

## Effects of Bullying

Bullying has serious and lasting effects. While these effects may also be caused by other factors, research has found bullying has significant effects for those who are bullied, those who bully others, and those who witness bullying.

### People Who are Bullied:

- Have higher risk of depression and anxiety, including the following symptoms, that may persist into adulthood:
  - Increased feelings of sadness and loneliness
  - Changes in sleep and eating patterns
  - Loss of interest in activities
- Have increased thoughts about suicide that may persist into adulthood. In one study, adults who recalled being bullied in youth were 3 times more likely to have suicidal thoughts or inclinations.
- Are more likely to have health complaints. In one study, being bullied was associated with physical health status 3 years later.
- Have decreased academic achievement (GPA and standardized test scores) and school participation.
- Are more likely to miss, skip, or drop out of school.
- Are more likely to retaliate through extremely violent measures. In 12 of 15 school shooting cases in the 1990s, the shooters had a history of being bullied.

### People Who Bully Others:

- Have a higher risk of abusing alcohol and other drugs in adolescence and as adults.
- Are more likely to get into fights, vandalize property, and drop out of school.
- Are more likely to engage in early sexual activity.
- Are more likely to have criminal convictions and traffic citations as adults. In one study, 60% of boys who bullied others in middle school had a criminal conviction by age 24.
- Are more likely to be abusive toward their romantic partners, spouses or children as adults.

### People Who Witness Bullying:

- Have increased use of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs.
- Have increased mental health problems, including depression and anxiety.
- Are more likely to miss or skip school.