

TIPS TO PREVENT AND STOP CYBERBULLYING

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

1. Keep the computer in a common area of the home. Do not allow it in your children's bedrooms. Monitor their online usage.
2. Learn how various social networking websites work. Become familiar with Facebook, Snapchat, and Twitter. Ask your children if they will show you their profile pages.
3. Talk regularly and specifically with your children about online issues. Let them know they can come to you for help if anything is inappropriate, upsetting, or dangerous.
4. Build trust with your children. Set time limits, explain your reasons for them, and discuss rules for online safety and Internet use. Ask your children to contribute to establishing the rules; then they'll be more inclined to follow them.
5. Tell your children not to respond to any cyberbullying threats or comments online. However, do not delete any of the messages. Instead, print out all the messages, including the e-mail addresses or online screen names of the cyberbully. You will need the messages to verify and prove there is cyberbullying.
6. Don't overreact by blaming your children. If they are being bullied, be supportive and understanding. Find out how long the [bullying](#) has been going on and ensure that you'll work together to find a solution. Let your children know they are not to blame for being bullied.
7. Don't underreact by telling your children to "shrug it off" or just deal with the bullying. The emotional pain of being bullied is very real and can have long-lasting effects. Don't tease them about it or respond with a "kids will be kids" attitude.
8. Don't threaten to take away your children's computers if they come to you with a problem. This only forces kids to be more secretive.
9. Talk to your school's guidance counselors so they can keep an eye out for bullying during the school day.
10. If there are threats of physical violence or the bullying continues to escalate, get law enforcement involved.

WHAT CAN KIDS DO?

1. Don't respond to any online or text messages sent by cyberbullies.
2. Don't be an accomplice by forwarding any of the messages to other kids.
3. Save and print out all the messages as proof and evidence of cyberbullying.
4. If you are being bullied, tell an adult immediately to get help solving the problem.

(Reproduced from www.parenting.com - *18 Tips to Stop Cyberbullying*)

For More Information:

Crime Victim Assistance Center: www.eastlandcrisis.org or call: 254-629-3223

Stop Bullying: www.stopbullying.gov/ STRYTE: www.safeyouth.gov

What Every Parent Should Know About:

Cyberbullying

WHAT IS CYBERBULLYING?

Sending mean messages or threats to a person's email account or cell phone

Spreading rumors online or through texts

Posting hurtful or threatening messages on social networking sites or web pages

Stealing a person's account information to break into their account and send damaging messages

Pretending to be someone else online to hurt another person

Taking unflattering pictures of a person and spreading them through cell phones or the Internet

Sexting, or circulating sexually suggestive pictures or messages about a person

According to the Cyberbullying Research Center there are several red flags concerning cyberbullying, including:

WARNING SIGNS OF VICTIMIZATION

Unexpectedly stops using the computer

Appears nervous or jumpy when an Instant Message, text message, or email appears

Appears to be angry, depressed, or frustrated using the computer

Avoids discussions about what they are doing on the computer

Becomes abnormally withdrawn from usual friends and family members

Complains of being bullied off line as well

Withdraws from social activities or groups previously interested in

Declining grades or fear of school

Experiences changes in appetite or sleep pattern

Over half of adolescents and teens have been bullied online, and about the same number have engaged in cyber bullying.

More than 1 in 3 young people have experienced cyberthreats online.

Over 25 percent of adolescents and teens have been bullied repeatedly through their cell phones or the Internet.

Well over half of young people do not tell their parents when cyber bullying occurs

