

EVERYBULLY

Door Three Resource Packet: “My Child Is Bullying Someone”

Website-ready draft for review with Chris Thompson

Face It → Stop It → Understand It → Repair It → Replace It

Hold your child accountable without surrendering your belief in who they can become.

This packet contains the foundational copy for the third door of the EveryBully Resource Center. It is written for parents and guardians who have received a report, discovered harmful digital behavior, witnessed aggression, or begun to suspect that their child is repeatedly using power to harm another young person.

Contents

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- 1. I Just Found Out—What Do I Say?
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- 3. How Do I Stop the Harm Now?
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- 5. How Does My Child Make It Right?
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- Denial, minimization, and blame
- S.A.F.E. Zone behavior-change framework
- Urgent concerns and professional support
- Parent Response Plan and Behavior Change & Repair Plan
- Implementation and review notes

Draft status: foundational website copy. School procedures, reporting duties, privacy rules, and legal consequences vary by jurisdiction. Local pathways should be reviewed before publication.

My Child Is Bullying Someone

Accountability begins with truth—and continues with relationship

If your child is harming someone, start here.

“I love you too much to excuse this—and too much to believe this is all you can be.”

Finding out may bring disbelief, anger, embarrassment, fear, or the instinct to defend your child before you know what happened. Those feelings are human. But the first person who needs your courage is the child being harmed. The second is your own child, who needs an adult strong enough to interrupt the behavior without turning accountability into abandonment.

Your job is not to prove that your child is good. Your job is to help your child do what is good next.

1. I Just Found Out—What Do I Say?

“How do I respond without denial or humiliation?”

2. What Actually Happened?

“Is this bullying, conflict, retaliation, harassment, abuse, or something else?”

3. How Do I Stop the Harm Now?

“What must change today?”

4. Why Is My Child Doing This?

“What is the behavior accomplishing for them?”

5. How Does My Child Make It Right?

“What does repair require—and who gets to decide?”

If there is a weapon, sexual coercion, stalking, extortion, a credible threat, serious injury, an abduction plan, or risk of self-harm or harm to others, choose “URGENT HELP.”

I Just Found Out—What Do I Say?

The first response sets the moral temperature

Begin with five messages

Name the report

“I have been told that you may be hurting or intimidating someone. I am going to take that seriously.”

Do not decide before listening

“I want to hear your full account. Listening is not the same as agreeing.”

Separate identity from behavior

“I will not call you a bully as though that is your whole identity. I will name bullying behavior when the facts support it.”

State the boundary

“Whatever the explanation, harming, threatening, humiliating, or controlling someone is not acceptable.”

Promise the work

“We will face what happened, stop the harm, and make a plan for what you will do differently.”

Regulate before you investigate

- Do not confront your child while you are shouting, intoxicated, or likely to use violence.
- Do not begin with “How could you do this to me?” The harmed child—not the family reputation—is the center of the concern.
- Do not post, publicly expose, or force a filmed confession.
- Do not contact the targeted child or family impulsively. Their safety and privacy come first.
- Do preserve relevant messages, posts, images, school notices, and dates. Do not coach your child to delete evidence.

Calm is not softness. Calm gives accountability somewhere to land.

What Actually Happened?

Gather facts without becoming your child's defense attorney

Ask for a timeline

- What happened immediately before, during, and after the incident?
- Who was present, who joined in, and who tried to stop it?
- Has this happened before—in person, through other people, or online?
- What did your child want the other person to feel, do, stop doing, or give up?
- Was there a difference in size, status, popularity, age, information, ability, numbers, or digital reach?
- What messages, posts, accounts, photos, videos, or group chats exist?
- Has your child been targeted, threatened, excluded, pressured, or harmed by someone else?
- What part does your child admit? What part do they dispute?

Listen for function—not merely motive

“I was joking” describes an intention. It does not settle the impact. “Everyone did it” describes a group. It does not erase individual choice. “They started it” may identify a conflict or prior harm. It does not automatically justify repeated domination, retaliation, or humiliation.

Explanation answers “How did we get here?” Accountability answers “What must happen now?”

