



**KUWAIT COUNSELING CENTER**

**Dr. Patricia Perez, PhD**  
The Chicago School of Professional Psychology

**Dr. Joanne Hands, PhD, LPC, LMFT**  
Kuwait Counseling Center

# Compassion and Empathy

# Compassion

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-compassion-chronicles/200804/what-is-compassion-and-how-can-it-improve-my-life>

- Ability to understand the emotional state of another person or oneself.
- Compassion has the added element of having a desire to alleviate or reduce the suffering of another.
- Having compassion for someone can lead to feeling empathy for another person.
- Beginning to have a totally different perspective when it comes to how you perceive others.



# Why Compassion?

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/shefali-tsabary/raising-compassion-the-most-important-thing-parents-can-do\\_b\\_4559124.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/shefali-tsabary/raising-compassion-the-most-important-thing-parents-can-do_b_4559124.html)

- “Why are they so selfish, when I gave them everything?”
- Building compassion=lies within the parent’s sense of self-connection, worth and acceptance
- A child’s capacity to self-love is directly related to its parent’s level of emotional intelligence.
- Authentic connection with your children; world a better place with prosocial behavior



# Empathy

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/empathy>

- Empathy is the experience of understanding another person's condition from their perspective.
- You place yourself in their shoes and feel what they are feeling.



- Empathy is known to increase prosocial (helping) behaviors.
- Research has uncovered the existence of "mirror neurons," which react to emotions expressed by others and then reproduce them.



## Why Empathy?

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/parenting/wp/2015/06/11/teaching-our-children-empathetic-assertiveness/>

- Help children become happier people with more fulfilling relationships
- Improved communication skills
- Increased quality of personal and professional relationships
- Empathetic assertiveness=respect others and can see their perspective, but at the same time we're firm in our boundaries and are confident in how we implement them



# How to Raise Compassionate and Empathetic Children

- Be Present
- Treat others with respect
- Model behavior in everyday life
- Make caring a priority
- Practice!
- Guide children



# What is Bullying?

<http://nobullying.com/what-is-bullying/>

- Bullying is when someone keeps doing or saying things to have power and control over another person
- Takes place overtime
- Main goal is to intimidate others



## Recent Stats:

<http://www.stopbullying.gov/news/media/facts/#stats>

National (USA) statistics about bullying:

- 1 in 7 students in grades K-12 is either a bully or a victim of bullying
- 90% of fourth through eighth graders report being victims of bullying
- 15% of all school absenteeism is directly related to fears of being bullied at school
- 38% of girls report being bullied online
- 39% of social network users have been cyberbullied





