

How you can prevent **Cyberbullying**

What School Staff Can Do

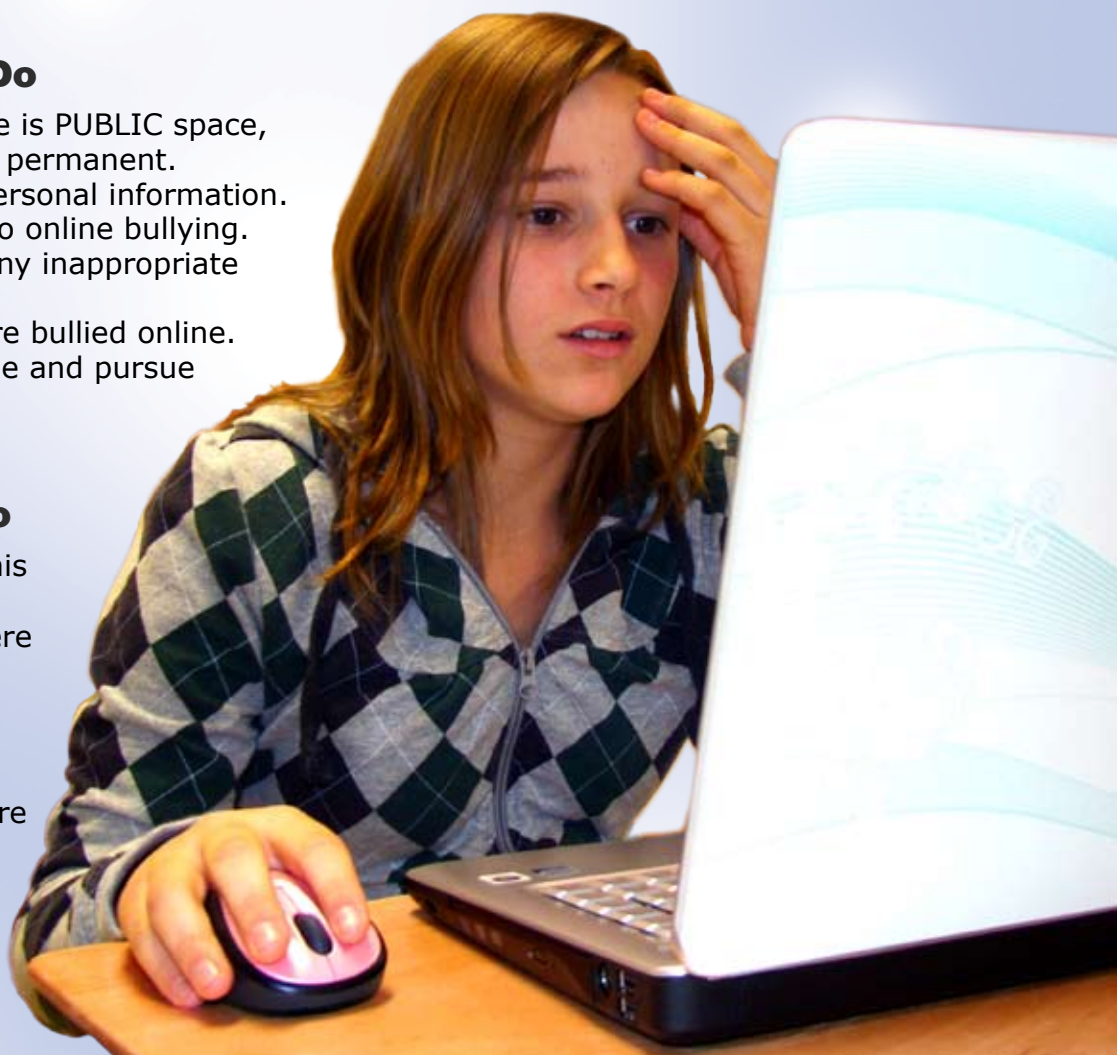
- Discuss Internet implications and online safety with students.
- Keep computers in open areas where the screens can be easily seen.
- Watch for students who quickly change screens when you walk by.
- Review history files of sites visited by students.
- Assign each student a personal ID number for Internet access.
- Ensure your school's anti-bullying policies refer to text messaging and online bullying.
- Make sure parents know who to contact at the school to discuss or report cyberbullying.

What Students Can Do

- Be aware that cyberspace is PUBLIC space, and online messages are permanent.
- Protect passwords and personal information.
- Do not respond directly to online bullying.
- Keep records—print off any inappropriate messages you receive.
- Talk to someone if you are bullied online.
- TAKE A BREAK! Get offline and pursue other interests.

What Parents Can Do

- Talk to your child about his or her Internet use.
- Place your computer where all family members have access.
- Supervise and monitor computer use.
- Install monitoring software if necessary.
- Encourage your child to become involved in clubs, sports, or other offline activities.



Cyberbullying isn't just wrong, it's a crime.

Under the Criminal Code of Canada, it is a crime to:

- **Communicate repeatedly with someone if your communication causes them to fear for their own safety or the safety of others.**
- **Publish a "defamatory libel" - writing something that is designed to insult a person or likely to injure a person's reputation by exposing them to hatred, contempt or ridicule.**

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Cyberbullying

Statistics and Information

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is covert, psychological bullying, conveyed through electronic mediums. E-mail, text messages, chat rooms, online discussion boards and social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace can all be used by cyberbullies.



What research has shown

- 99% of teens use the Internet regularly.
- One in every 17 children is threatened on the Internet.
- One in four youth, aged 11 to 19, is threatened via the Internet or cell phone
(Leishman, 2002; Snider, 2004; Mitchell, 2004)

In a study involving 177 Calgary middle school students:

- 23% were bullied by e-mail, 35% in chat rooms, 41% by text messaging.
- 32% were bullied by known classmates, 11% by people outside the school.
- 41% did not know the identity of the perpetrators.

(Li, 2005)

The 2005 Young Canadians in a Wired World Phase II Research Project, conducted by the Media Awareness Network, involved more than 5,200 youth from grades 4 to 11. This study showed that the Internet offers young people a place where they feel anonymous. In this environment, a majority (59%) say they have assumed a different identity. Of those students, 17% say they pretended to be someone else so they "can act mean to people and not get into trouble."



How to Address Cyberbullying

- Avoid the websites where bullying has occurred.
- File a complaint with the offending website or cell phone network.
- Save evidence of cyberbullying by printing e-mails or screen shots, or saving text messages.
- If the cyberbullying persists or if threatening messages are sent, contact the police—some messages can be traced through the nine-digit ISP (Internet service provider) number attached to the sender's computer.

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To learn more about cyberbullying or to book the workshop *Addressing Bullying Behaviour: Focus on Cyberbullying*, contact the Society for Safe and Caring Schools & Communities (SACSC) at 780-447-9487, 1-800-232-7208, or office@sacsc.ca. Please visit www.sacsc.ca for more information about SACSC programming and resources.

