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**FOR PARENTS:
A TIP SHEET ON DEALING WITH BULLYING
Marty Griffith
West Holmes District Case Manager**

Bullying: Bullying is when someone repeatedly says or does mean or hurtful things to another person who has a hard time defending himself or herself.

Warning Signs That Your Child Might Be A Target Of Bullying:

- Unexplainable injuries.
- Lost or destroyed possessions.
- Frequent physical complaints (headaches, stomach aches, etc.).
- Changes in eating habits like suddenly skipping meals binge eating, or coming home hungry because he skipped lunch.
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares.
- Declining grades, loss of interest in school, not wanting to go to school.
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations.
- Feeling hopeless or having low self-esteem.
- Self-destructive behaviors like running away or talking about harming himself.

Tips and Strategies For Parents:

- If you suspect your child is being bullied, do not ignore the problem. Talk to your child and ask if something is bothering them and encourage them to talk about it.
- If your child tells you they are being bullied, make sure they know you are concerned about them and that all kids deserve respectful treatment.
- If your child is either a target or a bully during school hours, it is appropriate to call the school and work cooperatively with the building administration to address the problem.
- Encourage your child to learn and practice assertiveness and good decision making skills. The more assertiveness and independent decision making skills they develop, the more self-confident and strong they will be.
- Spend time with your child, encouraging them to develop new interests or strengthen existing skills. This will help to boost self-esteem.
- Help your child to develop new friendships and strengthen existing positive friendships. A strong social support system can serve as a buffer to bullying.
- If your child appears depressed or self-hurtful, contact a local mental health professional.
- If the bullying continues or worsens, you may need to seek an attorney or contact local law enforcement officials.