Use more than one source

Speak with the responsible school, coach, program, or other supervising adult. Review available records. Do not demand the targeted child retell the experience directly to you. If facts remain unclear, hold the safety boundary while the investigation continues.

Name the Behavior Accurately

The label should clarify the response—not become a loophole

Bullying

Unwanted aggressive behavior involving a real or perceived power imbalance that is repeated or highly likely to be repeated.

Conflict

A disagreement between people with relatively equal power. Conflict may involve mutual poor choices, but it still requires limits when it becomes unsafe.

Retaliation

Harm intended to punish someone for reporting, resisting, leaving, refusing, or seeking help. Retaliation can occur through friends or online.

Harassment or discrimination

Mistreatment connected to race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or another protected status may trigger civil-rights responsibilities in a school setting.

Assault, abuse, stalking, extortion, or sexual coercion

These require a safety response and may require law-enforcement, child-protection, medical, or specialized professional involvement. Do not reduce them to “drama.”

Cyberbullying

Digital harm can spread rapidly, preserve humiliating material, recruit an audience, and continue outside school hours.

Something does not have to meet the technical definition of bullying before your child must stop doing it.

Stop the Harm Now

Before insight, before apology, before reputation management

Immediate containment

- Direct your child to stop all direct and indirect contact—including through friends, alternate accounts, gaming, comments, or “checking in.”
- End threats, taunts, exclusion campaigns, rumor-sharing, demands for money or property, and circulation of images or private information.
- Preserve evidence before removing content when safe and lawful to do so. Follow school or platform instructions about reporting and preservation.
- Return property and secure any weapon, intimate image, account access, password, or identifying information involved.
- Tell the responsible school, coach, or organization what you know and ask what immediate separation or supervision is required.
- Protect the targeted child from retaliation. Make clear that anger about being reported is not permission for further harm.

A boundary script

“Until we understand this fully, you are not to contact them, recruit anyone to contact them, post about them, or discuss the report in a way that identifies or humiliates them. This is not a declaration that every allegation is proven. It is the safety boundary while adults do their work.”

Digital access is a responsibility

Restrictions should be connected to the behavior, explained clearly, and reviewed on a stated date. The goal is not indefinite exile from technology. The goal is to remove the instrument of harm while teaching safer use and rebuilding trust.

The targeted child should not have to disappear so that your child can remain comfortable.

Why Is My Child Doing This?

Understanding is how we change the pattern—not how we excuse it

The EveryBully 3 P's

Pretending

Your child may be performing toughness, status, humor, indifference, or belonging. Making someone smaller can become a way to appear larger in front of an audience.

Protecting

Aggression may operate as armor against shame, fear, vulnerability, exclusion, failure, or the risk of becoming a target. Protection explains the function; it does not make the harm acceptable.

Projecting

A child may attack in someone else what they fear, reject, or cannot tolerate in themselves. The target becomes a screen for pain, prejudice, envy, or self-contempt that belongs elsewhere.

The 3 P's are an interpretive framework—not a diagnosis. More than one may be operating, or the behavior may arise from other factors.

Questions beneath the behavior

- What reward did the behavior produce—laughter, status, access, control, relief, revenge, belonging, or avoidance?
- Who was the audience, and what did that audience reinforce?
- What feeling arrived immediately before the behavior?
- What skill was missing—emotional regulation, perspective-taking, conflict management, refusal, leadership, or repair?
- Is your child also being harmed, pressured, abused, threatened, or recruited?
- Are there learning, attention, mental-health, substance-use, family, or social concerns that deserve professional assessment?

Understanding why someone hurts another person does not reduce their responsibility to stop.

Accountability Without Shame

Consequences should interrupt harm and teach the replacement

Accountability has four parts

Truth

Name what is known, what is disputed, and what still must be investigated.

Stopping

Remove access, opportunities, audiences, and permissions that allow the behavior to continue.

Repair

Restore property, correct falsehoods, accept appropriate consequences, and address harm without demanding access to the targeted child.

Replacement

Practice the skill that should take the behavior's place: tolerating embarrassment, leaving a group chat, disagreeing without domination, seeking help, or using influence protectively.

Avoid the two identity traps

- Denial: "My child is a good kid, so this cannot be true." Good children can do harmful things.
- Condemnation: "My child is a bully, so this is who they are." A behavior pattern can be interrupted and replaced.

