

Talking to Your Child About Harassment & Bullying

The most effective parents are the ones who actively *listen*. These parents and caretakers ask their children every day about how school went and openly discuss troubling issues.

Here are some ideas to help with a bullying or harassment incident:

First: Ask questions about school that can facilitate a discussion:

- “When kids want to be mean at your school, what kinds of things do they do?”
- “What does the teacher do when this is happening? What does the teacher say?”
- “Are some kids more secretive about how they are mean to others? What kinds of things do they do?”
- “Can friends be mean to each other? How?”
- “Have you ever seen a kid act mean to another kid? What did you think when you saw this?”

When your child shares his/her experience at school, take pride in the fact that your child trusts you. **Only half of the youth who experience bullying and bias-based harassment feel safe going to their families for help.**

Second: Listen intently and support your child. Make your comments and questions supportive, not blaming. For example:

- “I’m really sorry to hear this. What do you think you want to do next?”
- “Do you want me to talk to the teacher?”
- “When did this start? When does it happen? Is there anything that you can do to make it stop?”
- “What can I do to help?”

What greater gift can we give our youth than the chance to speak their truths and our ability as adults to listen? Ask your child “How was school today?”

You may want support and information for yourself.
KCSARC’s 24-hour Resource Line is always available for help and suggestions.
Call 1.888.99.VOICE.

You can also contact the KCSARC Education Department at 425-226-5062
for additional resources and materials.