

Family Guide to Confidence & Belonging

For parents and caregivers of children with vitiligo or another visible difference

Children benefit when home and school send the same message: your appearance does not define your worth, and you deserve safety, friendship, and support.

Awareness • Faith • Confidence

vitiligobond.org/school-resources/

Begin with listening

If a child mentions staring, questions, or teasing, start by listening without rushing to solve everything. You might say: “Thank you for telling me. That sounds difficult. You deserve to be treated with respect. Let's figure out what support you want.”

Talk about vitiligo in age-appropriate words

Vitiligo changes the color of areas of skin. It is not contagious. Children do not need to know every medical detail to learn kindness and respect. Let your child choose how much they want to share with classmates, and do not pressure them to educate others.

Practice short responses together

- “It's called vitiligo. It isn't contagious.”
- “My skin looks different, and that's okay.”
- “I don't want to talk about my skin right now.”
- “Please stop. That comment isn't kind.”
- “I'm going to tell a trusted adult.”

When your child reports bullying

1. Thank them for telling you.
2. Ask what happened, when, where, who was present, and whether they feel safe now.
3. Write down facts and save relevant messages or screenshots.
4. Contact the teacher or designated school staff and ask what steps will be taken under school policy.
5. Agree on a follow-up date and check in with your child.
6. If the behavior continues or your child appears distressed, request additional support from school professionals and qualified providers.

Build confidence without dismissing feelings

Celebrate interests, skills, relationships, creativity, courage, humor, and effort—not only appearance. Avoid saying “just ignore it” or “you should be proud” when your child is hurting. You can affirm their worth while taking the situation seriously.

A family-school conversation starter

“We want our child to feel safe and included. Could we discuss how the school responds to appearance-based teasing, how incidents are documented, which staff member is our point of contact, and when we will follow up?”

When to seek more support

If your child seems persistently anxious, withdrawn, hopeless, afraid to attend school, or talks about hurting themselves, take it seriously. Reach out promptly to a qualified mental-health professional or pediatric healthcare provider. If there is immediate danger, contact emergency services or a local crisis resource.

Educational note

This guide offers general educational suggestions, not medical or mental-health advice. Follow school procedures and seek qualified help for individual concerns.

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