

# Table of Contents

- Introduction ..... 1
  
- Section One: The Dynamics of Bullying** ..... 3
  - Chapter 1: Defining Bullying Behavior..... 5
    - Bullying vs. Conflict..... 6
    - The Impact of Bullying..... 7
    - Types of Bullying ..... 8
      - Verbal ..... 8
      - Physical ..... 9
      - Emotional (Social) ..... 9
      - Sexual..... 11
      - Cyberbullying ..... 12
  - Chapter 2: Who Bullies and Why? ..... 14
    - Who is Targeted by Bullying? ..... 16
    - Dual Role: Reactive Bullying ..... 16
  - Chapter 3: Common Views about Bullying..... 17
  
- Section Two: What Parents Can Do** ..... 19
  - Chapter 4: Does Your Child Recognize Bullying?..... 21
  - Chapter 5: Action Steps for Parents ..... 23
    - Know the Laws..... 23
    - Keep a Record ..... 23
    - Inform the School in Writing ..... 24
  - Chapter 6: Action Steps for Parent and Child ..... 25
    - Talk with Your Child about Bullying ..... 25
    - Why Children Might Not Tell ..... 26
    - Reactions for Parents to Avoid ..... 27
    - Encourage Self-advocacy ..... 28
      - You Are Not Alone ..... 28
      - The Right to Be Safe..... 28
    - Response Strategies..... 29
    - Student Action Plan ..... 30
  - Chapter 7: Protect Your Child from Cyberbullying..... 32
    - Three-step Plan to Protect Your Child from Cyberbullying ..... 32
  - Chapter 8: Take Action if Your Child is the Bully..... 34
  - Chapter 9: Encourage Children to Be Helpful Bystanders..... 35
  - Chapter 10: Know that Bullying Can Be a Civil Rights Issue..... 39
    - Federal Definition of Harassment..... 39
  
- Section Three: For Parents of Students with Disabilities** ..... 41
  - Chapter 11: The Numbers..... 43
  - Chapter 12: What is Disability Harassment? ..... 44
    - Federal Laws That Apply to Disability Harassment ..... 46
    - Schools’ Duties: The Role of School Policy in Responding to Disability Harassment .. 47
    - Using a Template Letter: Notifying the School about a Bullying Incident ..... 50
    - Using the Individualized Education Program (IEP)..... 51

Chapter 13: Filing a Complaint..... 52  
    Filing a Complaint of Discrimination with the Office for Civil Rights ..... 52  
    Filing a Complaint of Discrimination with the Department of Justice ..... 55  
    Filing a Complaint with a State Educational Agency ..... 57  
Chapter 14: The Peer Advocacy Program: An Innovative Bullying Prevention Program for  
Students with Disabilities ..... 57  
    The Concept ..... 57  
    The Process ..... 58  
**Section Four: How to Be a Champion Against Bullying ..... 61**  
    Chapter 15: How Schools and Communities Can Help ..... 63  
    Chapter 16: How Teens (Middle and High School) Can Help ..... 65  
    Chapter 17: How Kids (Elementary School) Can Help ..... 68  
**Bullying Prevention Curricula Resources..... 69**  
    PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center Websites ..... 71  
    Bullying Prevention Laws & Policy Guidance..... 73  
    Cyberbullying & Internet Safety Resources ..... 73  
    General Bullying Prevention Resources ..... 74  
    Resources & Crisis Support for Protected Classes ..... 74  
    Safe School Climate..... 75  
    National Education Organizations ..... 75  
    Notifying the School About a Bullying Incident — Using a Template Letter ..... 76  
References..... 77

# The Face of Bullying

**"I know what it's like to be bullied. Words cannot describe it. You feel hated and worthless for most of the time. I was bullied in fifth grade up to eighth grade. People would call me fat and ugly. They would spread false rumors about me. They would laugh in my face all the time. I hated life."**

**~Donya, 17, California**

**"First grade through fourth grade I was bullied, and every day I came home crying my eyes out. My mom and the school didn't believe me, but one day my mom saw it happen. She tried to get the school involved, but they wouldn't, so she pulled me out of private school and put me in public school."**

