

groups of children who have an increased risk of suicide, including those of American Indian, Alaskan Native, or Asian American descent, as well as children who identify as LGBTQIA+. Any risk is increased if children feel they have no support and no one to turn to.

A small number of children who are chronically bullied act out aggressively. In 12 out of 15 school shooting cases in the 1990s, the shooters were themselves bullied. ([www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov))

### WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

If your child is being bullied, please let them know they are not alone, it is not their fault, and there are resources for them to turn to. They should talk to you, another trusted adult, or their school's resource officer. For more information and/or statistics, go to <https://www.pacer.org/bullying/> or <https://www.meganmeierfoundation.org/>. An excellent resource for LGBTQIA+ children is the Trevor Project, located at <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>.

### JEFFREY JOHNSTON STAND UP FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT

Florida has one of the toughest anti-bullying laws in the nation, Florida Statute 1006.147, also known as the Jeffrey Johnston Stand Up For All Students Act. However, schools cannot intervene if children and teens do not feel it is safe to come forward. Talk to children and teens about bullying, how to identify it and prevent or stop it from happening to them or to their peers. Make sure they understand the importance of reporting incidents of bullying.

In Alachua County, bullying can be reported by submitting an online complaint form at <https://www.sbac.edu/reportbullying>, by phone at 352-955-7200, or via an e-mail to [reportbullyingnow@gm.sbac.edu](mailto:reportbullyingnow@gm.sbac.edu) with the subject line "Report Bullying."

## CONTACT Us:

**9-1-1 FOR EMERGENCIES**

352-955-1818 FOR NON-EMERGENCIES

### *ACSO Important Phone Numbers*

ACSO Main Administration	352.367.4000
Crime Prevention Unit	352.374.1800
Crime Stoppers & Gun Bounty	352.372.7867
Dept. of the Jail	352.491.4444
Evidence Section	352.367.4076
Human Resources	352.367.4040
Narcotics Tip Line	352.374.1849
Patrol	352.367.4101
Public Information	352.367.4050
Property Unit	352.367.4078
Records Bureau	352.367.4006
Victim Advocate Unit	352.367.4193



BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

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BULLYING & CYBERBULLYING

## DEFINITION OF BULLYING

**Bullying** is any unwanted aggressive behavior(s) by another youth or group of youths, who are not siblings or current dating partners, that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance, and is repeated multiple times or highly likely to be repeated. Bullying may inflict harm or distress on the targeted youth including physical, psychological, social or educational harm.

- Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

## FORMS OF BULLYING

- **Verbal:** Teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting, or threats.
- **Social:** Spreading rumors, embarrassing someone in public, or intentional social isolation of the victim.
- **Physical:** Hitting, kicking, punching, spitting, tripping, pushing, and stealing or breaking the victim's possessions.



## CYBERBULLYING

There is also another type of bullying that is unfortunately very prevalent in today's digital age. Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over electronic devices like computers, cell phones, and tablets. It can happen through apps or online via social media, gaming, SMS chat, or any forum or platform where kids can view, participate in or share content. It includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, false,

or harmful content about a victim, including material designed to embarrass or humiliate the victim.

Cyberbullying is unique from in-person bullying in that it can occur anytime, anywhere, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This leaves victims feeling especially vulnerable because they cannot escape from the persecution, even in their own homes.

Harmful material posted online is public and permanent unless specifically reported and removed. Even then, there is no guarantee that material will not still exist on the web somewhere. Online material can impact college admissions, employment, and other areas of life for both the victim and the bully. Some forms of material may cross the line into illicit behavior and result in criminal charges for the bully.

## PREVALENCE OF BULLYING

Two recent studies on bullying conducted by the CDC and the Bureau of Justice indicate that approximately 20% of students ages 12-18 experienced bullying within the 12 months preceding the studies.

A study by the Cyberbullying Research Center ([cyberbullying.org](https://cyberbullying.org)) showed that approximately 5.4 million children skip school at least once per year because they are afraid of bullying.

Children who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, or asexual (LGBTQIA+) experience bullying at a much higher rate than heterosexual and cisgender children. Nearly 40% of LGBTQIA+ children and 33% of those who were questioning their identity experience bullying or cyberbullying.

Bullying occurs more often in middle schools (28%) than high schools (16%) or primary schools (9%). Cyberbullying is also highest in middle school (33%), followed by high schools (30%) and primary schools (5%).



## WARNING SIGNS OF BULLYING

Are you worried that your child may be a target of bullies? Here are some signs to look for from <https://www.stopbullying.gov/at-risk/warning-signs/index.html>:

- Unexplained injuries.
- Lost or destroyed clothing or possessions.
- Frequent headaches or stomachaches, real or feigned illnesses.
- Changes in eating habits.
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares.
- Declining grades.
- Reluctance to attend school.
- Loss of friends, avoidance of social situations.
- Decreased self-esteem.
- Self-destructive behaviors (running away, self-harm, talking about suicide).

## EFFECTS ON BULLIED CHILDREN

Students who experience bullying are at increased risk for poor school adjustment, sleep difficulties, health complaints (headaches, stomachaches, etc.), anxiety, depression and decreased school achievement.

According to [stopbullying.gov](https://www.stopbullying.gov), the majority of youth who are bullied do not have thoughts of suicide. However, there are some bullied children who have other risks such as depression, an unstable home life, or a history of trauma who are at greater risk. Additionally, there are some