Shame says, "You are bad." Accountability says, "You caused harm, you are responsible, and you are capable of doing differently."

Consequences that teach

A useful consequence is connected to the conduct, proportionate to the harm, safe, enforceable, and paired with instruction. Punishment alone may suppress behavior in front of adults while leaving the social reward untouched.

How Do I Work With the School?

Cooperate without surrendering accuracy or your child's dignity

A first written response

“Thank you for notifying me. I take the reported behavior and the other student's safety seriously. I am speaking with my child and preserving relevant information. Please identify the specific conduct reported, the policy and process being used, any immediate no-contact or supervision requirements, the person coordinating the response, and the date for follow-up. I will reinforce that retaliation or indirect contact is prohibited.”

Ask the school to separate

- What is already known from what still requires investigation
- Immediate safety measures from final disciplinary findings
- Your child's individual conduct from assumptions about an entire friend group
- Consequences from the instruction and support needed to change behavior
- Protection of the targeted child from unnecessary public disclosure or forced contact
- Any disability-related needs from accountability for harmful conduct

Bring to the meeting

- A factual timeline and preserved records
- Questions your child's account raises
- A list of behaviors that must stop immediately
- Relevant support, learning, attention, health, or safety information
- A willingness to hear evidence that is uncomfortable
- A request for a written behavior-change and follow-up plan

Advocating for a fair process is compatible with taking the reported harm seriously.

The Behavior-Change Meeting

Leave with owners, actions, and a review date

Open the meeting this way

“Our goals are to protect the student who was harmed, establish an accurate account, stop retaliation, and help my child replace this behavior. I would like us to identify what is known, the immediate boundaries, the learning and support required, who owns each action, and when we will evaluate whether the plan is working.”

A complete plan names

- The prohibited behaviors, including indirect and online contact
- The settings requiring supervision or separation
- The staff member your child reports to before a problem escalates
- The consequence if the behavior or retaliation continues
- The specific skill your child will practice
- The support or professional assessment being considered
- The repair options that do not impose on the targeted child
- The evidence that will show improvement
- The date and participants for review

After the meeting

“Thank you for meeting today. My understanding is that the immediate boundaries are _____. My child will complete _____. The responsible staff are _____. Any new concern will be reported through _____. We will review progress on _____. Please reply with corrections.”

A written summary protects every child from the confusion that follows a meeting remembered differently by each adult.

How Does My Child Make It Right?

Repair belongs to the harmed person—not to the aggressor’s need for relief

Repair is larger than “Say you’re sorry”

- Stop the behavior and the audience that sustains it.
- Correct rumors or false information in the same settings where they were spread, when this can be done without renewed exposure.
- Return, replace, repair, or pay for damaged or taken property.
- Remove harmful content while preserving required evidence.
- Accept loss of privileges, roles, access, or trust that resulted from the conduct.
- Demonstrate changed behavior over time, including when adults are not watching.

An apology is an offer—not a demand for access

The targeted child does not owe your child a meeting, response, friendship, reassurance, confidentiality, or forgiveness. Any apology should occur only through a safe process approved by the responsible adults and, when appropriate, accepted by the harmed child.

“I did _____. It harmed you by _____. It was my responsibility. I am not asking you to forgive me or respond. I will _____. I will not contact you again unless the agreed process allows it.”

Do not use repair as theater

A public apology, service project, essay, or presentation is useful only if it teaches and does not place the targeted child back on display. The point is changed conduct—not a performance that restores the aggressor’s reputation.

Remorse is a feeling. Repair is a pattern of action.

When My Child Denies, Minimizes, or Blames

Do not require instant confession before setting a safety boundary

“I didn’t do it.”

“You may dispute the report. I will listen and help make sure the process is fair. The no-contact and no-retaliation boundaries remain while adults determine what happened.”

“It was only a joke.”

“A joke depends on shared freedom to laugh. Repeated humiliation, fear, or a power imbalance changes what the behavior is doing.”

“Everyone else did it.”

“The group matters, and we will tell the school who else was involved. You remain responsible for the part you chose.”

“They started it.”

