The Connection Between ADHD Children and Bullying

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ADHD and Bullying

The link between ADHD and bullying is well known and the reason is obvious: ADHD involves abnormal behavior with symptoms in children including problems controlling their emotions, attention spans, irritability or talking too much, and therefore children with ADHD are more vulnerable to become bullies or being bullied. One study conducted on ADHD sufferers in third to sixth grade (based on teacher and parent reports) reveals that 17 % were bullies, 27% were victims of bullying and 14% were both bullies and victims. What should you do as a parent? Consider the following tips:

If Your Child is Being Bullied at School

Your child may have troubles telling you about this, because he feels there's nothing you can do about it. Therefore, you may want to ask him casually about his friends and classmates (are they friendly or not?) or how happy he feels while at school. You may also want to talk to the teachers, because they often spot the bullies.

Once you know your child is being bullied, have a conversation with him. Explain to him – and work with him – to improve certain behaviors such as being too talkative, clowning around or making bad remarks which can make him a target to a bully. By using a quieter voice and listening more to classmates he will be less likely to be bullied. Let your child know that it is not hopeless and help is available. Encourage him to avoid isolation, but rather hang out with a friend or two at all times. Help your child become more assertive, without becoming aggressive.

The next conversation should be with the school officials. You need to inform the teachers and school principal about this problem. Gather as many details as you can from your child, and report the bullies. Although the principal may contact the bully's parents directly, you may want to talk to them as well. If there is a serious threat of violence or physical threat you should reported at the police.

If Your Child is The Bully

One of the most important things as a parent is to stay calm, and avoid accusing your child. Talk openly and calmly if your receive a phone call from the teacher reporting the incident. Help him understand that he needs to change his behavior, and ask details about what happened, and where.

Talk to the teacher and school principal. If the bullying occurred in the school bus, you may want to talk with the teacher and place your child away from that child, perhaps close to the bus driver. If the incident took place at recess, arrange to have your child playing in a well supervised area. The “bully” type of child is also a leader - perhaps the teacher could assign various tasks to your child, so he will be busy completing that project.

A child psychologist can also bring additional help, and teach your child how to control his emotions and behavior.

Don’t blame yourself and think you are a bad parent. But don’t ignore the problems, either. There are solutions and plenty of help from teachers and healthcare professionals. If you feel that your child has problems, take action as soon as possible.