

Tips for Keeping Kids Safer at School This Year

Stand for the Silent, an organization helping to stop bullying, is helping to make schools safer.

OKLAHOMA CITY , OKLAHOMA , USA , August 12, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Increasingly, people consider their child's safety at school, and many even turn to homeschooling. In fact, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, the top reasons for families choosing to homeschool are concerns about the school environment, including safety issues and negative peer pressure. This is an issue that people face from coast to coast, and it's one that communities must address. The good news is that there are some things parents can do to help keep kids safer this school year.



Photo courtesy of Stand For The Silent

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Kirk Smalley, co-founder of Stand for the Silent

“Only around five percent of families homeschool. It's simply not an option for most people,” says Kirk Smalley, co-founder of [Stand for the Silent](#). “We have to take a stand against the safety issues in school, especially when it comes to bullying and negative environments.”

As families prepare for the school bells to ring, some are already fearing the idea of the bullying culture that may be waiting in the hallways and classrooms. Now is the time for parents, schools, and communities to proactively address

the situation so that it doesn't become a big issue later on. Some things can be done to help address the problem at all levels, and it is better to get ahead of now rather than wait until it is a big issue.

Here are some tips for keeping kids safer this school year:

- Talk to kids about the issue. They need to know what bullying looks like, what to do about it, how to report it, why it's unacceptable, etc. We need to normalize discussing these issues with

kids so that they are prepared if and when it happens and so that we set the bar on what acceptable behavior is. Discuss bullying in school and online.

- Create a culture of kindness. It's important to respect people's differences. We will never have everyone the same in any community, home, or classroom. We need to instill a sense of understanding and respect so that people focus more on other things. No matter how different people are, we all have certain things in common, and if we focus on those, we will create a kinder culture.

- Be mindful of sharing personal information. It's a common practice for proud parents to post pictures of their child headed back to a new school year. When doing this, exercise caution in what personal information is being shared and who can see it. Avoid putting too much personal information in the photo or post, and be sure to check your account settings first so they are set only to show to your friends and not the whole world. That personal information can end up in the hands of predators and be used by others.

- Help kids become more confident and learn self-defense. The National Institutes of Health reports that those who are more vulnerable to being bullied are often seen as weak, unable to defend themselves, and having low self-esteem. Improving in these areas may go a long way toward reducing bullying incidents.

- Teach healthy phone habits. Not having a phone is not a solution for most families. Kids today have phones, which is not going away for the most part. It's better to focus on teaching kids how to use them healthily, the dangers of using social media, and how to protect themselves. They also need to know about cyberbullying and what to do about it. Parents must also be sure they are leading by example when using their phones and social media.

"Addressing safety and bullying concerns is within all of our power, and we must do it to protect the kids," added Smalley. "We are happy to help every community and school become a safer



Photo courtesy of Stand For The Silent



Kirk Smalley, co-founder of Stand for the Silent

learning environment for kids. Book one of our seminars, and let us help you kick off a culture of kindness at your school.”

Stand for the Silent has also launched a Student Stand Out program this school year. Teachers can nominate students who they feel stand out by being kind, addressing bullying, being a positive role model, having good leadership, having respect and integrity, and demonstrating actions that show initiative to end bullying at the school. Each week through the school year, one nominee will be chosen to receive a \$50 Visa gift card, and at the end of each semester, one person will be selected to win a \$100 gift card. The nomination period runs from August 1 to December 1 and then from January 1 to April 1. For more information about the program, visit the site at: <https://standforthesilent.org/schools/standout>

Stand for the Silent travels the country, providing seminars and talks for communities and schools. They also offer helpful materials online to help people with bullying issues. Each year, they also give scholarships to students who help address bullying at their schools. To get more information on how to have the organization do a presentation or how to start a local chapter, visit the site at: <https://standforthesilent.org/>

Smalley and his wife, Laura, started the organization following their 11-year-old son, ending his own life due to bullying. They turned their pain and loss into a mission of helping others. Those interested in getting involved can start a chapter of the group in their area, obtain a free K-2 bullying prevention curriculum or [cyberbullying handbook for parents](#), host a presentation at their school, introduce the How All Started video, and donate to help support the cause. To get more information, visit the site at: <https://standforthesilent.org/>

About Stand for the Silent

Started in 2010, Stand for the Silent is an organization on a mission to help eliminate bullying nationwide. Kirk and Laura Smalley founded the group after their child took his own life due to bullying. They offer free resources for parents and educators and travel to schools to host presentations. They have been to over 6,025 schools and spoken with more than 4.15 million

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