



ICAC Internet Crimes Against Children
Task Force Program

#StartTheConversation Cyberbullying

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is defined as willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices. Youth may target appearance, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status of the family, religion, disability, and more. Roughly 37% of middle and high school aged students report being victims, while 15% admit to cyberbullying others.

Potential Effects:

- Low self-esteem
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Family and social problems
- Academic difficulties
- Skipping school
- Delinquency
- School violence
- Suicidal ideation or attempts

Signs My Child May Be the Victim of Cyberbullying:

- Shy and withdrawn
- Moody, agitated, anxious
- Acts more aggressively towards others
- Doesn't want to go to school/drop in grades
- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Attempts self-harm
- Change in friend group or isolation
- Stops using digital devices

Signs My Child May Be Bullying Others:

- Stops using computer or phone when someone comes near
- Looks nervous or jumpy when online
- Secretive about online activity
- Spends a lot of time on digital devices
- Becomes angry when internet privileges are taken away

What Can I Do If My Child Is Cyberbullied?

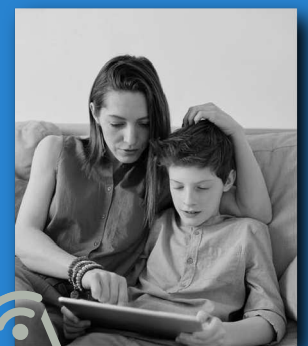
Supportive parenting can go a long way toward minimizing the impact of cyberbullying. Remember that taking the device, games, or app privileges away will likely feel punitive, and may result in the child not turning to you for help in other possible situations that may arise. More importantly, refrain from retaliation and hostility, as this can intensify the situation and further upset your child. Talk with your kids, help them think through the situation, how they feel about it, and work toward a solution together. It's important to involve your child in the process of problem-solving, to give them a sense of agency and autonomy, which can help build resilience. Save evidence, should you need to involve law enforcement. Unfollow/unfriend and block the bully. Review the community guidelines (or rights and responsibilities) information, in order to appropriately report to the site. Learn how to adjust settings to control who can contact your child. If cyberbullying involves threats of violence, stalking, the sending or requesting of explicit messages or photos, report to your local law enforcement.



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#Start the Conversation: Tips For Talking to Your Child About Their Online Engagement

- 1 Show interest in learning about their favorite **apps and games**. Know the **functions, rules, and age restrictions**!
- 2 Ask questions about their **friends and followers**. Emphasize the difference between true friends and online users!
- 3 Ask what they do when an **unknown user** tries to befriend or message them. Learn how to **block and report** users together.
- 4 Ask questions about their **posts**. Ask how they decide which information and photos are **appropriate and safe** to post. Encourage **positive digital citizenship**!
- 5 Remind children and teens that the internet is a permanent public platform, where their choices may impact their future. Encourage a **positive digital footprint** and discuss how to achieve it safely and effectively.
- 6 Talk about **potential risks, predatory red flags** and the **importance of privacy**. Encourage the use of **privacy settings** and keeping all online **accounts private**.
- 7 Discuss **screen-time limits** and **family technology rules** with your children. Allow them to be a part of the process of determining rules and restrictions to encourage **participation, self-discipline, and leadership skills**.



To create a Family Media Plan, use this tool created by the **American Academy of Pediatrics**:

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx>