

# What Is Bullying?

Source: [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#)

Topics: [Middle Years \(5-9\)](#), [Helping Your Child with Bullying](#), more...

## What is bullying?

Bullying among children is aggressive behavior that is intentional and that involves an imbalance of power or strength. A child who is being bullied has a hard time defending himself or herself. Usually, bullying is repeated over time. Bullying can take many forms, such as hitting or punching (physical bullying); teasing or name-calling (verbal bullying) intimidation using gestures or social exclusion (nonverbal bullying or emotional bullying); and sending insulting messages by phone or computer e-mail (cyberbullying).

## Effects of bullying

Bullying can have serious consequences. Children and youth who are bullied are more likely than other children to:

- Be depressed, lonely, anxious;
- Have low self-esteem;
- Be absent from school;
- Feel sick; and
- Think about suicide.