“If you were harmed, that matters and deserves its own response. It does not give you unlimited permission to punish or control them.”

“They’re too sensitive.”

“You do not get to decide how much harm another person must tolerate before you stop.”

“My life is ruined.”

“Consequences may be painful. They are not the end of your life. What you do next will matter.”

If the account keeps changing

Stay factual. Avoid trapping your child in a dramatic interrogation. Compare statements with available evidence, name contradictions without ridicule, and keep the safety plan in place. A qualified counselor or evaluator may help when denial is rigid, facts are serious, or the behavior is part of a larger pattern.

Use the S.A.F.E. Zone at Home

Change requires more than the absence of another incident

S — Self-Worth

Preserve the distinction between worth and conduct. A child who believes they are permanently monstrous may defend, hide, or repeat. A child whose worth is secure can face the truth without disappearing inside it.

A — Accountability

Place responsibility precisely. Do not absorb it for your child, transfer it to the target, or exaggerate it beyond the evidence. Require ownership, consequences, repair, and follow-through.

F — Forgiveness

Forgiveness is not something your child may demand from the person harmed. At home, it means refusing to freeze your child forever at their worst act while continuing to require change.

E — Empathy

Build the capacity to imagine the other child's fear, humiliation, loss, and uncertainty without turning empathy into a scripted performance. Empathy becomes credible when behavior changes.

Measure the replacement

- Can your child describe the impact without inserting “but”?
- Do they follow no-contact and digital boundaries without searching for loopholes?
- Can they tolerate lost status, embarrassment, or disagreement without retaliation?
- Are they choosing peers and activities that reinforce respect?
- Do they seek adult help before escalating?
- Are kindness and restraint appearing when no reward is offered?

The goal is not to produce a child who is sorry they were caught. The goal is a child who no longer needs harm to feel powerful.

The Parent's Shame, Anger, and Fear

Your feelings matter—but they cannot become the child's escape route

Watch for these reactions

- Protecting the family image instead of protecting the harmed child
- Attacking the reporter, school, coach, or other parent before reviewing facts
- Publicly humiliating your child to prove that you take the matter seriously
- Making the incident primarily about your own parenting failure
- Secretly minimizing consequences because you fear damage to your child's future
- Demanding immediate remorse so you can feel reassured

A steadier parent script

“I am angry about the harm and frightened about what this could mean. Those feelings are mine to manage. Your responsibility is to tell the truth, follow the safety boundaries, accept appropriate consequences, and practice the behavior that should replace this.”

Ask yourself

- Am I trying to reduce harm—or reduce my embarrassment?
- Would I consider this response fair if my child were the target?
- Am I modeling the respect and self-control I am requiring?
- Have I created enough connection for my child to tell me what else may be happening?
- What support do I need so that I do not make my child manage my emotions?

A parent can stand beside a child without standing between the child and accountability.

When More Help Is Needed

Some behavior requires assessment beyond a family conversation

Seek qualified help when

- The behavior is repeated, escalating, planned, or enjoyed despite clear consequences.
- There are credible threats, weapons, stalking, cruelty to animals, fire-setting, sexual coercion, sextortion, extortion, or serious property destruction.
- Your child appears unable to control rage, impulses, substance use, or digital behavior.
- Your child has experienced abuse, violence, exploitation, severe rejection, or persistent victimization.
- There are major changes in sleep, mood, school functioning, appetite, isolation, or risk-taking.
- Your child talks about suicide, self-harm, revenge, running away, or harming someone else.
- The family or school cannot maintain safety with the current plan.

Possible supports

- Pediatrician or primary-care clinician
- Licensed child or adolescent mental-health professional
- School counselor, psychologist, social worker, or behavior specialist
- IEP or 504 team when disability-related access or supports may be involved
- Specialized services for trauma, substance use, sexual behavior concerns, or family violence

**If someone is in immediate danger or needs police, fire, or medical help in the United States, call 911.
For a suicidal or emotional crisis, call or text 988. Elsewhere, use the local emergency or crisis service.**

This resource offers education and planning support. It is not an emergency service or a substitute for medical care, licensed mental-health care, law enforcement, child-protection services, legal advice, or local school procedures.

