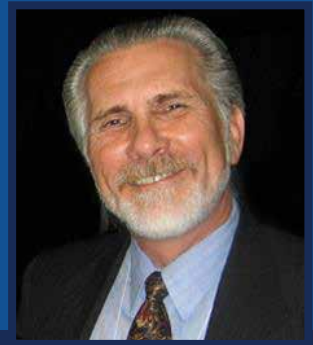




# FOOD ALLERGY BULLYING Q&A

WITH PSYCHOLOGIST  
DR. RALPH GENE CASH PH.D., ABPP



## 1 | What is food allergy bullying?

Food allergy bullying happens when children and teens living with life-threatening allergies (LTAs) are teased, ridiculed or even threatened or assaulted with food to which they are severely allergic.



**Approximately one-third of all kids** with food allergies are bullied because of their allergies according to a survey of 251 families.<sup>1</sup>



**Nearly one in five parents**, do not feel their child with a food allergy is safe while at school according to one recent study (N=289).<sup>2</sup>

## 2 | What should I do if I/someone I know is being bullied due to their food allergies?



Food allergy bullying can cause emotional harm, like other forms of bullying.<sup>3</sup> It is important to bring any occurrences of food allergy bullying immediately to school officials' and parents' attention, so they can take the appropriate measures to resolve the situation.

## 3 | What are tips for combating food allergy bullying?

Preventing and addressing food allergy bullying includes:



Recognize the signs of bullying



Set up a buddy system



Stay calm and assure those affected that you're going to help



Encourage teachers, administrators, the school nurse, or counselors to offer educational programs about food allergies and bullying

## 4 | What are the potential consequences of food allergy bullying?

Food allergy bullying can negatively impact a child's social development and self-esteem – just as they are learning how to self-manage their condition.<sup>3</sup> Open communication and widespread education can help put an end to food allergy bullying.

**Speak up to be an advocate: visit [NoAppetiteforBullying.com](https://NoAppetiteforBullying.com) and follow [#NoAppetiteforBullying](https://NoAppetiteforBullying.com) for more information on how you can help, including submitting a story about your experience with food allergy bullying.**

### ABOUT DR. CASH

Dr. Ralph Gene Cash, Ph.D., ABPP is a licensed psychologist and board-certified school psychologist, professor of psychology at Nova Southeastern University's College of Psychology, and Director of NSU's School-related Psychological Assessment and Clinical Interventions clinic. Dr. Cash has an expertise in the psychology behind food allergy bullying, and is passionate about helping to put an end to food allergy bullying.

1. Shemesh E, Annunziato R, Ambrose M, et al. Child and Parental Reports of Bullying in a Consecutive Sample of Children With Food Allergy. *Pediatrics*. American Academy of Pediatrics. 2013; 131; e10

2. Mustafa S, Russell A, Kagan O, et al. Parent perspectives on school food allergy policy. *BMC Pediatrics*. 2018. 18:164

3. ACAAI. Bullying and Food Allergy: What Can Allergists Do? <https://acaai.org/resources/connect/letters-editor/bullyingandfoodallergywhatcanallergistsdo> [Accessed 27 September 2018].