

What to Do If Your Child is a Bystander

Children who witness other persons being bullied, but do not initially participate in the bullying, are **bystanders**. Believe it or not, bystanders can be extremely powerful. They can enable the bullying to continue or worsen. However, bystanders can also be sources of strength for those who are bullied. Instead of intensifying the bullying, they can actually deescalate or even stop the bullying in its tracks.

Quite frequently, children who are bystanders to bullying can become quite distressed. Quite often, they simply do not know what to do. You can help them. Talk your child through the following steps to becoming a great bystander.

The following steps come from the [Olweus Bullying Prevention Program](#):

1. Try to help students who are bullied. Take a stand against bullying and side with those who are being bullied. Help someone leave a bad situation, become their friend, refuse to participate in the bullying, or simply give them a smile.
2. Try to include students who are left out. If you see that someone is left out, reach out to them and ask them to join you. Or find something else for the two of you to do.
3. Tell an adult at school and an adult at home. If you know that someone is being bullied, it is okay and even the right thing to do to tell an adult about it. They may be able to help you and the student who is being bullied. If the adult will not help, go to another one! If you are at school, tell a trusted teacher or principal. Then tell a parent or family member at home.

Sources: [Olweus Bullying Prevention Program](#) [Schoolwide Guide and Teacher Guide](#)

If you would like to know more about teaching your child how to be a better bystander, click [here](#) to visit the [Stopbullying.gov](#) website and watch some [videos](#) on learning how to help others who are bullied.

The Kentucky Center for School safety has a Tipline that you can call to report bullying in your school district, if the district has signed on to participate. Here is the link: [S.T.O.P. Safety Tipline](#).

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