

A Parent's Guide

PERSONAL COURAGE
H.E.A.R.TM
LOYALTY

Helping Everyone Achieve Respect



*Building Respect and Ending Bullying
and Cruelty in Your School*

NATIONAL GUARD 

The purposes of this guide are to help parents recognize the impacts of teen bullying and to provide them with valuable strategies and resources. The **H.E.A.R** presentation for high school students and this parent guide were created in collaboration with subject matter experts at Harvard Graduate School of Education and University of Nebraska-Lincoln. **H.E.A.R** is sponsored by the Army National Guard to help minimize bullying and promote respectful behavior.

BY CONTRAST

The **National Guard** promotes positive character traits:

- Loyalty
- Duty
- Respect
- Selfless service
- Honor
- Integrity
- Personal courage

Bullying violates these character traits by using:

- Repetitive words or writing that is intentionally hurtful (in person or through digital media)
- Physical and/or verbal attacks
- Exclusion and social isolation
- Negative behavior connected to sexual harassment or discrimination

Consequences of Bullying



What to do if you think your child is being bullied:

1. Let your child know she can come to you and that you are ready to listen.
2. If your child tells you he is being bullied, try to get the whole story before you react. It's important to neither overreact nor downplay the situation.
 - Actively listen. Teens really want to be heard.
 - Empathize with his/her feelings.
 - Stay calm.
 - Praise the courage it takes to speak up about bullying.
 - Ensure him/her that you will help find solutions.
3. Develop a plan of action with your child. She may not want you to get involved directly but she may need your help discussing possible strategies. Together, come up with several possibilities, such as confronting the bully, avoiding the bully, sticking together with a friend when near the bully, or telling an adult at school. Role-play or practice and decide which solution makes the most sense in this specific situation.
4. Teach your child to be assertive – to be strong without being mean. For example, teach him how to state his desires in a definitive, factual tone of voice, the way you would say “The capital of the U.S. is Washington, D.C.”
5. If your child feels isolated at school, help her find ways to form new, healthy friendships, such as through afterschool activities. Having just one good friend can help teens cope with being bullied.
6. After you have carefully considered your child's point of view, talk to his/her school, if you feel it is necessary. Make sure your child knows you are reaching out to the school.
 - Send a written request (email or letter) asking for a meeting. Ask your child to write down exactly what happened and include it.
 - During the meeting, focus on solutions, not blame or punishment.
 - Keep a written record of your conversations with the school.
7. Partner with the school to make the environment safe and respectful for all students, perhaps by helping establish policies and resources.
8. Teach your child what to do if cyberbullied:
 - Never respond to the message.
 - Save the message.
 - Tell an adult.
 - Block users involved in bullying.
 - Contact service providers to report cyberbullying (e.g., Facebook's Bullying Center, Twitter's Help Center, or Instagram's Abuse Reporting System).



How to raise a caring teen who does not bully or passively witness bullying:

1. Model and teach respectful behavior at home.
 - Be a good role model. Notice and appreciate those who help your community, and demonstrate fairness, friendliness, compassion, and generosity even to those not in your circle of friends.
 - Listen attentively to your child and to others.
2. Think about how your child perceives you. Your child won't learn from you unless she respects you. If you think your child does not respect you, consider why. You may want to consult your partner or close friends about this disrespect and about how you might handle it.
3. Make kindness and compassion toward everyone top family values. Instead of saying to your child, for example, that the most important thing is that you're happy, tell him that the most important things are that you're kind and happy.
4. Hold your child to high ethical standards. Make sure she treats others fairly and well.
 - Don't allow her to be rude to others under any circumstances.
 - Explain to her that she has responsibilities to her communities, whether neighborhoods, classrooms, sport teams, or religious community.
5. Expand your child's circle of concern. Help him notice, listen to, and care about people who are not his close friends and those who might sometimes be treated as invisible, including those who are different in some way. Talk to him about how it feels to be ignored or left out and encourage him to reach out to others (e.g., by paying a compliment, comforting a classmate who was teased, or including a new kid at the lunch table).
6. Help your child learn how to tackle her own challenges. Don't immediately jump in to solve them yourself. Brainstorm with her, and get involved if she is in danger or stuck.
7. Talk to your child about what to do if he sees someone else being bullied:
 - Don't join in if someone is bullying or harassing another person.
 - If he feels safe, tell the bully that this is not okay. (Suggest that they ask a friend to stand up with them.)
 - Report bullying and harassment to a trusted adult.
 - Comfort the victim. (Sometimes the safest way is in private afterwards.)
8. Talk to your child about responsible and safe use of social media, including:
 - Why and how to protect others' privacy and feelings.
 - Treating others with the same respect online as they would in person.
 - Following family rules about acceptable Internet use.

For Additional Resources,
Visit www.project-hear.us



NATIONAL GUARD 

The National Guard provides your community with a valuable service. Floods, tornados, blizzards, hurricanes - local disasters call the National Guard to duty. Because National Guard members are "citizen-soldiers" many community-minded youth enlist as a way to "give back"



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