

Cyberbullying

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CYBERBULLYING

Interpretation

Cyberbullying is using technology like cell phones and the Internet, to deliberately and repeatedly bully someone. It can happen to anyone, anytime, anywhere and can leave you feeling unsafe and alone. Cyberbullying affects many adolescents and teens on a daily basis.

Cyberbullying can take many forms:

It can be very damaging to adolescents and teens. It can lead to anxiety, depression, and even suicide. Also, once things are circulated on the Internet, they may never disappear, resurfacing at later times to renew the pain of cyberbullying.

Many cyber bullies think that bullying others online is funny. Cyberbullies may not realize the consequences for themselves of cyberbullying. The things teens post online now may reflect badly on them later when they apply for college or a job. Cyberbullies can lose their cell phone or online accounts for cyberbullying. Also, cyberbullies and their parents may face legal charges for cyberbullying, and if the cyberbullying was sexual in nature, the results can include being registered as a sex offender. Teens may think that if they use a fake name they won't get caught, but there are many ways to track someone who is cyberbullying.

It can include:

sending mean messages or threats to a person's email account or cell phone

spreading rumours online or through texts

posting hurtful or threatening messages on social networking sites or web pages

stealing a person's account information to break into their account and send damaging messages

pretending to be someone else online to hurt another person

taking unflattering pictures of a person and spreading them through cell phones or the Internet

excluding others online

inappropriate image tagging

Remember, treat others as you would like to be treated when socialising online

Despite the potential damage of cyberbullying, it is alarmingly common among adolescents and teens. According to Cyberbullying statistics from the i-SAFE foundation.

How is it different to face-to-face bullying?

While cyberbullying is similar to face-to-face bullying, it also differs in the following ways:

- the bully can have a sense of being anonymous
- it can occur 24/7 and be difficult to escape
- it is invasive and you can be targeted while at home
- it can have a large audience - sent to groups or posted on a public forum which can be permanent.

How do I deal with it?

Don't retaliate or respond, no matter how tempting. Block the person doing the bullying and change your privacy settings. Report it - click the report abuse button. Collect the evidence - keep mobile phone messages and print emails or social networking conversations. Talk to someone you trust, like a family member or friend. Talking to your teachers or parents can make a difference. Your school may have policies in place to deal with bullying and cyberbullying.

What do you do if your friend is being bullied online?

While it can be hard to know if your friends are being cyberbullied, if you see or know about cyberbullying happening to a friend:

- don't forward messages or pictures
- though you may not have started it, you will become part of the cyberbullying cycle
- stand up and speak out - tell a trusted adult
- support your friend and report the bullying.

Reducing cyberbullying statistics:

Talks to teens about cyberbullying - explaining that it is wrong and can have serious consequences. Make a rule that teens may not send mean or damaging messages, even if someone else started it, or suggestive pictures or messages or they will lose their cell phone and computer privileges for a time.

Encourage teens to tell an adult if cyberbullying is occurring. Tell them if they are the victims they will not be punished, and reassure them that being bullied is not their fault.

Teens should keep cyberbullying messages as proof that the cyberbullying is occurring. The teens' parents may want to talk to the parents of the cyberbully, to the bully's Internet or cell phone provider, and/or to the police about the messages, especially if they are threatening or sexual in nature.

Try blocking the person sending the messages. It may be necessary to get a new phone number or email address and to be more cautious about giving out the new number or address.

Cyberbullying Statistics

Cyberbullying statistics refers to Internet bullying. Cyberbullying is a form of teen violence that can do lasting harm to young people. Bullying statistics show that cyberbullying is a serious problem among teens. By being more aware of cyberbullying, teens and adults can help to fight it.

- Over half of adolescents and teens have been bullied online, and about the same number have engaged in cyberbullying.
- More than 1 in 3 young people have experienced cyberthreats online.
- Over 25 percent of adolescents and teens have been bullied repeatedly through their cell phones or the Internet.
- Well over half of young people do not tell their parents when cyberbullying occurs.

	Learners per group Leerders per groep	Reported Aangemeld
Group A Groep A	20	6
Group B Groep B	9	6
Group C Groep C	69	8

<http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/teens/howdoidealwith/cyberbullying.aspx>