

HAVE YOU OR A FRIEND BEEN CYBER-BULLIED? HERE'S HOW TO GET HELP!

What is cyber-bullying?

Cyber-bullying is when people repeatedly make threats, spread rumors, harass others, or intentionally exclude others using the internet or technological devices such as cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyber-bullying usually takes place through text, e-mail, internet messaging, and social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr.

What can you do if you or a friend has been cyber-bullied?

1. First of all, remember that any kind of bullying or harassment is wrong and you are not to blame for what has happened.
2. As a way of protecting yourself, do not respond to or forward mean or threatening messages from the person who is bullying you.
3. Tell an adult whom you trust (parent, grandparent, school counselor, teacher) as soon as you can and keep talking about it until one of these adults offers to take action and help you.
4. Save and print all harassing or threatening messages so that you can show these messages to your parents, your school principal, or police officers if necessary.
5. Block the person who is bullying you on websites such as Facebook.
6. Do not retaliate or send mean or threatening messages back to the person who is bullying you. It makes sense to be upset or angry when you are bullied or mistreated, but you could get yourself into trouble by retaliating.
7. On social media sites such as Facebook, you can report bullying and inappropriate behavior to their Help Center through the "Report a Problem/Report Abuse" feature.
8. It can be scary and challenging to report bullying, but don't ignore what is happening. You deserve help and support, and sometimes it is possible to make an anonymous report.

Here are tips for preventing cyber-bullying and for using technology in safe and fun ways:

1. Do **NOT** share your phone or internet passwords with friends or peers.
2. When it comes to websites such as Facebook, you should set strict security settings so that only close friends and family members can view your profile, pictures, and postings.
3. Think carefully before you post pictures or messages online and **do not** post pictures or messages that could hurt or embarrass you, your friends, or classmates. It is very difficult to remove something from cyberspace after putting it out there, especially since other people can save, print, or forward what you have posted.
4. If someone posts something or sends you a message that upsets you, tell your parent, grandparent, or other adult whom you trust. Don't feel like you have to handle this alone.

If you would like to learn more about cyber-bullying or would like to obtain help for yourself or a friend who has been cyber-bullied, please talk to one of your parents or to a school counselor.