



# BEYOND STICKS & STONES

**HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD  
ADDRESS BULLYING**

 **PACER's  
National Bullying Prevention Center.**  
Together We Can Create a World Without Bullying

[PACER.org/Bullying](https://www.pacer.org/Bullying)

PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center actively leads social change to prevent childhood bullying so that all youth are safe and supported in their schools, communities, and online. PACER provides innovative resources for students, parents, educators, and others, and recognizes bullying as a serious community issue that impacts education, physical and emotional health, and the safety and well-being of students.

PACER Center enhances the quality of life and expands opportunities for children, youth, and young adults with all disabilities and their families so each person can reach their highest potential.

**PACER.org/Bullying**

Bullying prevention resources for communities, schools, and parents.

**PACERTeensAgainstBullying.org**

Bullying prevention website for middle and high school students.

**PACERKidsAgainstBullying.org**

Bullying prevention website for elementary school students.

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# INTRODUCTION

Every day, children, teens, and adults from all over the world send stories of bullying to PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. The thousands of messages – filled with heartache and pain – attest to the serious and potentially long-term impact of bullying on a person's life. With more than one out of every five (20.8%) students who report being bullied, this means that bullying could be affecting someone you know and care about. But there is hope.

If you want to protect your child or someone you know from being bullied, or you want to be proactive in your community about this issue but are not sure where to begin, this book is for you. *Beyond Sticks & Stones: Guide to Helping Your Child Address Bullying* offers bullying prevention strategies for children at school, in the community, and online. It is filled with the information and practical tools that can help parents and others take action to address and prevent bullying.

**An important note:** While “parent” is used throughout this book, any guardian, leader, educator, community member, or caring adult can use this information to support young people in addressing and preventing bullying.

The first step to preventing bullying is to understand its dynamics: the definition of bullying, the different types of bullying, and how bullying impacts students. Following this overview, *Beyond Sticks & Stones* offers strategies on how to work with your child to address and prevent bullying, how to engage schools in bullying prevention, and how to learn about the legal rights that protect children and youth from bullying.

Because children who have disabilities are bullied more often than children without disabilities, a special section provides specific tips for parents of students with disabilities. “Beyond Sticks & Stones” also includes resources for schools, communities, teens, and children to take action to help create a world without bullying.

Even though bullying is still pervasive, the increasing awareness of the issue over the years shows that change is possible. When PACER Center founded the National Bullying Prevention Center in 2006, there was little public discussion about bullying, and media attention of the issue was almost non-existent. National Bullying Prevention Month, initiated by PACER and observed each October, has helped bring the issue to light, along with media awareness and community outreach. These days, people in the U.S. are more informed about the impact of bullying. Each state has a law or policy on bullying prevention, the White House has provided a summit on bullying, and schools around the country are actively engaged in this issue. This offers hope that a culture that once accepted bullying as a “rite of passage” can change if everyone does their part.

That hope can also be found in some of the messages students send to PACER. When a child who has experienced bullying speaks out and wants to support others, there is hope; when a child who has bullied others changes their behavior, there is hope; when students and adults take action against bullying and teach empathy and respect, there is hope.

**PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center provides innovative resources for students, parents, educators, and others, and recognizes bullying as a serious community issue that impacts education, physical and emotional health, and the safety and well-being of students. Along with this book, you can find additional valuable information and resources on our website at [PACER.org/Bullying](https://www.pacer.org/Bullying).**

### **Our Goals**

- Promote a shared conversation and response to bullying in which everyone works together responsibly and collaboratively to create safe environments for students
- Inspire entire communities to get involved with social change and promote kindness, acceptance, and inclusion
- Offer classroom activities, toolkits, and lesson plans for educators
- Provide informative guides for parents to understand the dynamics of bullying, help their children through bullying situations, and learn how to communicate with school staff
- Educate students with age-appropriate resources and information to manage bullying situations, be supportive of their peers, and take action to prevent bullying in their school, community, and online
- Create school-wide opportunities to address bullying, including National Bullying Prevention Month in October and Unity Day, initiatives both founded by PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center

**Together, we can create a world without bullying.**