



# Bullying Overview

Most people are familiar with the term “bullying” and many have experienced it themselves. In fact, according to the 2022 School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey conducted by the Institute of Education Science, nearly 1 in 5 (19.2%) school-age children report having experienced bullying. Additionally, 16.7% of male students and 21.8% of female students report experiencing bullying.

Although many children experience bullying in school, they may not ask for help for a variety of reasons. Children may fear backlash from the bully, children may feel isolated and as if no one cares or understands, children may not want anyone else to know what is being said about them, children may fear that adults will judge them or punish them, and children may want to handle the bullying on their own to regain a sense of control.

Consensus regarding a universal definition of bullying is difficult and has proven to be challenging over the years. The current definition of bullying by the American Psychological Association defines bullying as: “A form of aggressive behavior in which someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort. It can take the form of physical contact, words, or more subtle actions.”

Bullying also affects students possessing gifted and talented characteristics. Though literature is scarce regarding the rates of bullying within the gifted and talented student population as compared to non-gifted students, a systematic review of the literature by Martínez-Monteagudo et. al (2023) concluded that students possessing gifted and talented characteristics may be at a higher risk of experiencing bullying and have lower risk of becoming bullies.

Though difficult to identify, there are several signs and symptoms to be aware of when a youth is experiencing bullying. Unexplained physical marks, increased anxiety (especially of going to school), low academic performance, difficulty with sleep, headaches or stomachaches, and being overly aggressive or having angry outbursts are all indicators a child might be experiencing bullying.

Additionally, parents should also be aware of the possibility their child could be engaging in bullying behavior. Warning signs a child could be bullying their peers include getting into physical or verbal fights, are becoming increasingly more aggressive, have unexplained money or belongings, blame others for their problems, get sent to principal’s office often, and don’t accept responsibility for their actions.

## Resources:

1. American Psychological Association. (n.d.). *Bullying*. American Psychological Association. <https://www.apa.org/topics/bullying>
2. Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA). (2021, November 11). *Warning signs for bullying*. StopBullying.gov. <https://www.stopbullying.gov/bullying/warning-signs>
3. *Bullying: What is it and how to stop it*. UNICEF Parenting. (n.d.). <https://www.unicef.org/parenting/child-care/bullying>
4. Martínez-Monteagudo, Á., Martínez-Monteagudo, M. C., & Delgado, B. (2023). School bullying and cyberbullying in academically gifted students: A systematic review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 71*, 101842. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2023.101842>