

Cyber Bullying Factsheet

“All cruelty springs from weakness.”

(Seneca, 4BC-AD65)

Bullying online can be just as bad, and in some cases worse, than when bullying occurs in the physical community.

What is Cyber Bullying?

Bullies are those people who gain gratification (a sense of happiness) when they have provoked or tormented others. They feel better by making others feel worse. Cyber bullies are those bullies who use the Internet to knock others down. E-mail provides one method of communication for these bullies. Flame mail – mail designed to make another person mad – is used along with hate mail – mail that shows racism, sexism or other prejudices. Bullies also use the Internet through chat rooms and online social-networking sites to make their comments public. Finally, some cyber bullies build Web sites devoted to making a person or persons feel bad.

Think about it: Do you think it's a sign of strength or weakness to use the Internet for bullying? Why?



What to do if you are being Cyber Bullied:

1. Tell someone. No one should put up with bullying! Don't keep it to yourself – there are laws against bullying. Tell a trusted adult about the bullying. This might be a parent, teacher, friend's parent – even an older brother or sister.
2. Don't open or read messages by cyber bullies.
3. Tell your school if it is school related. Schools have a bullying plan in place.
4. Don't erase the messages – they may be needed to take action. Instead, put them in a folder unread or have an adult help you.
5. Stay protected – never agree to meet with a bully, or with anyone, you meet online.
6. If bullied through chat or instant messaging, the bully can often be blocked. Ask a trusted adult to help you.

If someone you know is being bullied online use these guidelines to HELP THEM GET HELP – their life may depend on it.

Prevention Techniques – how to keep from being bullied online:

- Don't give out private information such as passwords and pins. Be careful about where you post other personal information online, such as name, address and phone number. This information can be used in a negative way by bullies.
- Don't exchange pictures or give out e-mail addresses to people you meet on the Internet. Ask permission from parents when it is necessary to give such information.
- Don't send a message when you are angry – it's hard to undo things that are said in anger.
- Delete messages from people you don't know, or from those from people who seem angry or mean.
- When something doesn't seem right, it probably isn't. Get out of the site, chat, etc.

The best defense to keep from being a bully online: Use Netiquette.

Be polite online and others will tend to do the same. If someone does get angry or bullies, ignore them – online bullies want a reaction.

Think about ways to apply e-mail Netiquette to the following:

Subject lines	Hoaxes
Your original messages	Chain letters
Attachments	Spam
Forwarded messages	

Chat room, IM, and Blogging Netiquette

Netiquette use applies to real-time chatting and posting on blogs:

- **Avoid Using ALL CAPS**
It's considered yelling.
- **Decide What Tone the Conversation Has Before Posting**
Don't use offensive language or nicknames. Always avoid making personal attacks and calling names.
- **Don't "Flood" the Chat Room**
Flooding is repeating messages over and over, or filling the screen with gibberish, in order to impede communication in the chat room.
- **Be Nice to Newbies**
Remember your first chats or messages? If someone stumbles into your chat, who is obviously new to this medium, show some patience and help him or her get the hang of it.