

The top four reasons why children won't talk about bullying and how to overcome them.

Bullying is a serious issue that affects children of all ages, and parents and carers must be aware of the signs and take action if their child is being bullied. Unfortunately, many children don't talk about bullying, making it difficult for parents and carers to help. Here are the top four reasons why children won't talk about bullying and how to overcome them.

1 – Fear of retaliation

One of the most common reasons why children don't talk about bullying is the fear of retaliation. They may worry that if they tell someone, the bullying will get worse, or that their bullies will target them even more. Children may also be afraid that the person that they tell will take extreme measures that will make the situation worse.

To overcome this, a parent or carer must create a safe space for their child to talk about their experiences. They can assure their child that they won't take drastic measures without their child's consent and will work with them to find a solution. The parent/carer can let their child know that they are able to support them by talking to the school in a calm & reasonable manner and allay the child's fears of the parent/carer doing something to make the situation worse.

Click her for tips on how [Parents and carers can also talk to the school.](#)

2 – Embarrassment and shame

Children who are being bullied may feel ashamed or be embarrassed about what is happening to them. They may feel like they're at fault or that they're weak for not being able to handle the situation on their own. This can make it difficult for them to talk to their parent or carer, especially if they feel like they won't understand or will judge them.

A parent or carer can overcome this by creating an open and non-judgmental environment where their child feels comfortable talking about their feelings. They should also avoid blaming their child or making them feel like they're at fault. Instead, they should reassure their child that they're not alone and that they'll work together to find a solution.

Starting these conversations early is imperative- parents should talk to their children when they are young, and before any bullying starts. If they show their children from an early age that they can trust them, despite any embarrassment or shame, they will be much more likely to share their experiences when bullying starts.

3 – Lack of communication skills

Children may not talk about bullying because they lack the communication skills to express themselves. They may not know how to describe what is happening to them, or they may not have the words to express their feelings. This can be especially true for younger children who may not have the vocabulary or emotional maturity to articulate or even understand what is happening to them.

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Parents and carers can also teach their child how to express themselves by modelling good communication skills and practicing active listening. This includes not interrupting with questions or comments and managing their own strong emotions such as anger or disappointment which may make a child feel rushed or anxious about upsetting their parent or carer.

Parents and carers can also talk to their children about healthy friendships and what constitutes being "a friend" so that children can develop a sense of what is safe and appropriate with their peers. They can also call out both positive and negative behaviours when reading a story together or when watching a TV show to help their child identify some of the different bullying styles including emotional manipulation (e.g. isolating, ghosting), social exclusion and spreading rumours.

4 – Lack of Trust

Children who have been bullied might not trust adults, particularly if they have been let down before. They might believe that telling someone won't make a difference or that the adults won't take them seriously.

To overcome this, parents and carers need to build a strong relationship with their children, based on trust and open communication. It's essential to listen to the child and validate their feelings, even if they don't agree with them. They should also let their child know that they are there for them and that they will take action to stop the bullying.

Bullying is a serious issue that affects children of all ages. Unfortunately, many children don't talk about bullying, making it difficult for parents and carers to help. By creating a safe space, avoiding blame, and practicing good communication skills, they can overcome the top four reasons why children don't talk about bullying and help their child find a solution. Remember, it's essential to take action if you suspect your child is being bullied.

If you are concerned about a child or young person being bullied, please seek help. Speak to a trusted GP, school wellbeing staff, or a helpline such as:

[Dolly's Dream Support Line](#) 0488 881 033

Parentline in your state or territory

Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800

headspace 1800 650 890

Lifeline 13 11 14

Beyond Blue 1300 224 63