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How to Keep Your Kids Safe at School: Bullying, Safety & More

Family & Relationships

4-minute read



Sending your kids off to school can be hard for any parent because you're letting them go handle the world on their own – with help from teachers, of course! Here are three ways to keep your kids safe from potential legal run ins at school, no matter their age.

1. Talk to your kids about bullying.

Help them understand what to do if they are bullied. Discuss with them the importance of knowing when to walk away and knowing when to calmly stand up for themselves. Encourage them to share anything that happens with you or adults at school and to never be afraid to ask for help.

Kids also need to know what to do if they see someone else being bullied. Tell them to report any bad behavior they see to an adult. Encourage them to include the kids being targeted in activities and to join with other children in letting the bullies know that what they are doing is wrong.

Be familiar with your school's anti-bullying policy and know the process for alerting the school administration to any issues. Document the behavior and report it to the school or law enforcement immediately if you believe your child is being bullied.

2. Establish ground rules for internet use – at school and at home.

Bullying doesn't just happen on the playground or in the classroom. As children spend more and more time online and on their phones, cyberbullying has grown to be a serious problem – particularly on social media platforms.

Set rules at home that will help protect your children, such as requiring computers and tablets be used in shared family spaces. Ask your kids for their passwords and make sure they are not sharing them with anyone else.

Talk with your children about the consequences of what they post: explain that everything they post online stays online. The same goes for pictures and texts sent on their phones – just because they delete it from their phone doesn't mean the message doesn't still exist.

If your child is harassed online, keep all messages as proof. Depending on the severity of the situation, you may want to involve the school or police. While going directly to the bully's parents might provide relief, it is not always practical or possible. In this case, letting the school, the cell phone carrier or internet service provider intervene may be an effective first step.

3. Make sure you plan out a safe route for your kids to get to and from school.

If they are walking or biking, find a route together that avoids dangerous streets and intersections. Talk about how they should travel to and from school with other children whenever possible. Remind them to always pay attention to their surroundings: this means no headphones and no texting while walking or biking.

If you have teens that are driving to school, keep in mind that half of all teens will get in a car crash before graduating. The biggest reason is because they are inexperienced drivers.

Help them practice their route to and from school. Consider establishing rules about driving with others in the car. Go over safety basics like following speed limits and wearing seat belts.

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