

## How to Help: Steps to Bully-Proof Your Child

(from: *Bully-Proofing Your Child: A Parent's Guide* by Garrity, Baris, and Porter)

1. Let the school know your safety worries immediately.
2. Keep a record of time, date, names and circumstances to show a pattern of harassment.
3. Teach your child self-respect – confident kids are less likely to become a victim.
4. Let your child know it is okay to express anger if done appropriately.
5. Encourage friendships – there is strength in numbers.
6. Arrange weekend play dates to promote friendships.
7. Build social skills early.
8. Help shy kids with social skills training – role play together situations that have occurred previously.
9. Explain the difference between telling and tattling. Tattling is when you report something just to get someone in trouble. Telling is when you report that you or someone else is in danger. (Verbal abuse and being excluded are dangers too.)
10. Stress the importance of body language – a “victim stance” may attract bullies.
11. Teach your child effective skills for making friends such as how to share, compromise, apologize, use “I” statements, change the topic to avoid conflict, and use a “diplomatic” approach.
12. Teach your children alternative responses – **HA HA, SO** (Help, Avoid, Humor, Assert yourself, **Self**-talk, **Own** –it).
13. Don't advise physically attacking the bully.