

# BULLYING

How Do I Protect My Child?

Susan Conners

Education Specialist, TSA, Inc.

# Why do Kids Bully?

- **To make themselves feel more important or popular**
- **To get a laugh**
- **To forget about their own shortcomings and inadequacies**
- **To cover for a fear of the unknown**



# What are some types of bullying?

- **A quick look, a glance from across the room, a gesture**
- **Imitating the child**
- **Pushing, shoving, poking**
- **Physical confrontation**
- **Verbal abuse**



- **Bullying can be very subtle and often not seen by the teacher**

# The Results of Bullying

- **Isolation**
- **Low self-esteem**
- **Depression**
- **School phobia**
- **Avoidance**
- **Aggression**
- **Suicidal thoughts**



# Why Are Kids with TS Easy Targets?

- **Motor and vocal tics**
- **Hyperactivity, impulsivity**
- **OCD symptoms**
- **Social Skills deficits**
- **Fear of the unknown**
- **Ignorance of the disorder**



# Why do kids often not tell someone about the bullying?

- **Embarrassment about their inability to defend themselves**
- **Protecting their parents from hurt**
- **Fear of not being believed**
- **Fear of the abuse getting worse if they “tattle”**



# What Can Parents Do To Help Their Children?

- **Do not ignore the problem**
- **Educate, Educate, Educate**
- **Communicate with your child**
- **Teach & practice coping strategies, quick responses**
- **Use humor where possible**
- **Encourage them to talk to an adult they trust in school**
- **Listen to your kids and look for changes in behavior.**



# More Suggestions for Parents

- Give your child ideas about how to stay away from the kids who are bullying.
- Keep a record of dates, times, who was involved in the bullying.
- Speak to the teacher about it. If nothing happens, contact the principal.
- Inform the principal that you expect this to be dealt with very severely.
- Volunteer to help set up a disabilities awareness program for the school

The title is centered at the top of the slide. It is flanked by four circles: a solid light purple circle on the far left, a white circle with a light purple outline, a solid light purple circle, another white circle with a light purple outline, and a solid light purple circle on the far right. The text 'What Can Teachers Do?' is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font across the middle of these circles.

# What Can Teachers Do?

- Watch and listen carefully to what is happening in your classroom.
- Keep a close eye on kids who are socially in trouble, who seem to be loners.
- Discuss these kids with support staff - guidance counselors, social workers, etc.
- Try to involve these kids in counseling or friendship groups.

- Educate classmates about Tourette Syndrome. □
- Make it well known that teasing and bullying will not be tolerated and carry through with consequences.
- Encourage kids who are being picked on to discuss it with you.
- Set a tone of acceptance of the child with TS in your classroom.



# What Can Administrators Do?

- **Set the tone in your school that bullying will not be tolerated.**
- **Take a proactive approach by setting up programs for students that deal with bullying.**
- **Make sure that the consequences for bullying are as severe as they are for other serious infractions of school rules.**
- **Work with support staff such as guidance counselors, school social workers, school psychologists to establish a program of support groups for children who are most susceptible to being teased or bullied.**

- **Work with the bullies themselves.** Kids who bully almost always have issues of their own which could include feelings of inadequacy, low self esteem and insecurity.
- **It is the responsibility of an administrator to make sure that students are safe not only from physical harm, but also emotional harm.**





# RESOURCES

- *Educating Classmates About TS, TSA, Inc.*
- HBO DVD - *I Have Tourettes But Tourettes Doesn't Have Me*
- *Bullying, TSA, Inc.*
- PACER - Bullying Prevention Project, [www.pacer.org](http://www.pacer.org)

[www.tsa-usa.org](http://www.tsa-usa.org)