

CYBER BULLYING

Although there are several definitions regarding the topic of Cyber Bullying, it can generally be defined as sending or posting harmful or cruel text messages or images using the Internet or other digital communication devices.



Some specific examples of cyber bullying would include

- Sending cruel, vicious, and sometimes threatening messages
- Creating web sites that have stories, cartoons, pictures, and jokes ridiculing others
- Posting pictures of classmates online with intent to embarrass them
- Breaking into an e-mail account and sending vicious or embarrassing material to others
- Engaging someone in IM (instant messaging), tricking that person into revealing sensitive personal information, and forwarding that information to others
- Taking a picture of a person using a digital phone camera and sending that picture to others without consent

Cyber bullying is emerging as one of the more challenging issues facing educators and parents as young people embrace the Internet and other mobile communication technologies.

Cyber Bullying Tips:

1. Do not respond to/engage in the abuse. No back and forth.
2. Talk to someone about it. Ignoring bullying leads to escalation.
3. Keep records/print off messages if possible, to help identify the bully.
4. If necessary, get a new number, account, give it out one person at a time and keep a diary to record any abuse. Your tormentor may be closer than you think.
5. Take a break – Unplug.

Parent Solutions –If your child is being bullied:

1. Make bullying a more “talkable” subject.
2. Place and keep the computer in an open, common area.
3. Inform Internet Service Provider (ISP) or cell phone service provider of abuse.
4. Do not erase messages; keep for evidence.
5. Software help – McAfee Parental Controls filter both IM and Chat Rooms. Tracker programs.

School Solutions:

1. Amend anti-bullying policies to include text messaging, cell phone use and online bullying.
2. Make a commitment to educate teachers, students and parents about cyber bullying.
3. Make sure parents know whom to contact at the school if there is a problem.
4. Never allow a known incident of bullying to pass unchallenged and not deal with it.



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What can be done about cyber bullying? Awareness and education are the keys to the prevention of cyber bullying!

Spend some time learning what you can do about cyber bullying. It is often a very hurtful, difficult and time consuming challenge to deal with the effects of cyber bullying after it has occurred. It can take a lot of time and effort to get Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and Mobile Telecommunications Service Providers to respond and deal with your complaints about being cyber bullied.

An Ounce of Prevention...

- Place/keep computer(s) with Internet access in an open, commonly used space
- Never give out personal information or passwords, P.I.N. numbers etc.
- Personal information includes your name, the names of friends or family, your address, phone number, school name (or team name if you play sports). Personal info also includes pictures of yourself and your e-mail address.

- Passwords are secrets. Never tell anyone your password except your parents or guardian.

If you are The Victim of a Cyber Bully What Can Be Done Now?

1. Don't reply to messages from cyber bullies
2. Do not keep this to yourself! Tell an adult you know and trust!
3. Inform your Internet Service Provider (ISP) or cell phone/pager service provider
4. Inform your local police
5. Do not erase or delete **messages from cyber bullies** – You don't have to read it, but keep it, it is your evidence. You may unfortunately get similar messages again, perhaps from other accounts. The police and your ISP, and/or your telephone company can use these messages to help you. You might notice certain words or phrases that are also used by people you know.

Protect yourself –

If you receive an unsolicited harassing e-mail message from a cyber bully, you can often use your mouse to right-click on the header of the offending message and choose the "Options" section of the menu. This will often reveal greater details about the message. You can then look at the root-domain of the sender. You can then go to do a "**WHOIS**" search with a domain name registration company. If the last two letters of the cyber bully's e-mail address end in .ca this means it is a Canadian domain name and was registered in Canada. If the last letters are something other than .ca, such as .com, .org, .net etc. you can do a "**WHOIS**" search internationally with Internic.com. This Web site has been established to provide the public information regarding Internet domain name registration services and is updated frequently. The "WHOIS" search will often provide information as to who owns the domain name, and their contact information. Share this information with your local police and your telecommunications or Internet service provider.