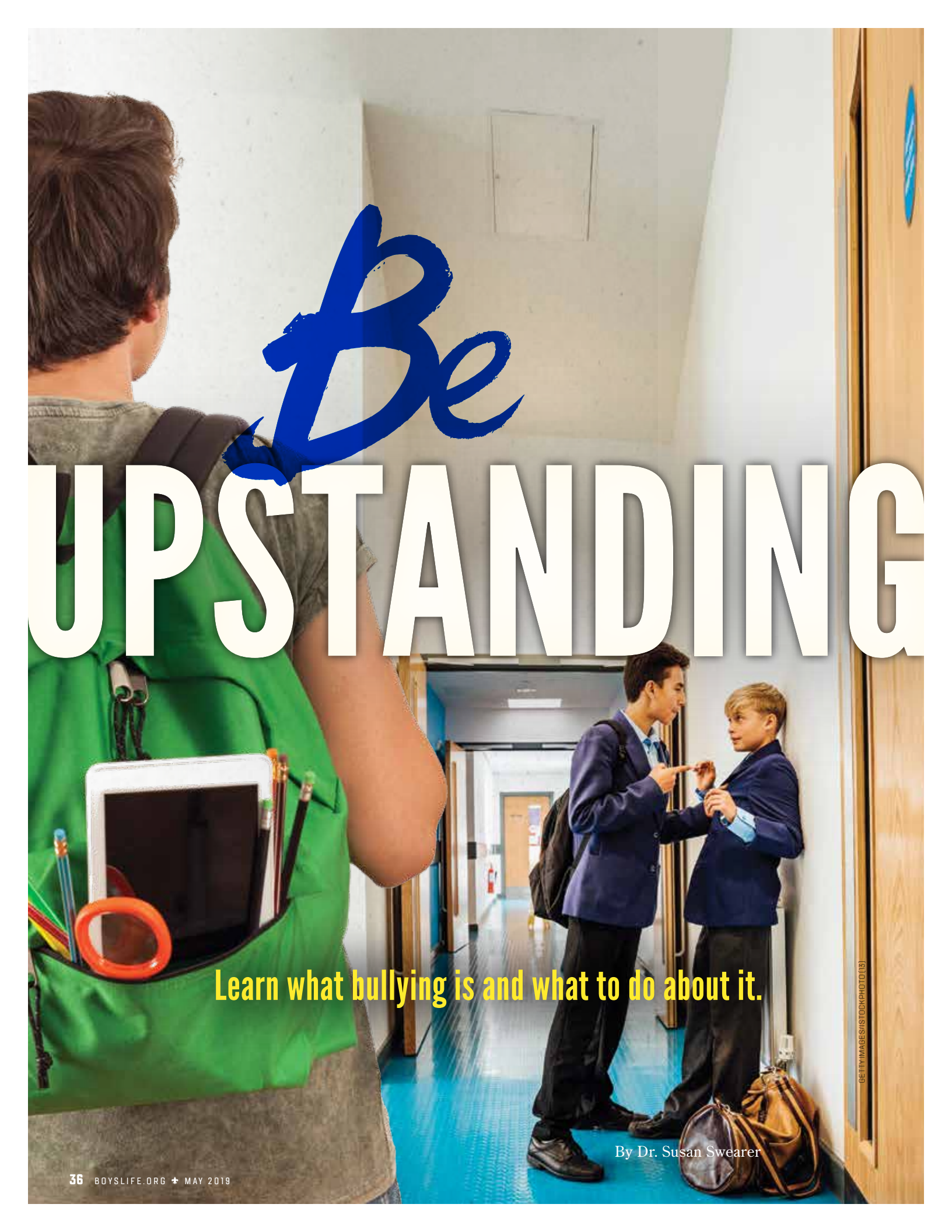


A photograph of a school hallway. In the foreground, the back of a boy's head and shoulders are visible; he is wearing a green backpack with a white tablet and orange-rimmed glasses in a side pocket. In the background, two boys in blue school uniforms are standing and talking near a wooden door. The floor is blue, and the walls are white.

Be UPSTANDING

Learn what bullying is and what to do about it.

