

# Bully Awareness Monday

## What can parents do to help bully-proof their children?

### ♡ Encourage friendships:

Children who don't have friends tend to be vulnerable to bullies. Start early in helping your child build social skills and make friendships.

### ♡ Teach your children to express themselves clearly yet tactfully:

Help your child use "I statements" (e.g., "I am mad about you picking on me. Stop it!"). Such "I statements" explain how people feel. When children know how to express themselves without offending others, they tend to be popular with their peers, and that will keep bullies away.

### ♡ Teach self-respect:

A confident child is not likely to become a victim of a bully.

### ♡ Stress the importance of body language:

Teach your child to be assertive by relaxing his body (deep breathing helps), keeping his hands steady, and using frequent eye contact. These tricks will help children seem self-assured even when they are not.

### ♡ Start teaching the art of negotiation early:

The preschool years are the best time to begin teaching children to settle their own disputes and solve problems. For example, when your child is fighting over a toy with another child, let them discuss how they can share the toy; let them talk about what can be done to solve the problem.