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Ask Dr. Harold What is bullying?

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deal with the amount of emotional battles they have to deal with.

Strategies for Kids

Resiliency is the emotional karate that we as parents and teachers need to help build with our kids and for our communities. Bouncing back and being able to cope is really what we hope for when we say toughen up. Psychologists once thought resiliency was a thing we each had and researchers have found it is a series of processes. Social problem solving skills are key. We can model and describe how we deal with difficult social issues. Getting and asking for help is important. We need to encourage kids to ask those questions-even during those years when questions come at sonic speeds. Helping others is a key process in resiliency. This is the research that has all the schools implementing service-learning projects. Turns our helping each other makes us better. Spirituality is a resiliency process. Partaking in your religious tradition is important for your kids to see and build a community that is supportive. Connection and involvement with family, friends, and community are resiliency processes. Encourage these interactions and connections. Families and friends do not let bullies run the classroom or the family. The following site has good resources: Web <http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/kids/>

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If we think about how a kid experiences bullying it becomes more clear. The child who is bullied feels fear and powerlessness. The bully gets the feeling of gaining power. These are the classic psychological dynamics of bullying. Other definitions include intent to harm by the bully and a real or perceived social advantage gained by the bully. The most recent bullying statistics indicate that 77% of kids report being bullied and cyber bullying statistics are similar. The fact is we all witnessed or participated in kids being mean to one another and our kids are growing up in a similar world. Gender seems to make a difference only in the physicality of bullying, with boys tending to use aggressive behavior more and girls using emotional bullying more often.

What can we do about it?

Lets start with teasing. Who likes to be teased? Not many of us. And contrary to some people's belief there is no psychological evidence that teasing builds character. Taking on a difficult challenge and working hard and accomplishing a goal builds character. Teasing and bullying cause shame in kids that they later have to work out in therapy or cover up with addictions. Character and toughness is built more efficiently when we teach kids to stand up for each other against those that try to bully them. There is evidence to suggest that bullies attempt to convince the person who is being bullied that everyone is also against them. We need to stand up and let kids and adults know it is not acceptable to make fun of or bully people. We need to model this and actively let kids know everyone is not against them by standing with them.

But many of us have little idea what weapons to provide our kids to