By Dr. Susan Swearer

BY DR. SUSAN SWEARER

STEP IN SPEAK UP

10 actions you
can take to help
**ELIMINATE
BULLYING.**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

DR. SUSAN M. SWEARER, co-director of the Bullying Research Network, is one of the nation's foremost experts on bullying and cyberbullying. She has been featured on Anderson Cooper's daytime talk show, *Anderson Live*, and has presented her research at the White House.

The latest research is startling: More than half of all children have been involved in bullying as a perpetrator, target or both. Those who aren't directly involved often witness others being bullied.

Bullying affects kids of every race, gender identity, grade and socioeconomic sector. But it doesn't have to be this way. Here are 10 actions you as a parent or Scouter can take to help address bullying.

1 Talk — and listen.

Adults are often the last to know when young people are bullying others or being bullied.

Talk to your kids about their social lives. Ask open-ended questions about their school friends, what they do between classes, their lunchmates, and what happens on the way to and from school.

If children feel comfortable talking to you *before* they're involved in a bullying event, they'll be much more likely to get you involved *after*.

2 Be present.

Research shows 67 percent of bullying happens when adults aren't around.

Volunteering at school or a Scouting event once a week or once a month can make a real difference. Your presence will encourage kids to play well with others.

Ask your child's teacher, principal or Scout leader how you can best serve.

3 Lead by example.

Kids learn a lot about power relationships by watching you. When you get angry at a waiter, driver or fellow Scout leader, you have a great opportunity to model effective communication techniques.

Don't blow it by blowing your top. Any time you speak to another person in a mean or abusive way, you're teaching your child that bullying is OK.

4 Learn the signs.

Most children won't tell anyone, especially adults, that they've been bullied.

That makes it vital for parents to learn to recognize possible signs of their being targeted, such as frequent loss of personal belongings, complaints of headaches or stomachaches, looking upset after reading a social media post on their phone or computer, avoiding recess or school activities, or getting to school very late or very early.

5 Create healthy habits.

Help develop anti-bullying and anti-victimization habits as early as preschool and kindergarten.

Coach your children on what not to do, including hitting, pushing or teasing. Help your child to focus on how such actions might feel to the child on the receiving end by asking, "How do you think you would feel if that happened to you?"

6 Learn the policies.

Know how your child's school and Scout unit address bullying.

Research shows "zero-tolerance" policies aren't effective. It's better to use ongoing educational programs that help create a healthy social climate in the school.

This means teaching kids of all ages how to be inclusive leaders and how to be empathic toward others.

7 Establish household rules.

Your children and Scouts need to hear explicitly from you that bullying is not OK. They shouldn't tolerate being bullied, either.

It's important to define bullying, because many children don't know when they're bullying others. Help young people find other ways to exert their personal power, status and leadership at school, and implement a kindness plan at school and in the Scout unit.

8 Encourage upstanders.

Research shows that kids who witness bullying feel powerless and seldom intervene.

Children shouldn't put themselves in danger, but they can often effectively diffuse a bullying situation by stating firmly, "Stop! You're bullying!"

People who stand up to bullying are called "upstanders." Teach all kids (and adults) to be upstanders.

9 Talk about cyberbullying.

Children often don't realize what cyberbullying is.

It includes sending rude, vulgar or threatening messages or images; posting private information about another person; pretending to be someone else to make that person look bad; or intentionally excluding someone from an online group.

These acts are as harmful as physical violence and must not be tolerated.

10 Spread the word.

Bullying should not be a normal part of childhood.

Some adults think of bullying as a typical phase of childhood that must be endured or that can help children "toughen up." That's wrong.

All forms of bullying are harmful to the perpetrator, the target and even witnesses. The effects last well into adulthood. By sharing this information with other adults you know, we can work together to end bullying. ✦

ANTI-BULLYING RESOURCES

- ▶ BSA Youth Protection: scouting.org/training/youth-protection
- ▶ Bullying Research Network: cehs.unl.edu/brnet
- ▶ Netsmartz: netsmartz.org/cyberbullying
- ▶ Federal anti-bullying site: stopbullying.gov
- ▶ Selected books about bullying: cehs.unl.edu/empowerment/books



