

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is any bullying that occurs through electronic communications, including email, instant messaging and text messaging, as well as social media (Facebook, Twitter, SnapChat, Instagram, Tumblr, etc.).*1, 2

Cyberbullying has occurred when another person or group distributes harmful, false, embarrassing, or hostile electronic communication to or against another person or group.*2

Why is Cyberbullying an important topic?

Cyberbullying negatively impacts adolescents, with victims often experiencing symptoms of depression, frustration, embarrassment, and anxiety.*3 In addition, instances of Cyberbullying may contribute to feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and suicidal thoughts.*4, 3



Resources

- * <https://cyberbullying.org/>
- * <https://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/index.html>
- * <https://pacerteensagainstbullying.org/experiencing-bullying/cyber-bullying/>
- * **The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline : Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

*1 Duong, J., & Bradshaw, C. (2014). Associations between bullying and engaging in aggressive and suicidal behaviors among sexual minority youth: The moderating role of connectedness. *Journal of School Health*, 84, 636–645.

*2 Ozgur, H. (2015). Exploring the distance education students' cyberbullying, cybervictimization and cyberbullying sensibility levels. *The Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*, 16(4), 3–17.

*4 Dilmaç, B. (2017). The Relationship between Adolescents' Levels of Hopelessness and Cyberbullying: The Role of Values. *Educational Sciences: Theory And Practice*, 17(4), 1119-1133.

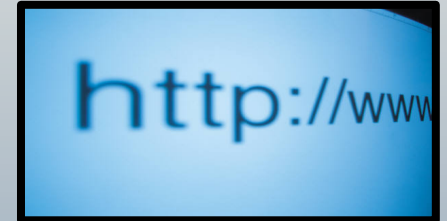
*5 US Department of Health & Human Services. (2014). *The relationship between bullying and suicide: What we know and what it means for schools* [PDF doc.]. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/bullying-suicide-translation-final-a.pdf>

*6 Davis, N., & Schmidt, C. (2016). Cyberbullying and cyber abuse intervention: The three-tiered model for schools. *Journal of Creativity of Mental Health*, 11, 366-77.

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Cyberbullying

Information for Schools & Parents

Cyberbullying Statistics

According to the 2015 Youth Risk Behavioral Survey (YRBS), conducted by the National Center for Disease Control (CDC), **15.5%** of adolescents, ages 12-18, reported victimization from Cyberbullying. Another national survey, the 2015 (SCS), conducted by the (NCVS), revealed that **11.5%** of adolescents reported victimization in Cyberbullying cases.

These numbers may seem insignificant, but not after considering the extent of Cyberbullying effects. In 2014 the CDC reported that **suicide was the 2nd leading cause of death for youth** ages 10-14, and again from ages 15 to 24. In addition, the CDC has discovered supportive **evidence of relationships between bullying and suicide** on multiple levels.*5 In the realm of bullying, Cyberbullying is a convenient, and often unsupervised way for youth to act out aggressively towards one another, putting all parties at further risk of its negative effects.*6



Parental Prevention, Awareness & Intervention

Prevention.

- **Talk to your kids.** Make sure your children feel safe enough to talk to you about their problems. Always try to provide a non-judging ear, unconditional support, and little-to-no criticism at home.
- **Educate.** Teach your children to use the Internet wisely. Teach appropriate *online* behaviors by suggesting they mirror appropriate *offline* behaviors while on the Internet – respect, dignity, resilience, etc.
- **Set boundaries.** Spying on your kids should be avoided. Collaborate with your children early on to set boundaries for their Internet usage. Creating contracts with you children is a great way to ensure that everyone is accountable of the rules.

Awareness.

- **Cyberbullies:** May quickly switch screens or hide their device; Use their device(s) at all hours of the night; Get unusually upset if they can't use device(s); Avoid discussions about what they are doing online; Using multiple online accounts, or an account that is not theirs.

- **Victims:** May unexpectedly stop using their device(s); Appear nervous or jumpy when using device(s); Appear uneasy about being at school; Be angry, depressed, or frustrated after using electronics; Abnormally withdrawn; Avoids discussions about their activities online.

Intervention.

- **Cyberbullies:** Remember that kids make mistakes! Determine the seriousness of the situation, and then move forward with consequences. Going forward, pay greater attention to your child's technology usage, and ensure that responsible choices are made in the future.
- **Victims:** Work together and include your child's perspective when arriving at a solution to improve the situation. Always validate your child's voice. When and if necessary, contact the appropriate sources to resolve the situation (school administrators or teachers; parents of the cyberbully; the police, if physical threats are made).

Adapted from *3 Hinduja, S. & Patchin, J. W. (2018). *Cyberbullying Identification, Prevention, and Response* [PDF doc]. Cyberbullying Research Center(cyberbullying.org).

