



### Facts

- About 10-15% of children say they are regularly bullied.
- 90% of children say they have been bullied at some point
- Most bullying takes place at school
- Bullying occurs most often where there is little or no adult supervision
- Most bullying is verbal rather than physical
- Bullying begins in primary school, peaks in middle school and slows down towards the end of senior school.
- Boys bully both boys and girls, girls tend to bully other girls.

"The brain is wired to respond to social pain and pleasure in the same way as it responds to physical pain and pleasure. Having a poor social network is literally as bad for our health as smoking two packs of cigarettes each day."

Lieberman, 2013



Making friends is a vital part of growing up, an essential part of children's social and emotional development but it's not unusual for children to need a little help, guidance and understanding along the way.



- Your child will inevitably go through a range of friendship stages – linked to his or her developmental stage. These stages, whilst significant, are transitory and it's vital to remember that before we leap in and view a situation through our adult lens.
- It's important to understand the developmental context of a friendship or friendship issue because we are better able to respond in a more sensitive and rational way if we can recognise that the ups and downs of childhood friendships usually stem from immaturity and are not necessarily driven by enduring character flaws.
- Remember that teasing and unkind behaviour is a normal part of a child's life and not necessarily bullying. It's important therefore to understand what bullying is and, crucially, what it isn't – and to help our children to recognise the difference.
- Gender matters:
  - Girls often share a great deal of personal information – they 'self-reveal' and whilst that can deepen and enrich a friendship in its early stages, it can prove a very dangerous weapon indeed further down the line.
  - Boys' friendships are often described as following the law of monkey dynamics – he wants (needs) to know who's boss, who's sub-boss and who's sub-sub boss. Once the jostling for position and ranking has been sorted out, boys usually fall into their role quite happily, it's the not knowing who/where he is that causes him a problem.



# huddl

Parent Talks

## HUDDL FACTS & TIPS ON FRIENDSHIP GROUPS & BULLYING BY DR ROSEMARY TAYLOR

- ‘Queen Bees and Wannabes’ – fitting in or falling out? The alpha often rules the roost at school and we need to help our children understand this dynamic by reminding them of the importance of understanding the difference between use (or abuse) of power and real friendships.
- Friendships become all-consuming during adolescence – friends were always important but now they are everything. Whilst they may be pushing you away at this time, endeavour to stay close at this time and encourage conversations to give balance and perspective.
- Licensed to fly? You might want to reconsider your role as helicopter parent – or even fighter pilot – because every time you step into your child’s world and take over, you risk damaging your their growing self esteem. Learn to take a step back and remember nobody ever learned to drive sitting in the passenger seat!
- The rollercoaster experiences of friends and friendships are rites of passage for your children and also for parents. Don’t underestimate how painful they can be – for you and them.
- Parents are our first role models – how do you manage your own friendships? Your children are watching...

