



Fact sheet

CYBERBULLYING

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Cyberbullying is the repeated use of the internet, mobile phones and other technologies to bully, intimidate and humiliate others. It differs from other bullying because it often continues outside of school and school hours. It can be 24/7 and sometimes you may not know who is behind it.

What does cyberbullying look like?

Cyberbullying might occur over the internet, in instant messaging (IM), social networking sites, blogs or through online gaming. It can also occur over the phone, by SMS or MMS, or voice and video calls.

Why do people cyberbully?

There are a number of reasons why people might cyberbully others, including:

- think it's amusing
- don't like the person
- don't consider it to be a big deal, "it's just words"
- don't believe there are any consequences
- think they can be anonymous

None of these reasons, or any others, can justify cyberbullying.

What are the effects of cyberbullying?

Things that happen on the internet or mobile phones can have offline consequences. Some of the effects of cyberbullying are:

- anger
- embarrassment
- fear
- poor performance at school
- loss of confidence and self-esteem
- revenge cyberbullying or retaliation
- self-harm, even suicide

Cyberbullying hurts people. It can ruin lives. There could even be legal consequences for harassing or threatening someone online.

Most importantly, know where you can go for help! Speak to an adult you trust if something makes you feel uncomfortable online or on a mobile phone. You can also contact:

- Reach Out: www.reachout.com.au
- Bullying. No Way!: www.bullyingnoway.com.au
- Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
- Youth Beyond Blue: www.youthbeyondblue.com
- The website, application or phone carrier that you were using at the time

What can you do about cyberbullying?

Don't start it! Cyberbullying is never acceptable.

Think before you post something mean, or send someone a hurtful message.

Don't be a part of it! As a bystander, you can do something to stop cyberbullying. If someone tries to get you involved in cyberbullying, say NO.

Don't let it get out of control! You need to tell someone if you are being cyberbullied so that they can help you to make it stop.

How can you stay in control?

- learn how to block cyberbullying communications
- find out your school's policy on cyberbullying
- research what policies your Internet Service Provider (ISP) and any online sites and applications you are using have on cyberbullying
- tell someone!

How can you help your friends?

- encourage them to speak to a trusted adult if they are being cyberbullied
- don't forward or pass on any cyberbullying materials such as links to humiliating videos or gossip texts
- create a positive culture in your school and community which doesn't tolerate bullying in any form

