

Nearly one in five parents of food-allergic children are bullied

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Parents of children with food allergies find their children are often bullied by classmates, as well as parents of other children and teachers. A new study being presented at this year's virtual American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI) Annual Scientific Meeting shows that nearly one in five parents of food-allergic kids are the target of bullying by a multitude of sources.

"We know children are often bullied about their food allergies," says Dannielle Brown, MHS, lead author of the study. "What we weren't aware of was how many [parents](#) are bullied by multiple sources. Of the 252 parents or guardians we surveyed, more than 17% said they had been bullied."

Parents of children 4-17 years ([school-age children](#)) in the survey found it was helpful to take action to stop the bullying. 13% of parents/guardians spoke with their child, 7% spoke with the offender or the offender's parent, 17% spoke with a teacher and 15% spoke with a principal or administrator. Almost 50% of those who did something to stop food allergy bullying said it was helpful.

Another important finding in the survey was that while there were no significant differences in the percentages of Black and [white children](#) who were bullied around food allergies, Black children experienced non-food allergy-related bullying twice as frequently.

"No child or their parent should be bullied because of their food

allergies," says food allergy researcher Ruchi Gupta, MD, MPH, ACAAI member and one of the lead researchers on the study. "And it's of course equally important that Black [children](#) with food allergies not be bullied for additional reasons. Having a food allergy puts tremendous stress on the entire family and any form of bullying makes life that much harder."

More information: Presentation Title: Food Allergy-Related Bullying and School Policy Among Black and White Children in the FORWARD Study

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Provided by American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology

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