



## TERRY YOUNG

Psy.D.

Director of  
Neuropsychological  
Services



talks about

## Bullying

### WHAT IS IT?

While teasing and kidding are a normal part of growing up, bullying involves a person or group who repeatedly try to harm someone who is perceived as weak or vulnerable. Bullying involves **DIRECT ATTACKS**, such as hitting, intimidating, malicious teasing, name-calling, sexual comments and stealing or indirect or **SUBTLE ATTACKS**, such as rumor spreading or encouraging others to tease or reject. More recently, a new form of bullying involves **CYBER-BULLYING** where pictures, rumors, sexual content and solicitations are used to injure the intended victim.

### HOW COMMON IS IT?

- 30% of teens report they were involved in bullying, either as a target or as a bully.
- From grades 6 to 10, 13% of students reported they bullied others; 11% were victims.
- It is more common among younger teens; as children grow older, they are less likely to bully others or be the victim of bullying.
- It occurs more frequently among boys.
- Boys use more direct, aggressive means of bullying.
- Girls use rumors and sexual comments.
- 88% of school age children have witnessed bullying.

### WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF BULLYING?

- Fear and anxiety
- Reduced school performance
- School avoidance
- Reduced self-esteem
- Social isolation
- Thoughts of suicide
- Weapons for protection or revenge
- As adults, higher levels of depression and poor self-esteem.

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**www.newlife  
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20700 Watertown Road,  
Suite 102  
Waukesha, WI 53186

## WHO ARE THE BULLIES?

- Tend to be self-confident with high self-esteem.
- Physically aggressive
- Hot-tempered, easily provoked
- Pro-violence attitudes
- Need to dominate others
- Lack sympathy
- Higher incidence of smoking, drinking and fighting
- Less family support
- Parents who do less monitoring of activities
- Parents who are excessively permissive or excessively harsh

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Tell your parents or an adult you can trust (teacher, coach, principal, etc.).
- You are not to blame.
- Act confident.
- Make other friends.
- Find activities to build self-confidence.
- Do not use weapons to retaliate.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU WITNESS BULLYING?

- Do not join in.
- Attempt to diffuse bullying situations.
- Get an adult.
- Support the bullied person.

## WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

- Ask your child what he or she thinks needs to be done.
- Do not act without your child's awareness.
- Do not encourage fighting back.
- Encourage the school to take this seriously.
- Encourage your child to be with accepting peers and friends and avoid being alone.
- Practice assertiveness conversations.
- If you are concerned that your child is slipping into depression or begins to tune you out, contact a health care professional such as a child or adolescent therapist.



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