



PRATTVILLE YMCA

Choosing Kindness: Helping Your Child Prevent Bullying

A Parent Guide from the YMCA

At the YMCA, we strive to create an environment where every child feels welcome, safe, and respected. Children learn best when the adults in their lives work together. Here are a few ways you can help reinforce kindness at home.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is intentional, repeated behavior meant to hurt, embarrass, or intimidate another person. It may include:

- Calling someone hurtful names
- Leaving someone out on purpose
- Spreading rumors
- Physical aggression such as pushing or hitting
- Hurtful messages or posts online (for older children)

Not every disagreement is bullying. Children will have conflicts, but bullying involves repeated harmful behavior and an imbalance of power.

How Families Can Encourage Kindness

Talk about kindness every day.

Ask questions like:

- Who did you help today?
- Did anyone help you?
- Did you include someone new?

Model respect.

Children learn by watching the adults around them. Speak respectfully about others, even when you disagree.

Teach empathy.

Help your child think about how others might feel by asking, "How would you feel if that happened to you?"

Celebrate differences.

Teach children that everyone has unique talents, backgrounds, and abilities that make our community stronger.

If Your Child Is Being Bullied

- Listen calmly and thank them for telling you.
- Let them know they did the right thing by speaking up.
- Encourage them not to respond with more hurtful behavior.
- Contact YMCA staff so we can work together to address the situation.

If Your Child Has Been Unkind

Every child makes mistakes. These moments are opportunities to learn.

- Stay calm.
- Help your child understand how their actions affect someone else.
- Encourage them to apologize sincerely and make things right.
- Work together on better choices for the future.

Ways Your Child Can Be an Upstander

Encourage your child to:

- Invite someone who is alone to join a game.
- Use kind and encouraging words.
- Tell a trusted adult when someone is being hurt.
- Refuse to join in teasing or excluding others.
- Stand beside someone who needs a friend.

Thank you for partnering with us to help children grow into caring, respectful, and confident leaders.

The choices we make every day shape the community we create tomorrow. Let's choose kindness together.