

GET RESULTS WITH BETTER CONVERSATIONS

What do you do about your child being bullied?

First, don't be surprised if the kids in your care get bullied.



Here are some suggestions for healthy responses for dealing with bullying:

- Calm down.** Pause and take a deep breath before you do or say anything.
- Listen and focus on the young person.** Learn what's going on and show with facial expressions and active listening skills that you want to help.
- Understand that it may be difficult or shameful for the young person to talk about what's happening.** Offer to include a social worker or mental health professional.
- Respond in terms of safety** of the young person, saying something like, *"I care about you and want to help you stay safe and have a good life."*
- Give advice about what to do.** Offer to do role-play with the young person to let him or her get feelings out in a safe way.

Sit down with the kids within your influence and look at the resources available to kids and families at www.stopbullying.gov

☑ If the child is considering retaliation, **ask what the young person is trying to achieve** from the behavior he or she is considering.



☑ **Ask the young person for ideas** on what he or she could do differently to feel better, fit in, or whatever other result he or she hopes to achieve.

☑ **Make it clear to the young person that you are on his or her side.** Do what you can to help the young person to not feel so alone.

It will take time, patience, and a commitment to love and listening to heal the youth in your care. **They are worth it.**

“Foster kids often feel different, excluded, and alone. They are targets for bullies. Our job is to let them know they belong and are not alone.”

—RHONDA SCIORTINO

Talk to kids about healthy ways to do take care of themselves. Suggest an expression of creativity like some art form; exercise, which releases “feel good chemicals” in the brain; yoga, or outdoor activities. If they are trying to fit in, suggest they participate in some kind of team sport, drama group, scouts, or some other group activity.

Thank you for helping to create successful survivors!