

SUPPORT YOUR TEEN!



Preventing the bullying of teens with neurodivergence

90%

of students in California with disabilities report being bullied, and students with neurodivergence face a similarly high risk.

Most stay silent

More than 50% don't know how to report it, and up to 75% don't tell school staff, because they're afraid of getting in trouble.

We can change this

Stopping bullying usually takes more than reporting it once. Reaching out for support is always an important step, especially if someone is in danger.

What Helps Us Grow?

The first step is knowing what puts a teen at risk and what protects them.

RISK FACTORS		PROTECTIVE FACTORS	
Social isolation Being seen as different	Individual	Strong sense of self Good social skills	
Aggressive friends Family conflict	Peers and Family	Close friends Supportive parenting	
Unfair school rules Feeling unsafe	School and Community	Caring staff Safe and inclusive environment	

*Risk factors don't mean a teen will be bullied.
We all have a role to play.*

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KNOW THE SIGNS

Your teen might not tell you, but they might show you. Look for changes in:

Mood - More irritable, anxious, or withdrawn than usual

Behavior - Not wanting to go to school, changes in eating or sleeping

Belongings - Lost or damaged items

CONNECT AND SUPPORT

You fulfill the role of their home base.

Validate Their Feelings - "That sounds incredibly frustrating. I'm glad you told me."

Don't Rush to Fix It - "What would be most helpful for me to do right now? Listen, or help come up with a plan?"

Find a Role Model - Connect them to a trusted coach, relative, mentor, or staff member named in an IEP/504 plan than can provide extra support and guidance.

ADVOCATE AND TEACH

Talk About It - Make it clear that bullying is never okay and that differences in learning and communication are normal and valued.

Work With the School - You are a key part of the team. Contact teachers and staff, share what you're seeing, and ask what they are seeing.

Use Their Plan - If your teen has an IEP or 504, ask the team to include specific supports for social safety, like teaching social skills or designating a safe adult to check in with them.

**BE YOUR TEEN'S BEST ADVOCATE BY
PARTNERING WITH YOUR SCHOOL TO EMPOWER THEM!**