



Parent TIP SLIPS

Cyber Bullying

What is Cyber Bullying?

Cyber Bullying is the use of information and communication technologies, such as e-mail, cell phone and pager text messages, instant messaging, personal Web sites and on-line personal polling Web sites, to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, which is intended or perceived to harm others.

Here are a few examples of Cyber Bullying:

- **Exclusion** – Excluding someone from an online group or blocking them from a chat group. Students also use gaming sites to purposely exclude or attack other's characters, so that they can not take part in the game.
- **Impersonation** – Breaking into someone's e-mail or MSN account, posing as that person and sending damaging messages.
- **Denigration** – Sending or posting cruel gossip or rumours about a person to damage their reputation.
- **Misusing** – Using a cell phone to take embarrassing photos and e-mailing to others, or posting on Facebook, Youtube etc.
- **Outing or Trickery** – Revealing someone's secrets or embarrassing information online or tricking someone into revealing secretes while online.
- **Polling sites** – Setting up web-pages so that peers can vote on who is the "dumbest" or "ugliest" student in the school
- **Hate sites** – Individuals create web-pages designed to insult others.
- **Flaming** – Mean or vulgar messages in electronic communications.

Typically, messages are sent in upper case letters

Prevention At Home:

- Talk to your children about responsible Internet use. Emphasize that they are not to give out personal information such as phone numbers, on-line name, e-mail address, or passwords
- Explain that Cyber Bullying is harmful and unacceptable behaviour. Outline your expectations for responsible on-line behaviour and make it clear that there will be consequences for inappropriate behaviour. Consider creating an on-line agreement or contract for computer/technology use.
- Keep your home computer(s) in high traffic areas (ie. kitchen, family room, etc.). It is not advisable for children to have computers in their bedrooms.
- Become computer and on-line savvy.

If a Child Reports They Are Being Cyber Bullied:

- Stay calm and thank them for reporting the incident. Try to keep from over-reacting.
- Ask for copies of texts, websites, messages etc. Inform child to save:
 - E-mails and E-mail address
 - Date and time received
 - Nickname of offending person
 - Name and URL of chat room
- Does the child feel safe coming to school? Try to determine if there are other targets.
- Does the child know the identity of the perpetrator(s)?

Next Steps:

- If necessary, inform school administration/teacher/police
- Contact Internet Service Provider (ISP) and inform them of abuse
- Implement a safety plan, and ways to stay safe on-line

Other Helpful Tips for On-line Safety

- Don't send a message to someone else when you are angry – (**Thinkb4Uclick**)
- Don't open a message from someone you don't know

- Learn Webcam safety
- Investigate Facebook, MySpace, MSN etc. and learn how to use them properly