

# Stop Bullying: Walking a Mile in Another Kid's Shoes



Social Skills

## How Will Having Empathy for Other Children Help My Child?

Although many young children do not understand exactly what bullying is, the roots of bullying behaviors are often evident in the preschool years. Responding quickly to unkind behaviors and consistently teaching children empathy and problem-solving skills prevents bullying before it becomes a continuing problem.

## What Can I Do?

Teach your child that all aggressive behaviors – including teasing, threatening, and name-calling – are unkind and unacceptable. Talk about bullying behavior you notice in a book or on television. Name the behavior.

When you notice your child showing unkind behavior:

### 1. Stop. Calmly point out the unacceptable behavior.

Example, say: *"You were teasing your friend. Teasing hurts people's feelings."*

### 2. Talk about how the child who was targeted seems to feel.

Example, ask the child who was teased: *"How did being teased make you feel?"* Or say to your child: *"Teasing made your friend feel sad."*

### 3. Teach empathy by asking your child how it feels to be on the receiving end of the unkind behavior.

Example, ask your child: *"How do you feel when someone teases you?"*

### 4. Problem-solve a better strategy so no one's feelings get hurt next time.

Example, ask your child: *"What could you do differently next time?"*

Practice what he would say instead of using unkind words.

**Note:** If needed, first give a consequence for the inappropriate behavior and then problem-solve a better strategy for next time.

Notes & Tips for my child...

## Rewards for Life!

Teens and adults who think about other people's feelings and use positive social skills get along better in relationships, and at work, and are well-liked and respected by others.

These are general guidelines, not medical advice, for children ages 3 years and older.  
Consult a physician or mental health professional for specific problems or concerns about an individual child.

For more ideas and resources to help develop children's social-emotional skills and healthy decision-making visit [AcornDreams.com](http://AcornDreams.com), a service of Wingspan, LLC.

