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Signs your Child is being Bullied

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What should you do if you suspect that your child is being bullied? If your child shows any of these signs, it does not necessarily mean that he or she is being bullied, but it is a possibility worth exploring.

Here are the common signs you child may be being bullied:

- Loss of interest in school and extracurricular activities
- Frequent complaints of illness to avoid attending school
- Sudden decrease in academic performance
- Spends substantially less time on the Internet
- Unexplained bruises scratches and cuts
- Goes out of their way to hide things from you (like their backpack contents)
- Seems upset, moody or depressed
- Loss of appetite
- Trouble sleeping
- Anxiety or low self-esteem

You are your child's number one advocate, so if you think something is wrong, talk to them right away. Even if you keep the lines of communication open, your child may still be afraid to bring up certain issues with you. They may feel embarrassed or ashamed of their bullying situation, and may not want to talk about it in person. Here are some things you can do that gives them options:

-  Utilize anti-bullying software like CyberBully Alert (<http://www.cyberbullyalert.com/>)
-  Report the issue online though Canada's official online tipline at <http://CyberTip.ca>
-  Tell another trusted adult (teacher, uncle, or even Kids Help Phone)
-  Write the issue into an email instead of talking about it face-to-face