

Healing Words for Kids & Teens

Top Ten Tips

[How to Deal with Teasing, Gossip and Other Big Issues]

1 Say nice things about the people around you and they'll do the same for you.

2 Avoid the gossip game; tomorrow you might be "it."

3 When someone confides in you, keep the secret, even from your best friend! You want the same for your secrets, right?

4 Respect yourself for your many talents and great features. Do the same for your siblings and classmates. Appreciate your differences and don't judge. Every person is special and this makes life interesting, rich, and beautiful.

5 Give yourself and others the benefit of the doubt, and reach out. Maybe the person you think is a snob is just shy, or the kid making fun of you is just jealous of your nice family or good grades.

6 Chat rooms and e-mail are fun, but they are not confidential. With the click of a mouse button, hundreds could be reading your real opinion of your friend's new jacket, and your friendship could be ruined, perhaps forever.

7 If you are being teased or ridiculed, don't let the bullies win by believing their taunts. They have a character problem, not you! Stand your ground!

8 Use the **3 P's** if you are being teased or bullied: **Prevent** means learning to know when you might be in a "situation," and getting help from an adult when necessary; **Prepare** to make the first move by being ready to use nonviolent alternatives, like humor or trying to make friends with the bully, and; **Protect** means getting self-defense training, like tae kwan do. Hopefully, you'll never need to use it, but, man, you'll have confidence.*

9 Remember, there are at least two sides to every story. It is far better to help make peace among your family members and friends than to contribute to the quarrel.

10 Disagree with respect, and avoid harsh words with your parents, siblings and friends. A harsh word, said in haste, can take a long time to erase.

*From T.W. Doyle's "Why is Everybody Picking on Me: A Guide to Handling Bullies."