

RAISING BEARS WITH MRS. MILLER

Episode 3: Was It Bullying... or Just a Bad Moment?st

EPISODE SUMMARY:

Not every tricky situation at school is bullying—but it can feel that way when your child comes home upset. In this episode, we unpack the difference between bullying, mean moments, rude behavior, and conflict, and talk about how parents can respond with calm, confidence, and connection.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR PARENTS:

- Bullying = repeated, targeted, and with a power imbalance.
- Mean Moment = one-time unkind behavior.
- Rude Behavior = inconsiderate or thoughtless, not usually meant to hurt.
- Conflict = Kids of equal power disagreeing or clashing.
- Your role: Ask questions, coach responses, and step in if it's true bullying.

GENTLE REMINDER:

Every tough social moment, even the small ones, can help your child grow. With your steady presence and support, they'll learn empathy, resilience, and problem-solving skills. You don't need to fix it all perfectly. Just showing up makes a difference.

PARENT REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. The last time my child came home upset, did I assume it was bullying, or pause to explore what really happened?
2. How confident do I feel in explaining the difference between rude, mean, conflict, and bullying?
3. What's one way I can coach my child to respond next time they face a tricky situation?
4. When should I step in and contact the school, and when can I guide my child to problem-solve first?



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PARENT CHEAT SHEET:

Was It Bullying... or Just a Bad Moment?

Kids use the word bullying for all kinds of tricky situations—but not every unkind or frustrating moment is bullying. Here's a quick way to sort it out:

Type of Behavior	What It Looks Like	How Often It Happens	Power Dynamic	How Parents Can Help
Bullying	Targeted teasing, exclusion, or threats	Repeated, ongoing	Unequal (one child has more power)	Step in early. Contact the teacher or counselor, support your child's safety.
Mean Moment	Intentional unkindness (name-calling, eye roll)	Usually one-time	Equal or unequal	Talk it through, help your child name feelings, role-play healthy responses.
Rude Behavior	Thoughtless or inconsiderate actions (interrupting, cutting in line)	Occasional	Equal	Teach manners and empathy; model polite ways to handle it.
Conflict	Disagreement between kids (arguments, hurt feelings, "you can't play")	Can be one-time or off-and-on	Equal	Coach problem-solving and compromise; encourage kids to try again.

QUICK PARENT TIPS:

- Ask first: "Did this happen once, or has it been happening a lot?"
- Coach skills: Teach the difference between rude, mean, and bullying.
- Practice at home: Role-play how to respond; confidence grows with practice.
- Speak up when needed: If it is bullying, loop in the school sooner rather than later.

REMEMBER:

Every tough moment, even the small ones, can help kids build resilience, empathy, and problem-solving skills. And with you in their corner, they're not handling it alone.

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