**~Maggie, 16, Arkansas**

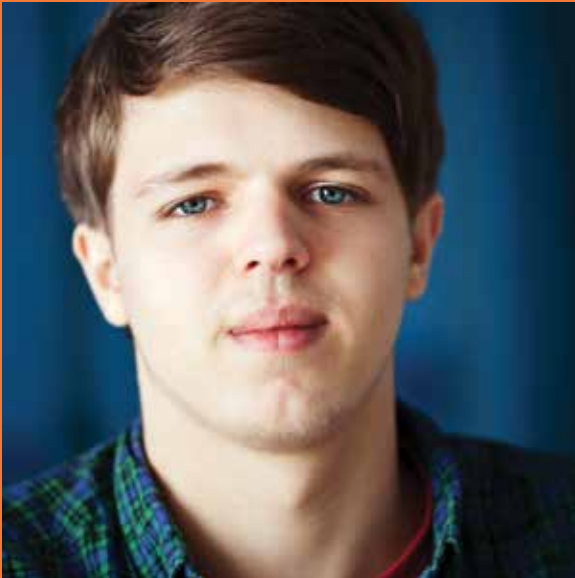
**"My brother is 7 and is bullied far worse than anyone should be at that age. When you're in second grade, it's supposed to be fun to go to school, see your friends, and have recess. Instead it's about being tied down to be beaten up and choked."**

**~Mackenzie, 20, California**

**"My grandson was being bullied, and the school never did anything. My daughter moved to another county just to keep my 8-year-old grandson safe. He was being attacked on the school bus also."**

**~Vicky, 47, Wisconsin**





**"I've been bullied since kindergarten. In kindergarten I was hit, tripped, pushed, etc. and in fourth grade I was threatened to be killed."**

**~Brea, 14, Virginia**



**"I was bullied even in preschool. My earliest memory is having a bigger, stronger kid pushing my head into a wooden slide. Then from first grade all the way to the end of eighth I was bullied for having learning disabilities and smaller and weaker than the other boys...My darkest hour was when I almost brought a knife into school to hurt my tormentor. I didn't...What I went through isn't even the worst of bullying, and it was still hard for me."**

**~Riley, 18, New York**



**"I was cyber bullied, verbally bullied, and sometimes physically bullied because I went through puberty early. I was abandoned by all the people I thought were my friends, and I hated it. I didn't go to an adult and I regret that."**

**~Kimberly, 12, Alabama**

**"My friend was bullied to a point of near suicide, and when her parents went to the school about it, they told them to 'Deal with it.'"**

**~Lavi, 16, Oregon**

*\*Comments sent to PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center website section "I Care Because..." Visit [PACER.org/Bullying](http://PACER.org/Bullying) to read more.*



# Introduction

Every day, children, teens, and people 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 sometimes deadly impact of bullying on a child’s life. Unfortunately, the number of students who write to PACER about being bullied can be multiplied by millions of others: nearly one-third of all school-aged children are bullied each year in the U.S., upwards of 13 million students.<sup>1</sup>

This book can help you change that number. 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 aren’t sure where to begin, this book is for you. “Beyond Sticks & Stones: How to Help Your Child Address Bullying” offers bullying prevention strategies for children at home, in school, and online. It is filled with the information and practical tools that can help parents and others take action against bullying. Throughout the book, you’ll also find comments from children and teens that illustrate the face of bullying today.

The first step to preventing bullying is to understand its dynamics — what bullying is, the types of bullying, and why children are bullied. Following this overview, “Beyond Sticks & Stones” offers strategies on how to work with your child to put a stop to bullying or prevent it, how to work with the school, and how to learn about the legal rights your child may have.

Because children who have disabilities are bullied two to three times more often than children without disabilities, a special section provides specific tips for parents of students with disabilities. “Beyond Sticks & Stones” also includes specific ways for schools, communities, teens, and children to become Champions Against Bullying. Finally, the book offers bullying prevention resources that can provide further help and guidance.

Even though bullying is still pervasive in this society, the increasing awareness of the issue over the past six years offers hope that change can occur. 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. These days, people in the U.S. are more informed about the dangers of bullying. Celebrities are supporting bullying prevention initiatives, the White House has provided a summit on bullying, and states are strengthening bullying laws. This offers hope that a culture that has in the past 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 PACER. When a child survives bullying to speak out and help others, there is hope; when a child who has bullied others changes her behavior, there is hope; when students and adults take action against bullying and teach others empathy and respect, there is hope.

Consider this message sent to PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center website:

---

<sup>1</sup> 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>; 2008–2009 School Crime Supplement (National Center for Education Statistics and Bureau of Justice Statistics), <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012314.pdf>

**“Both Emma and I are in clubs in our school that promote bullying prevention. Through our experiences in our clubs, we have seen a major difference in bullying. Kids are now being respected for who they are, not what they look like, and others are finally seeing that we are all equal. Although bullying has not stopped completely, we know that with the help of our fellow students, club members, people like you, and this website, we are making a change for the better.”**

**~Emma and Jeannie, 17, New York**

Thank you for joining Emma, Jeannie, and PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center in making a “change for the better.”