National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

Language: English ⇕

NetSmartz® Workshop
A PROGRAM OF THE
NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN®

| PARENTS & GUARDIANS | EDUCATORS | LAW ENFORCEMENT | TEENS | NSTEENS | KIDS |

LEARN +
- BLOGGING
- CELL PHONES
- CHILDREN AS VICTIMS
- CYBERBULLYING
- E-MAIL, IM & CHAT ROOMS
- GAMING
- IDENTITY THEFT
- MORE

TEACH +
- EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS
- IMPLEMENTION GUIDE
- SAFETY PLEDGES
- PRESENTATIONS
- TIP SHEETS
- TEACHING MATERIALS

WATCH +
- NETSMARTZKIDS
- NSTEENS
- TEENS TALK BACK
- REAL-LIFE STORIES
- ASK DR. SHARON
- STREAMING PRESENTATIONS

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is just what it sounds like - bullying through Internet applications and technologies such as instant messaging (IM), social networking sites, and cell phones. It can start easily—with a rumor, a photo, or a forwarded message—and just as easily spiral out of control. An embarrassing video posted to a social networking site by someone in Kansas tonight may be watched by someone in Japan tomorrow. Cyberbullying victims may be targeted anywhere, at any time.

Common Forms of Cyberbullying [1]

- **Flaming and Trolling** – sending or posting hostile messages intended to "inflame" the emotions of others

- **Happy-Slapping** – recording someone being harassed or bullied in a way that usually involves physical abuse, then posting the video online for public viewing

- **Identity Theft/Impersonation** – stealing someone's password and/or hijacking their online accounts to send or post incriminating or humiliating pictures, videos, or information

- **Photoshopping** – doctoring digital images so that the main subject is placed in a compromising or embarrassing situation

- **Physical Threats** – sending messages that involve threats to a person's physical safety

- **Rumor Spreading** – spreading gossip through e-mail, text messaging, or social networking sites

Signs Your Child May Be a Victim of Cyberbullying

- Avoids the computer, cell phone, and other technological devices or appears stressed when receiving an e-mail, instant message, or text

- Withdraws from family and friends or acts reluctant to attend school and social events

- Avoids conversations about computer use

- Exhibits signs of low self-esteem including depression and/or fear

- Has declining grades

- Has poor eating or sleeping habits

[1] Hinduja, S., Patchin J. *Bullying Beyond the Schoolyard: Preventing and Responding to Cyberbullying*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press, 2009.

‹ **less**

DID YOU KNOW?

> About one-third of online teens (ages 12-17) have been cyberbullied. Girls are more likely to be targeted.

Lenhart A. Cyberbullying and Online Teens. Pew Internet and American Life Project, 2007.

⁺ Tips

Help protect children from bullying

Bullying is often seen as an unfortunate, but natural part of adolescence. However, pediatrician Dr. Sharon Cooper warns, "Cyberbullying can affect the social, emotional, and physical health of a child."[1] For these

⁺ Discussion Starters

Start a discussion with your child

Use these discussion starters to get an Internet safety conversation going with your children. The more often you talk to them about online safety, the easier it will get, so don't get discouraged if they don't respond immediately!

reasons, it is important that parents and guardians take steps to help their child deal with and respond to cyberbullying.

- Tell your child not to respond to rude e-mails, messages, and comments.

- Save the evidence, such as e-mail and text messages, and take screenshots of comments and images. Also, take note of the date and time when the harassment occurs.

- Contact your Internet service provider (ISP) or cell phone provider. Ask the website administrator or ISP to remove any Web page created to hurt your child.

- If harassment is via **e-mail, social networking sites, IM, and chat rooms**, instruct your child to "block" bullies or delete your child's current account and open a new one.

- If harrassment is via **text and phone messages**, change the phone number and instruct your child to only share the new number with trustworthy people. Also, check out phone features that may allow the number to be blocked.

- Get your child's school involved. Learn the school's policy on cyberbullying and urge administrators to take a stance against all forms of bullying.

- Make a report to www.cybertipline.com, and if you feel something illegal has occurred, inform law enforcement.

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[1] *Blogs, Bulletin Boards, and Bullying*, NetSmartz Workshop, (October 04, 2007).

- Why do you think people cyberbully?

- How does your school deal with cyberbullying?

- Have you ever sent a mean message because you were upset?

- What would you do if someone created a mean, fake profile for you or one of your friends?

- How can you stop yourself from being cyberbullied?

- Who would you talk to if it happened to you?
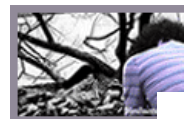
‡ Additional Resources

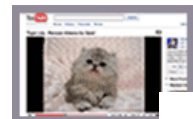* Legend: [A] Activity Card [V] Video [H] Handouts [P] Presentation [I] Issues

Bad Netiquette Stinks

Terrible tEXt

Cyberbullying: You Can't Take it Back

How to Block Someone on YouTube

Internet Safety Basics

Cyberbullying Unplugged

Tips For Tweens

Tips For Teens

Teachable Recipes for Parents