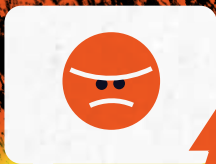
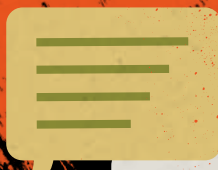
VERBAL BULLYING

Three out of four young people will experience bullying during their school years. Both guys and girls can experience one or all four forms of bullying:

- **Verbal:** saying mean things, calling others mean names, saying threatening things, and using words to intimidate and harass.
- **Physical:** hitting, pushing, kicking, shoving and being physically aggressive.
- **Relational:** leaving someone out of a group, inviting everyone to a party except one or two people and trying to damage someone's reputation (like by spreading rumors).



ELECTRONIC BULLYING



- **Electronic:** using social media to engage in verbal and relational bullying by blocking people from group chats, kicking someone off a game or group chat, and using social media platforms or messaging to intimidate and harass. Bullies often use all four forms.





THE BULLYING DYNAMIC

The Bullying Dynamic

There are many ways guys and girls can experience or participate in bullying. In this “bullying dynamic,” some people might even be involved in multiple roles at the same time or different roles at different times.

Think about these roles:

- **Target:** The target of bullying.
- **Bully:** The person doing the bullying.
- **Bully-Target:** A person who both bullies others and is bullied.
- **Bystander:** Someone who observes bullying happening to others.
- **Not involved:** Someone who does not experience or witness bullying.
- **Upstander:** The person who stands up when he or she sees bullying happening.

Bullying is often related to other problems, such as feelings of sadness and depression, anxiety, not wanting to go to school, and problems with friends and family.

People who were involved in bullying when they were kids can experience some of these problems as adults. It is important not to be involved in bullying at all. It can cause lifelong problems.

From elementary to middle to high school, bullying can look different. Bullying by younger kids tends to be more physical and verbal. In high school, bullying might be more relational and electronic.

CONTINUED >



TARGET



BULLY



BULLY-TARGET



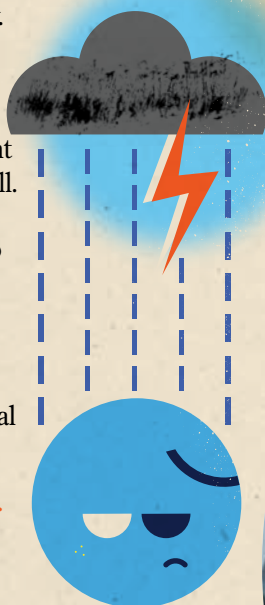
BYSTANDER



NOT INVOLVED



UPSTANDER





WE CAN ALL *Be* UPSTANDERS





Be an Upstander

Bullying is complicated. The good news is that we can all be upstanders — people who are prepared to do the right thing at the right moment. If you see someone being bullied or you know of someone being bullied, here's how you can be an upstander:

- Tell the person that the bullying is not OK.
- Encourage him or her with simple, positive statements, such as “You deserve to be treated better.”
- Ask the person if he or she needs help.
- Offer to go with the person to tell a trusted adult.
- Include in your group the person being bullied.
- Help the person to not feel alone.
- Offer kindness and a smile.

Sometimes simple acts like a smile or a compliment can really change a person's day. Targets of bullying often feel very alone, and upstanders can help everyone feel supported and included. ✨

Dr. Susan Swearer is co-director of the **Bullying Research Network** and the Willa Cather Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Nebraska—Lincoln.

For more information about bullying and what to do about it, visit go.boyslife.org/resources and go.boyslife.org/books

Netsmartz: go.boyslife.org/netsmartz

Government anti-bullying site: go.boyslife.org/stopbullying



BULLYING
IS NOT OK



It is going to happen to everyone at some point. Yes, even you. You will be teased about something. Someone will be mean to you. Maybe sometime you will feel left out or hurt. The good thing is, those usually are temporary actions and feelings.

But when teasing and mean words cross the line and become bullying, it's time to step in and step up.



What Bullying Is

Three factors define bullying:

- It is mean behavior done on purpose.
- There is a power imbalance — bullies are usually bigger or older or stronger or more popular, or other factors.
- Bullying is repeated. It has to happen several times to be defined as bullying, which is different from teasing and/or being mean a time or two.

