



Improving the mental health of the community through awareness, advocacy, and support.

**Mental Health America of Northeast Florida**

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# What to do if your child is **BEING BULLIED**



We all have something special to give.

If you or someone you know is in crisis now, seek help immediately.  
Call United Way crisis center **211**. Or dial **911** for immediate assistance.





**Did you know:** Because of the increased risk of suicide associated with bullying – for victims and perpetrators alike – open dialogue and support are crucial in ensuring the safety of children and teenagers.

### WHAT IS BULLYING?

Definition of bullying (as per Florida Statute):

- Systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more individuals.
- It is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation; and is often characterized by an imbalance of power.
- Further defined as unwanted, purposeful, and repeated written, verbal, nonverbal, electronic, or physical behavior, by a student or adult.

#### Types of bullying:

- Physical, verbal and peer pressure.
- Cyber Bullying – sending mean or threatening messages or images, posting private information about another person, pretending to be someone else online.
- Direct vs. Indirect Bullying
  - Girls are more likely to use indirect forms of bullying such as spreading rumors or gossip about someone, calling names, or excluding someone from their group.
  - Boys act more directly, physically, and aggressively.

### BULLYING STATISTICS & FACTS:

- 16 percent of high school and 33 percent of middle school students report being bullied at school.
- Incidents of bullying are significantly underreported due to fear and concern of retribution.
- Young people who are bullied are more likely to skip or drop out of school. They are also more likely to engage in violence and to suffer from mental health problems, such as depression, thoughts of suicide and anxiety.
- Bullying may include one or more bystanders (witnesses).
- Bullying can happen anywhere – on the bus, at recess, in the halls, bathroom, locker rooms, classroom, walking home.

### WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE BULLIED OR WITNESS BULLYING?

- Tell an adult.
- Try not to let the bully see that you are upset.
- Avoid areas where you might be confronted by a bully.
- Surround yourself with friends and people who will stand up for you.
- Lend a hand and be a friend to someone else who is being bullied.
- If you witness bullying, get help. Don't cheer the bully on.
- If it is online or by text messaging, don't reply.
- Join activities where you can meet other people.



### HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

**MHA offers online screenings to help identify symptoms, and to find the help you need to feel your best and healthiest. To learn more about our screenings, visit the MHA website at [www.mhajax.org](http://www.mhajax.org). Our screenings are confidential, online, and will take just a few minutes of your time.**