

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is any cyber communication sent by a minor meant to frighten, embarrass, harass or otherwise target another minor. Cyberbullying is the latest trend in childhood harassment and can include the following on-line activities:

- Sending mean vulgar or threatening messages
- Posting sensitive, private information about another person
- Pretending to be someone else in order to make a person look bad
- Intentionally excluding someone from any on-line group

How Common is Cyberbullying?

Unfortunately, cyberbullying has become very common. About 90% of middle school children, in one poll, have admitted to having their feelings hurt online.

18 % of these students in grades 6-8 have been bullied on-line at least once in the last few months.

Girls are two times as likely as boys to be the victims of these types of hate crimes.

www.surfinsafe.org

How is Cyberbullying Done?

There are many means by which cyberbullying can occur. The following are the most common methods:

- E-mails
- Instant messaging
- Text or digital imaging on cell phones
- Web pages/blogs
- Chat rooms

How is Cyberbullying Different than Other Forms of Bullying?

Bullying appears to be anonymous. This emboldens the bully.

Bullying is more likely to occur on the home computer; so home is no longer a safe refuge

Cyberbullying can occur at anytime of day or night

Messages/Images can be sent instantly to a wide audience

What are the Signs a Child is Being Cyberbullied?

Look out for these key indicators:

- Long hours on the computer
- Fear of going out of the house
- Trouble sleeping/behavioral changes/mood swings
- Lowered self-esteem
- Frequent visits to nurses office at school requesting to come home
- Falling behind school work
- Aggressive behavior
- Secrecy about internet activities



Tips for Dealing with Cyberbullying:

If a child receives a threatening internet message, **do not respond.**

Do not erase the message or image. Save it for evidence.

Consider filing a complaint to the providers of e-mail services, cell-phone companies, and/or web sites with which the messages were sent.

Try to identify the individual doing the cyberbullying.

Contact your school, if the bullying is occurring through your school district's internet.

Contact the police if the bullying involves acts such as

- Threats of violence
- Extortion
- Obscene phone calls
- Stalking like activities
- Child Pornography



What can Parents and Adults do to Prevent Cyberbullying?

Keep your home computer in easy view.

Talk regularly with your child about their on-line activities. Create an atmosphere of trust.

Install parental filtering software and tracking programs on your computer.

Get to know the services your child uses. Know your computer and the internet!

Set reasonable rules and guidelines for computer use at home and outside of the house.

Do not allow your child to have an on-line profile or use chat rooms.

Important Links :

Check out these websites for more information about cyber-bullying:

www.besafeonline.org

www.cyberbullying.ca

www.stopcyberbullying.org

For important contact numbers and more useful safety information, visit the SCMSA websites at

www.scms-a.org

www.surfinsafe.org

Cyberbullying... What Adults can do to **STOP IT** Before it **STARTS!**



Get Surf Serious... Get Surf Smart...
Get Surf Safe!

Stark County
Medical Society Auxilliary

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www.scms-a.org