

Is it Bullying? What is It?



TEASING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone is having fun • No one is getting hurt • Everyone is participating equally 	CONFLICT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No one is having fun • There is a possible solution to the disagreement • Equal balance of power
MEAN MOMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Someone is being hurt on purpose • Reaction to a strong feeling or emotion • An isolated event (does not happen regularly) 	BULLYING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attacked physically, socially, and/or emotionally • Unequal balance of power • Happens more than once over a period of time • Someone is being hurt on purpose



“Often the right path is the one that may be hardest for you to follow. But the hard path is also the one that will make you grow as a human being.”

- Karen Mueller Coombs

Conflict vs. Bullying:

Conflict is a normal part of life. And learning to deal with it helps kids master the social skills they will need as adults. But **bullying** is not normal even though many people mistakenly believe it is a "rite of passage" for kids as they grow up. In fact, there are some distinct differences between bullying and peer conflict. Being able to identify these differences will help parents and teachers know how to respond.



stop **bullying** now!

Differences in Addressing Conflict and Bullying

Conflict is an important part of growing up but bullying is not.

Conflict teaches kids how to give and take, how to come to an agreement and how to solve problems. But bullying only wounds kids. When it comes to conflict, it's good for kids to learn [conflict resolution](#) skills. These skills promote listening and working together to come to an agreement that both parties can agree to. But conflict resolution is not appropriate for bullying situations. In fact, it can be particularly dangerous and damaging to the target of the bullying. Conflict resolution works based on the assumption that both people are in part responsible for the current problem and need to work it out. In this situation, both kids make compromises and the conflict is resolved. Usually when kids have a conflict, it is best to allow them the opportunity to work it out on their own.

But bullying is different. It's about the bully making a choice to intentionally target another person. There is nothing to work out there. Besides [bullies](#) usually don't negotiate with others. They blame others. Even if an adult can extract an apology, the bully will often retaliate when no one else is around.

As a result, it is crucial that parents and teachers recognize the difference between conflict and bullying.

When bullying occurs, the bully is fully responsible for the situation. And the bully bears all the responsibility for change. Forcing a target to participate in conflict resolution or mediation is not recommended. Instead, there needs to be [an intervention process](#) in place that ensures the safety of the student being targeted.

For instance, bullies need to be told that their behavior is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. They also need to experience consequences for their behavior. Likewise, targets of bullying need to be reassured that they didn't cause the bullying and that they are not to blame. They also should receive interventions that will help them overcome the [negative impact of bullying](#) so they can regain [self-esteem](#).

For help with conflict or bullying in the Middle School:

- 1) Contact your child's teachers
- 2) Contact your child's guidance counselor
- 3) Contact the Middle School Administrators

To report bullying:

Call: **(607) 844-8694**, or submit to the main office the [Dignity for all Students reporting form](#), available from the Dryden Middle School website

The A, B, C, and D of Bullying

A – Aggressive: Attacks physically, socially, and/or emotionally



B – Balance of Power is Unequal



**Bigger vs Smaller
Older vs Younger**

Even popularity can play a role!

C – Consistent: It happens more than once over a period of time



D – Deliberate: There is an intent to hurt or harm.

