

CYBERBULLYING

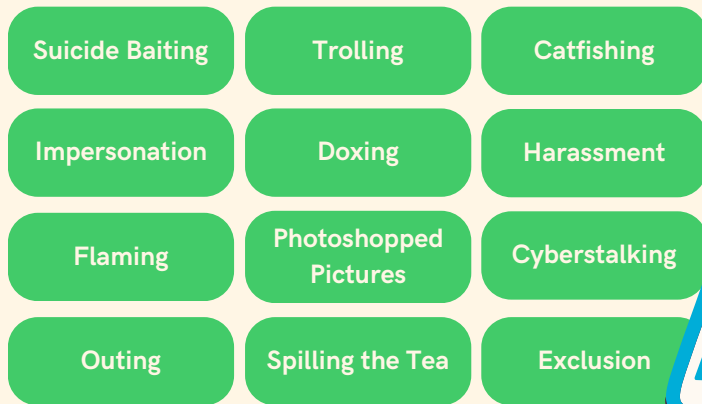
Children, Tweens, and Teens

Cyberbullying is the use of digital devices (cell phones, gaming consoles, computers, or tablets) to send, post, or share threatening, mean, intentionally embarrassing, or false information to someone either privately (one-to-one through text or messaging app) or publicly (social media, forums, gaming) online.

Key elements to consider

- **Intention:** The behavior is deliberate, not by accident
- **Impact:** The victim is harmed (afraid to go to school, depressed, anxious, fearful, etc.)
- **Repeated:** Bullying often occurs more than once, can be a single significant act, or combined with in-person bullying
- **Power Imbalance:** The perpetrator has more followers or is more popular, victim unable to reach into the screen and make it stop, or anonymity (the victim cannot identify the perpetrator)

Types of Cyberbullying



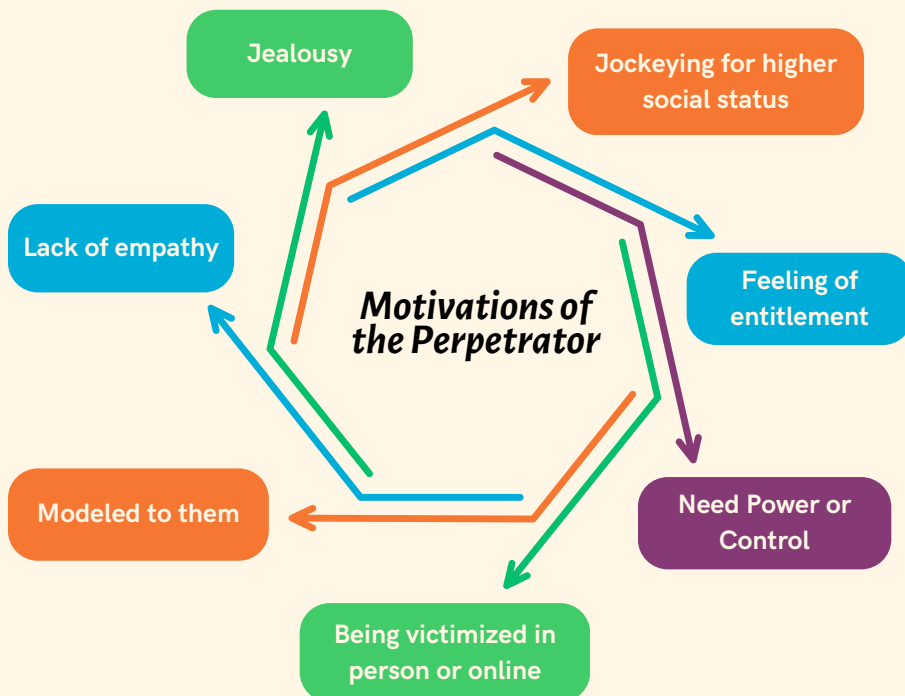
Unique Characteristics

- Public
- Permanent
- Persistent (24/7)
- Easily spread
- Cyber-mob
- Frequently spread from one-platform to another
- Hard to recognize

** Most states have laws requiring schools to respond to cyberbullying and may also have criminal statutes that apply when cyberbullying and harassment intersect.*

Impact on the Victim

- **Psychological:** Increased emotional distress, depression, anxiety, PTSD, low self-esteem, suicidal ideation and attempts, indulging in harmful habits, substance use (illegal and prescription drugs, alcohol, smoking or vaping)
- **Physical:** Sleeping disturbance, eating disorders, stress-induced ailments
- **Academic:** Lower attendance, lack of attention, drop in grades, lack of interest in EC activities, change in friendships



PREVENTION & MITIGATION



Ongoing Discussions

- Have open, intentional and frequent conversations about cyberbullying and its potential impact on the victim, perpetrator, and bystander.
- Role-play on how to get themselves or others out of cyberbullying situations.
- Help your child develop effective coping strategies to deal with stressful situations.
- Let your child know they can always come talk to you. You will help them figure it out.

Conversation Starters

- **What was the funniest thing you saw online today? What was the worst thing?**
- **Have you witnessed cyberbullying with friends or classmates?**
- **What is our responsibility to help someone who is being cyberbullied?**
- **What is the difference between snitching and helping someone in need?**
- **What are some ways you can report or tell a safe adult?**

Nearly half (46%) of US teens aged 13-17 reported that they experienced cyberbullying

Pew Research Center, 2022

Boundaries & Limits

- Set the expectation that all devices stay out of the bedroom overnight. Always.
- Create a Technology Contract with your child before they get their first device and update it as your child matures.
- Limit screen time and number of platforms the child uses.
- Be a role model and have regular times you're fully present with family without your phone.

Parental Supervision

- Monitor your child's devices in partnership with your child.
- Research the apps they have on the App Store.
- Block downloads of new apps.

ACTION STEPS IF YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED

- 1 **Stay calm and do not dismiss it as "drama". Let your child know this is very common and you will help them get through this situation. Ask questions about how it started, who is involved, and how long it has been going on. Work with your child on how to make it stop.**
- 2 **Take screenshots of the cyberbullying or use a second phone to take pictures. Do not delete anything.**
- 3 **Block and report to the platform and keep the documentation of the communications.**
- 4 **Report to your school and work peaceably with your school administration to end the abuse.**
- 5 **Report to law enforcement if you feel a crime has been committed.**
- 6 **Seek advice from your pediatrician or children's mental health facility if your child is not coping well.**



"Preventing and mitigating cyberbullying is a community issue and it takes parents, young people, legislators, law enforcement, and schools working together to keep kids safe. The one stakeholder that has yet to come forward to find a solution are the social media companies."

— Maurine Molak

SCAN THE QR CODE TO TELL CONGRESS TO PASS THE KIDS ONLINE SAFETY ACT.

