

Questions & Answers

Q: My son has never had a lot of friends. But there was one boy in his class who spent time with him—that is, until recently. This boy has moved on to a new group of friends and has joined these other students in ignoring my son.

Now my son doesn't want to go to school. I don't know how to handle this. Should I call the former friend's mother to ask her to talk to her son?

A: As much as we want school to be solely a place for learning, experts know that there's also an important social aspect. When social issues affect a child's desire to go to school, it's time to take action.

Calling the other parents hardly ever works—and could actually result in more heartbreak for your son. Instead:

- Talk with his teacher. Has she noticed that your son is being ignored? Ask for her assistance in making your son feel included in class activities.
- Find opportunities for your son to make friends outside of school. Think about programs like the Scouts or other youth organizations. Sometimes, a structured setting makes it easier for kids to get along.
- Look into clubs and activities at the school. Connecting with students who share his interests—whether it's making robots, playing chess or singing in the chorus—can help your son find his peer group.

If your son continues to struggle, talk with his pediatrician or the school counselor.

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