

Cyberbullying Fact Sheet 1

Cyberbullying can be described as any harassment, insults and humiliation that occurs through the electronic mediums such as email, mobile phones, social networking sites, instant messaging programs, chat rooms, web-sites and through the playing of online games.

Forms of Cyberbullying can include:-

- Harassing and threatening messages
- Sending nasty SMS, IM's pictures or prank phone calls
- Using person's screen name or password to pretend to be them
- Forwarding others' private emails, messages, pictures or videos
- Posting mean or nasty comments or pictures
- Sending sexually explicit images – 'sexting'
- Intentionally excluding others from an online group

What can I do if my child is being cyber bullied?

- Do not be angry with your child – remember that they are the victim and it is someone else doing the wrong thing
- Praise them for coming to you – this is a big step as most children are frightened to tell a parent about cyberbullying
- Save and store the emails, chat logs or SMS's in case of Police investigation
- Help your child to block and delete the bully from all contact lists
- Do not respond to nasty emails, chats, SMS or comments – this is what the bully wants so ignore them. (They will need your help to do this)
- Use the 'report abuse' button which all websites/applications have. Tell them the problems you are having and they are obligated to investigate.
- Have some 'down time' without computer or mobile (do not do this as punishment, rather as some peaceful time where they are not being bothered)
- If unwanted contact continues, consider deleting email, msn, hotmail etc and start a new account. Only give your new details to a small list of trusted friends.
- Get a new phone number if being harassed on your phone. Report the problem to your phone company and insist on a new number for free.
- Inform your child's school. It is important that they know what is going on so that they can monitor any issues at school.
- If ongoing report to Police. Each state has laws that prohibit online bullying and stalking. You don't have to put up with it.