



## Questions to ask your child after playing the game.

The game is a great way for parents to start important conversations with their children.

### Conversation starters

#### **How do you win this game?**

(hint: by collecting buddies and creating a group of upstanders)

#### **What do upstanders do?**

(hint: they stand up to the bully rather than letting the bully intimidate them)

#### **Where does the bullying take place?**

(hint: the cafeteria, the bathroom, the playground)

#### **Have you ever seen someone get bullied?**

(hint: If so, ask when, where, by whom, and ask what happened. Ask your child how they felt about the incident.)

#### **Have you ever been afraid that you might be bullied?**

(hint: If so, by whom, when, where, why? Ask if there is anything they would like you to do to help them feel safe.)

#### **Have you ever been bullied?**

(hint: If so, by whom, when, where, why? What happened? Praise the child for telling you, and ask them to share this kind of information in the future so that you can help them as soon as possible.)

## Tips for becoming an UPSTANDER in real life.

Parents need to “model” upstander behavior. For example, when you pass an accident on the road do you stop and help? Do you call 911? These are examples of being an upstander, helping others in need.

Parents may see bullying or cyberbullying in action. It is a parent’s duty to intervene if possible; to tell the bully to stop, to protect the child who is being harassed, and to report the incident to the school.

In general, it is best to ask open-ended questions, and it is important to have the child elaborate on his/her answers. The goal is to get children to express their thoughts and feelings, their wishes and fears. Hopefully, just playing the game will help children to talk to their parents about bullying issues.

Parents can influence groups of children to be understanding, to show empathy and to support a child who is a likely target of bullying. For example, while in a carpool a parent may overhear children chatting about a bully or a target of bullying, and the parent can help the group see that they have power to change the event; to stop bullying!

Parents need to teach children “to tell “when something happens that might be harmful. Often parents say “don’t tattle tale,” and this may keep some children from reporting important information, but parents need to make it clear to their children that telling on a bully is not tattling.

## The Do’s and Don’t’s

**Do** teach your child that they have the right and duty to protect themselves, the space around them and their friends. Empower them to say NO to bullying!

**Do** intervene if you see a child in distress.

**Do** encourage your child to intervene if they feel they can do so safely.

**Do** report incidents of teasing, bullying and harassment to school officials.

**Do** encourage your child to report incidents to you and to teachers.

**Do** use the game, AWESOME UPSTANDER, as a conversation starter.

**Don’t** teach your child to isolate themselves, because they are more likely to be picked on, teased, or bullied if they are alone.

**Don’t** encourage your child to exclude others from their group.

**Don’t** teach your child to “mind their own business” if this means not getting involved in a situation in which they could be an upstander.

**Don’t** report incidents directly to the parents of the bully.

**Don’t** try to discipline the bully.



## Is your child being bullied? Does your child...

- ...avoid certain places or situations?*
- ...seem different, "blue" or unhappy?*
- ...seem lonely or isolated?*
- ...play with others during recess?*
- ...complain that others are teasing or harassing them?*

If you answer "yes" to any of these questions it is possible that your child is being bullied. However, there are other reasons that a child might be unhappy or avoidant. In any case, it is important to explore these issues and to ask for assistance from the school.

## What characteristics are often seen in the child who is targeting by bullies?

**Pleasers:** targets NEED to PLEASE and will do whatever it takes to be accepted; including being abused, humiliated, or bullied.

**Avoidant:** targets avoid eye contact; they AVOID NEW or UNCOMFY situations. They have difficulty adapting and therefore try to keep things familiar.

**Socially Isolated:** targets may have few friends, no group to hang out with. They may be SOCIALLY AWKWARD.

**Language Challenged:** targets often have TROUBLE TALKING because they have problems remembering words, have a shallow amount of information to share, or because they have an undiagnosed language impairment which inhibits their ability to express themselves.

**Compliant:** targets like to FOLLOW the RULES, not make waves, and make sure they do not get in trouble with any authority figure.

**Perfectionists:** targets TRY to be PERFECT in every way. They may rehearse what they will say in order to make sure that they are not making a mistake.

**Shy and Quiet:** targets may have SOCIAL ANXIETY DISORDER which means that they are painfully shy or anxious in social situations to the degree that it impairs their ability to function.

**Afraid:** targets are often fearful of many things, but especially AFRAID OF CONFRONTATION. Any sort of conflict makes them miserable.

**Very Sensitive:** targets may be TOO SENSITIVE, aware of every nuance, and may misinterpret words or cues. They are NOT RESILIENT, not able to let things roll off.

**Depressed:** targets are often VERY UNHAPPY. They may have been depressed before the bullying started, and then they become more depressed as a result of the bullying.

**If you think your child is being bullied you should talk with your child, with his teacher, and perhaps with a psychologist who can help stop the bullying.**



## Is your child a bully?

Any child has the potential to be a bully. Often bullies are very popular, athletic, attractive and socially powerful.

*Is your child the “leader of the group?” If so, do you notice that he/she excludes others?*

*Does your child lack empathy?*

*Does your child tease frequently, often in a negative or hurtful manner?*

*Has your child been disciplined in school, camp or on a team because they were hurtful to another child?*

*Does your child bully his/her siblings? If your child teases or bullies his/her siblings it is quite possible that he/she will do the same thing outside the family.*

## The Target-Bully Cycle

Sometimes kids who have been bullied become bullies themselves. When they have been bullied and harassed and conditions become worse, they hit a boiling point.

The target needs to express his own feelings of aggression, and sometimes, when they have the opportunity, they become bullies themselves.

This has become fairly common. In a recent survey, 50% of the high schoolers said they had bullied, and 48% report having been bullied. These statistics seem to say that almost half the students are either bullies or targets.

It is important to stop this cycle. To do so we must help that targets feel empowered. UPSTANDERS can help this cycle stop!