Parent Response Plan

From first report to accountable follow-through

What has been reported or observed:

What my child admits and disputes:

Immediate danger or urgent concern:

Evidence preserved:

Direct and indirect contact that must stop:

Digital access or property involved:

The responsible school, program, or adult to contact:

Immediate supervision or separation required:

What may be driving or rewarding the behavior:

The skill my child needs to practice instead:

Professional support to consider:

Date the plan will be reviewed:

The next action that protects the targeted child and helps my child change is: _____

Behavior Change & Repair Plan

Make the replacement visible and measurable

The behavior I am responsible for:

The harm or risk it created:

The excuses or loopholes I will stop using:

The people, places, apps, or situations that trigger the pattern:

The feeling or reward I am seeking:

What I will do instead:

Who I will contact before I escalate:

The no-contact and no-retaliation boundaries:

Property, content, or false information that must be addressed:

Repair options approved by responsible adults:

How adults will know the plan is working:

Review date and responsible adults:

My power will be measured by what I can protect, repair, and control in myself—not by whom I can control.

Implementation Notes

How Door Three should function on the website

Recommended architecture

- Lead with the parent’s shock and the first-response script—not with a lecture about bad parenting.
- Make the immediate no-contact and no-retaliation steps visible from every path.
- Present the 3 P’s only after the behavior has been named and stopped.
- Keep identity separate from behavior throughout the copy.
- Give parents copyable scripts for the child, school, and follow-up meeting.
- Make repair conditional on safety and the targeted child’s agency; never promise direct reconciliation.
- Offer the Parent Response Plan and Behavior Change & Repair Plan as printable and fillable downloads.
- Keep urgent help persistently available.

Tone rules

- Do not flatter parental denial or feed parental shame.
- Center the safety and dignity of the targeted child.
- Do not diagnose the child or present the 3 P’s as clinical categories.
- Do not treat victimization, disability, stress, or family difficulty as an excuse for harm.
- Do not require forgiveness, mediation, friendship, or access from the targeted child.
- Keep hope concrete: changed conduct, repaired damage, practiced skills, and sustained follow-through.

Suggested first production pieces

- 60-second “You just received the call” video
- Five first-response script cards
- Immediate containment checklist
- EveryBully 3 P’s explainer
- School response email generator
- Parent Response Plan
- Behavior Change & Repair Plan
- Short “Accountability without shame” video
- S.A.F.E. Zone family behavior-change guide

Editorial spine: Face It → Stop It → Understand It → Repair It → Replace It.

Source and Review Notes

For internal accuracy review before publication

The definitions, response principles, and warning signs were informed by current federal bullying- and youth-violence guidance. The packet reflects the principle that all children involved in bullying can be affected, that adults should respond calmly and consistently, and that effective intervention combines stopping harm, teaching replacement skills, appropriate consequences, repair, connection, and follow-through. Source language was checked on September 2, 2026.

Primary references

- StopBullying.gov — Support the Children Involved: <https://www.stopbullying.gov/prevention/support-the-children-involved>
- StopBullying.gov — Bullying Prevention for Parents of Middle School Students: <https://www.stopbullying.gov/prevention/middle-school>
- CDC Youth Violence Prevention — Bullying: <https://www.cdc.gov/youth-violence/about/about-bullying.html>
- CDC Youth Violence Prevention — Risk and Protective Factors: <https://www.cdc.gov/youth-violence/risk-factors/index.html>
- U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights — Harassment, Bullying, and Retaliation: <https://www.ed.gov/laws-and-policy/civil-rights-laws/harassment-bullying-and-retaliation>
- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: <https://988lifeline.org/>

Recommended professional review

- A school counselor, psychologist, or district safeguarding professional
- A licensed child or adolescent mental-health clinician
- A school administrator who handles investigations and behavior plans
- Special-education and civil-rights counsel familiar with the jurisdictions served
- Parents, young people, and adults who were targeted as children, using protected feedback processes

This packet is educational content, not legal or clinical advice. Laws, reporting duties, school authority, privacy rules, complaint deadlines, and available remedies vary by jurisdiction and circumstance.

Every bully has a story. Every target deserves a voice. And every story can change.