# Bullying can be:

## DIRECT

Face to face

### Verbal

Insults, putdowns,  
teasing,  
harassment

### Physical

Shoves, pushes,  
hitting, assault

### Psychological

Rolling eyes, dirty looks, uttering threats,  
extortion



# Bullying can be:

## INDIRECT

Behind someone's back

### Exclusion

Leaving out  
Shunning

### Relational Aggression

Telling people not to be  
friends with a victim

### Gossip

Lowering people's opinion  
About the victim



# Cyberbullying:

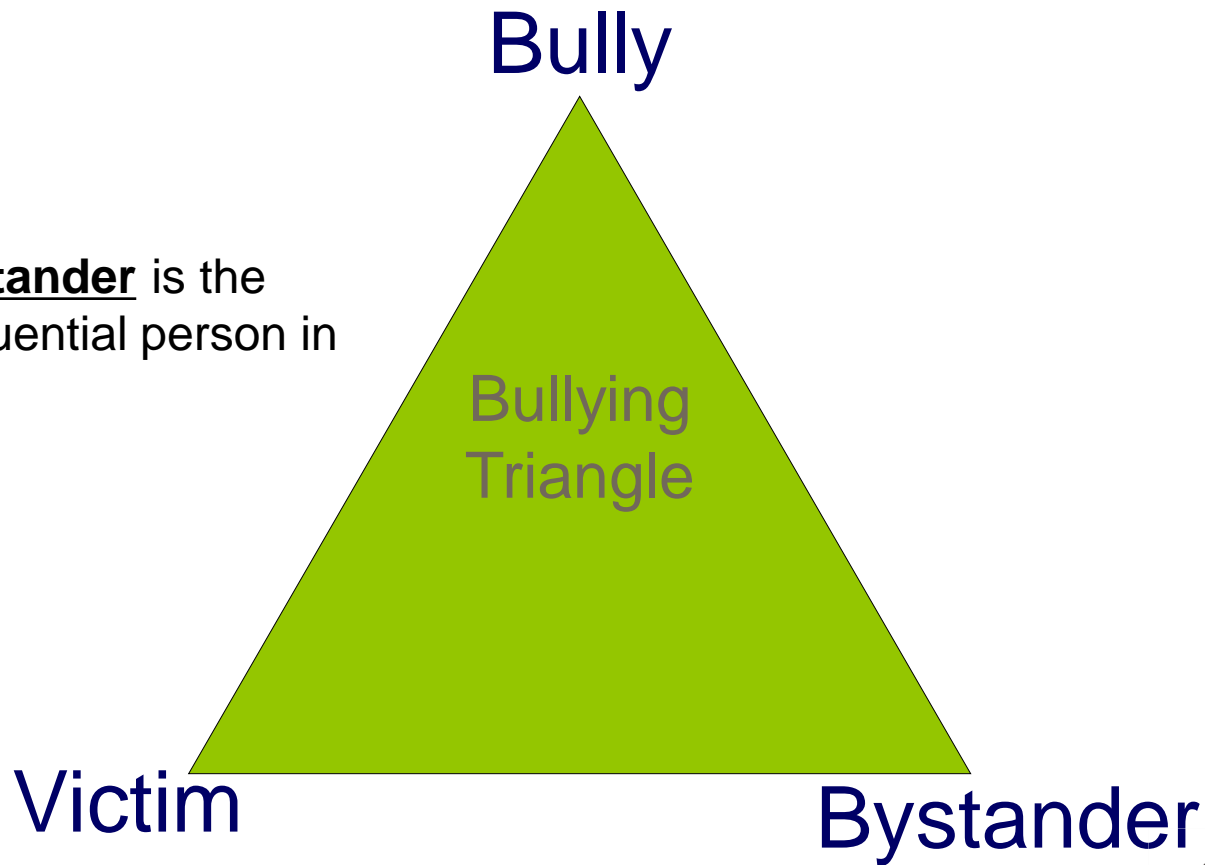
The most common online risk for all teens. Similar to social bullying but using digital technology. It includes:

- Gossip, exclusion, impersonation, harassment, cyber threats, pictures, videos, emails, texting
- It can happen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week even when the person is at home



# Who is involved in Bullying?

The **Bystander** is the most influential person in the triad



# What Can Parents Do:

- Try to observe changes in your child's behavior
- Ask questions and take time to listen to answers
- Respond in a comforting way to encourage your child to continue
- Encourage honesty
- Praise child for being brave enough to take a stand
- Be their friend but not forgetting to be their parent



# What Can Parents Do Cont.:

- Implement parenting with your head and not your heart
- Teach your kid to solve problems without using violence
- Encourage your child to help others who need it (team work)
- Educate students on personal safety activities
- Encourage your child to visit the school counselor
- Don't become your own child's bully...



**Treat everyone  
with respect**

**Tell an adult  
at school.**

**Talk to the  
bully privately.**

**Don't gossip about  
what happened.  
Change the  
topic.**

**Talk to the victim  
in private.**

**Tell your child  
to:**

**Don't be a bystander and  
just walk away. Take  
friends  
with you and stand WITH  
the victim against the  
bully.**

**Invite the victim  
to join you and your  
friends.**



# Remember ...

- Allow your child to let you know if you say something that humiliates or hurts them in any way
- Children learn through modeling to use empathy with others
- Pay attention to your body language, it is more important than your actual words
- Use less words....lectures don't work
- Select one line to show your empathy and stay with it:
  - This is so sad
  - This must really hurt
  - That is really hard
  - I am sorry you feel that way
  - It must be hard to feel so frustrated





Take the driver's seat and not  
the passenger's seat



