



## PARENT TOOLKIT

### FIVE STEPS PARENTS CAN TAKE TO PROTECT THEIR CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS FROM BULLIES

1. Reach out to the parents of other children in your school whose children are diagnosed with special needs. Form a coalition and begin supporting one another through suggestions and recommendations to the PTA, the school board and your local legislature on the topic of bullying and children with special needs.
2. Become familiar with statistics on bullying and children with special needs. Educate your school district, teachers and community on the issue. Bring in speakers to address such topics.
3. Be visible by taking part in community functions and figuring out ways to give visibility to your children. Research shows that when students with a disability or chronic illness were restricted from participating in school activities, they had a 30% additional risk of being bullied.
4. Demand that any anti-bullying projects adopted by your school district adequately addresses the issues of children with special needs.
5. Write letters to policy-makers on bullying and children with special needs, requesting that federal and state funds be used to expand the research on the topic. Request that anti-bullying programs used in the schools be effective in reducing the vulnerabilities of children with special needs.

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