



CYBERBULLYING

What Parents Need to Know



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What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is bullying, or mean-spirited behavior, that takes place using electronic technology. Examples include mean text messages, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, “burn pages” on Facebook, embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake online profiles. Attacks often get more frequent over time and use more than one kind of communication. They may be from more than one person.

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How Can I Help Keep My Child Safe?

- Keep your child’s computer in a shared space so you can monitor their activity.
- **If you don’t know how to use the mobile device, website, or computer your child is using, ask them to teach you. There is nothing embarrassing about asking. In fact, they might enjoy teaching you.**
- Know the websites your child visits and their electronic activities. Get familiar with chat rooms, texting, emailing, Facebook, Instagram, MySpace, Foursquare, Twitter, etc.
- Have your child show you their profile page, but realize that they may have more than one identity set up, so they may not be showing you the one their friends see.
- **Ask your child to show you what they are doing to protect their identity online.**
- Update privacy settings. Make sure they don’t share their passwords with friends.
- Ask for your child’s passwords, but tell them you’ll only use them in case of emergency.
- Do an online search with your child’s name to see what information lives online. You may find more information if you include a city or school name.
- **Help your child understand the consequences of sharing personal information, photographs, or videos of themselves.**

Did You Know?

- Cyberbullying may start as early as 4th grade and is common in 6th, 7th and 8th grades.
- **Nearly 50% of teens have been victims of cyberbullying.**
- Messages, photos and videos can be sent anonymously and forwarded to many people very easily.
- Cyberbullying may lead to depression, low self-esteem, health problems, poor grades or suicidal thoughts.
- Someone who is bullied is more likely to turn to alcohol or drug abuse.
- Cyberbullying may be a crime.
- **Most children are too scared to tell their parents about being cyberbullied.**

Take Action

- **Encourage your children to tell you immediately if they, or someone they know, are being bullied.** Explain that you will not take away their computers or cell phones if they confide in you about a problem they are having.
- Tell your children not to respond to threats or bullying comments online. However, **DO NOT DELETE** the messages. Instead, print them out. You will need this to prove exactly what is happening.
- Block the bullier.
- Report the **FIRST** signs of cyberbullying to your child’s school.

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It's 10pm.

Do you know where your child is online?

Learn more about cyberbullying

WellnessEveryDay.org/bullying

Report cyberbullying

Contact your child's school

Made possible through Ventura County Behavioral Health,
a department of the Ventura County Health Care Agency.

Mental Health Services Act • Alcohol & Drug Programs

