

How Common is Bullying?

Many people think that bullying is a common part of childhood, and sadly, it is. Bullying affects close to half of students in high school and middle school. Estimates by the National Youth Violence Prevention in 2006 say that 30% of students either are bullied on a regular basis or are bullies themselves. About 11% of children are bullying victims while a slightly higher percentage, 13%, are doing the bullying. 6% of children say that they have been both the bullying victim and the bully at one time or another. This startling evidence shows that bullying is all too common in schools and the serious nature of bullying can damage the lives of these children.

Any child can be the victim of bullying, but some types of students are more likely than others to be targeted. Any child that is different whether it is race, ethnicity, religion, physical limitations or mental limitations is at a higher risk of being bullied. Bullying is more common among boys than girls and is more likely to be physical. It is common for bullying among girls to be emotional and based on what children say about each other. Bullying can take place anywhere that children interact, including on the computer and over the phone.

Bullying is common even from children who are confident and popular. A common misconception about bullying is that bullies are usually children with low self-esteem and are trying to compensate for their own problems. This is not the case and frequently bullies are confident, popular students who pick on others for the fun of it. Bullies often act out as a way to dominate others and to impress their friends. Bullies feel no remorse for what they do and are often in trouble in other areas of school. Bullies who are shown proper ways to interact with other are more likely to have serious problems later in life. It is common for children who are bullies in school to develop problems with the law later as adults and to get involved with drug and alcohol abuse.

Bullying victims can usually overcome the effects of bullying, especially if the bully is stopped before they have a chance to do any permanent damage. Not all cases of bullying have long term effects, but if not stopped in time they can. Children who are bullied relentlessly for a long time are more likely to be depressed and suicidal, even later in life. Bullying victims are also likely to drop out of school or do poorly in school as a result of all the stress placed on them by the bully. Bullying victims also tend to have low self-esteem that may never improve.

Bullying is a common and serious problem in schools today. Parents and teacher should closely monitor children for signs of bullying and stop any incidents

before both the bully and victim suffer long-term consequences. The serious nature of bullying is often overlooked by good natured parents and teachers who think it is something that will be outgrown, and while that is sometimes the case, bullying should not be taken lightly.