, teasing, spreading bad rumors, keeping a person out of a group, or ganging up on one person. It can happen electronically on line or by phone or cell phone.

Why do kids bully? They see others do it and decide to bully rather than be bullied. The secret word is conscience. Sometimes it's what kids have to do to hang out with a certain group; it makes them feel stronger, smarter, and/or better.

Bullying affects both parties. The victim suffers loss of confidence, lacks a feeling of safety, withdraws, isolates him/herself, and will avoid situations, even school. Researchers say that the bully is more likely to drop out of school, drink, smoke, and get into fights.

What can be done about this problem? There are several directions on which to focus prevention efforts. The first avenue is to educate children about bullying and what they should do if it happens to them or if they witness it. Kids need to be taught to talk to an adult and tell them clearly what happened, who did it, where it happened, when, and how

long it has been going on. If it feels safe, the child should try to stand up calmly to the person who is bullying him. Bullies want to upset their victim.

If a child witnesses bullying, he needs to be educated to report it to an adult and to support the person being bullied. Do not bully back. Stay with the person being bullied. Usually bullies pick on people who are alone.

Another avenue for prevention is directed toward adults. School teachers and all others in the school system, as well as parents, need to focus on the social environment at the school. It needs to become "uncool" to

bully. Schools need to assess this problem by having students complete an anonymous questionnaire.

Adults at school and home can coordinate prevention programs and activities and train all staff in the prevention strategy. Schools can establish and enforce rules and policies related to bullying. They can increase adult presence in hot spots where bullying occurs. Consistent and appropriate intervention at the moment bullying occurs is important.

Prevention policies should be long term. The tendency is to react when someone is severely hurt or killed, but effective bullying prevention needs to continue over time.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND THE



City Hall
City Hall Annex
Duval County Courthouse
Jacksonville Public Libraries
Police Memorial Building
Sonny's Real Pit Bar-B-Q
Office Depot
The Jacksonville Landing
Most Major Downtown Buildings
Jacksonville Area:
(select locations)
Burger King Restaurants
Larry's Giant Subs
Gate Food Posts
(select locations)
Famous Amos Restaurants
McDonald's Restaurants
Wal-Mart
(select locations)
And Green Cove Springs:
(select locations)
Winn-Dixie
Rich's Bar-B-Q
Harvey's Grocery

NASSAU COUNTY'S MOST WANTED

Sheriff Thomas Seagraves and the Nassau County Sheriff's Office endorse the efforts of the Justice Coalition to capture wanted criminals. We rely greatly on the public's participation in locating wanted persons and deeply appreciate their efforts.

AMANDA LANE

Race: White Sex: Female
DOB: 4/13/78 Ht: 5'5" Wt: 140
Violation: Scheme to Defraud



JESSE MCKENZIE

Race: White Sex: Male
DOB: 12/17/82
Violation: Grand Theft

KENNETH LEE BLANKENSHIP

Race: White Sex: Male
DOB: 12/31/57 Ht: 5'6" Wt: u/k
Violation: Grand Theft



MILTON ALDERMAN

Race: Black Sex: Male
DOB: 12/11/82
Violation: Lewd & Lascivious Battery

SAMANTHA HARRIS

Race: Black Sex: Female
DOB: 5/20/79
Violation: Uttering Forged Instrument



STEPHEN DALE MICHEL, JR.

Race: White Sex: Male
DOB: 5/8/80
Violation: Dealing in Stolen Property

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