

The Ring of Valor: Issues for parents

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Fact Sheet #8

With your child

Listen to your child

Ask your children if they have had experience with bullying or have witnessed bullying in school. Treat what your child tells you as a serious matter. Most importantly, *get the facts*. If your child has been treated unfairly, you have the right to feel angry. But stay calm and put your anger to work effectively.

Discuss the causes and consequences of bullying

Use victim-centered reasoning in your discussions about bullying. This involves a focus on the consequences of bullying for a child who is targeted.

Discuss solutions

Every child has the right to self-defense but not counter-aggression. A child should not use the tactics of bullying in response to bullying. Look for strong and assertive but nonviolent solutions. Be a good role model for compassion and nonviolent conflict resolution. Help your child expand his or her network of friends. Nurture your children's self-respect without indulging them in "unearned" praise.

Establish clear, unambiguous moral guidelines for behavior.

Help your child become a person with integrity. See *Raising Courageous Kids: Eight Steps to Practical Heroism* (<http://www.raisingcourageouskids.com>) for more information.



In this *Bullying* series:

1. *Bullying fundamentals*
2. *From teasing to bullying*
3. *Bullying facts*
4. *Responding to bullying*
5. *From victim to target*
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The content of this fact sheet is subject to revision at any time. For the most recent version, check the website.



www.theringofvalor.com

If you have any questions or comments, you can contact the author at casmith@ksu.edu.

With the teacher

View the teacher as an ally

Make an appointment and respond to a request to discuss the situation with your child's teacher. Solutions to bullying must be a community solution, one that involves everyone with a stake in the issue.

Take time to listen to the teacher

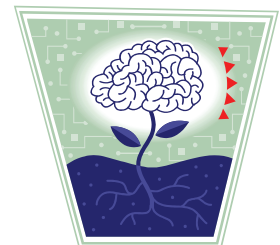
Respect the teacher's opinion about the situation. Listen to their perception of the facts. Be open to new information about your child and the problem.

Stand up for your child but focus on facts

Have the courage to stand up for your child with the educational establishment. Be sure to remain focused on the facts and remain poised, however. Be willing to make an investment in the solution and being a better ally with the teacher in his or her opposition to cruelty. If you believe the teacher is uncooperative, take your concern to the principal, and then to the school board if necessary. At each step, ask yourself, am I being reasonable and respectful of the teachers and administrators.

Keep it low key

Children often fail to report problems with bullying to adults because they are worried that making a report will exacerbate the problem. At each step, involve your children and ask for their opinion about how to proceed.



**A Knowledge Building
Series of fact sheets**