

My Mentee Might Be Bullying Others

Although it is hard for most parents to hear about their mentee's negative behavior, mentors of children who bully must work closely with the school and parents to help resolve the situation. Parents need to remember that children who bully are at high risk for engaging in risky or even criminal behaviors, and it is very important in a bullying situation for the mentors to **act immediately**.

If you think that your mentee may be bullying others, read about the warning signs for children who bully and work with your mentee's school to address this issue.

What You Can Do

- **Talk with your mentee.** Ask for their account of the situation. Be objective and listen carefully. Calmly explain what your mentee is accused of and ask for an explanation of the incident and their role.
- **Make it clear to your mentee that you take bullying seriously.** Calmly let them know that you will not tolerate this behavior. Help your mentee learn that bullying hurts everyone involved.
- **Develop clear and consistent rules for your mentee's behavior.** Praise your mentee when they follow the rules. Decide on fair consequences and follow through if your mentee breaks the rules.
- **Spend more time with your mentee.** Carefully supervise and monitor their activities, including when they are online or texting.
- **Be aware of who your mentee's friends are.** Find out how they spend their free time.
- **Build on your mentee's talents and positive attributes.** Encourage him or her to get involved in social activities.
- **Work with your mentee's school to ensure the bullying does not happen again.** Ask the school to keep you informed. Develop strategies together to address bullying. Work together to send clear messages to your mentee that the bullying must stop.
- **Talk with a school principal, vice principal, counselor or health professional.** They may be able to provide your mentee with additional help.