

## PARENT TOOLKIT

### SIGNS THAT YOUR CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS MAY BE A VICTIM OF A BULLY

- Be observant of your child's behavior, appearance and moods, particularly if you think that your child is 'at risk' for being bullied. If your child is reluctant to attend school, investigate why and pay close attention to answers related to social experiences with peers.
- Children are sometimes emotionally sensitive. If your child exhibits these behaviors, be aware and ask them why they are upset or what incident upset them.
- Observe your child's daily routines. Has their diet or lack of appetite changed? Are they having trouble sleeping, or want to sleep all the time? For some children, this may be a common occurrence due to their disability. But if changes occur, try to determine if it could be related to problems at school, emotional issues or physical stress.
- Look for physical signs including torn clothes, cuts and bruises.
- Ask your child about their friends. What nicknames do they call each other? Do their friends hit or push them? Do their friends expect them to buy lunch or give them money? Some children aren't aware they are being bullied or that the names other children call them are offensive. A little investigative work can go a long way when physical or emotional signs aren't as obvious.
- Watch your child's behavior around other children; how do they interact and vice versa. Volunteering in his/her classroom might help you better understand the social dynamics and potential problems.
- If your child declines in his/her academic performance, talk to teachers or aides. Be sure it isn't due to behavioral issues or teasing from other students.

Additional resources and tips are also available at [www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov). To learn more about your child's emotional and behavioral development, visit [www.abilitypath.org](http://www.abilitypath.org).

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