



Parent Guide: Signs Your Child Might Be Being Bullied

You know your child best so you will most likely be aware if something seems wrong. Children are often reluctant to come forward and will try to hide that they're having issues. If you're concerned about your child, here are some behaviours to look out for:

- a reluctance to go to school
- unexplained tummy upsets or headaches
- showing signs of distress on a Sunday night or at the end of school holidays - becoming either quiet or withdrawn or playing up
- torn school clothes or missing belongings that they may use as an excuse to not go
- seeming upset after using their phone, tablets, computers, etc
- wanting to leave for school much earlier than necessary or returning home late

Long-term bullying can have an impact on a child's mental health so you may notice more extreme signs:

- not eating or overeating
- making extreme changes to their appearance (more often seen in teens)
- panic attacks, aggression or extreme emotional reactions when returning to school after the weekends or holidays or possibly on the way to school sporadically or daily

If you see any of the above or signs such as depression, anxiety or self-harm, always speak with your GP.

If you notice any of these signs and want to ask your child if they're being bullied, consider these steps:

- Plan Ahead.
- Be really clear about what you want to ask.
- Put yourself in your child's shoes; how will they feel about being asked to talk about this? When are they at their most communicative and comfortable?
- Don't push if they don't open up right away; let them know you're there for them and then give them some space.
- Be clear that you won't charge off demanding action from school or shout at the children involved or their parents.
- Get into the right state of mind and choose your words carefully.

We hope you find the information on our website and resources useful. This resource is provided for informational and educational purposes only. It is intended to offer general information and should never be taken as professional advice on mental health. As information on mental health is complex and is a developing area, we do not warrant that the information provided is correct. You should not rely on the material included within this resource and we do not accept any responsibility if you or your children do. It is up to you to contact a suitably qualified health professional if you are concerned about your mental health or the mental health of your children.