



May 2021

## WORDS HURT AND DESTROY CYBERBULLYING IS STILL BULLYING!

When harassment, belittling or threatening happen on the Internet, this is known as that is cyberbullying. It is becoming more common as we all spend significantly more time online, on social media and discussion forums. With that in mind, it is necessary to know how to deal with such situations when you come across them and how to support your child.

### What is cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is identified as repeated, intentionally harming behavior on the Internet and in other digital spaces, particularly on social media sites and through texting.

### What are the forms of cyberbullying?

Harmful bullying behavior can include the spread of

- rumors, name calling, belittling, or mocking comments
- sexual remarks,
- victims' personal information,
- threats or pejorative labels (i.e. hate speech).

### How is cyberbullying different from regular bullying?

Cyberbullying is different from classic bullying and abuse in a way that a) the attacker can stay anonymous, b) the attack is visible to a much wider audience and c) stopping such an attack is much harder and almost impossible.

### Consequences to the victim's mental health.

Some of the first symptoms of a teenager who is a victim of cyberbullying will likely manifest through a decrease in his/her performance at school or skipping school all together. That is accompanied by frustration, anger, moodiness, depression, anxiety, lower self-esteem, and increased suicidal thoughts.

These symptoms are no different from those caused by regular bullying or abuse, however cyberbullying is much harder to ignore as it follows the child home on his/her phone and via the Internet.

### How to prevent cyberbullying?

Preventive measures can be grouped as following:

#### 1. Preventive actions

- Periodically checking the setting modes on the child's social media
- Allowing your child to only friend people online that he/she knows in the real world,
- Teaching your child how to delete comments and block aggressive people,
- Engaging your child in non-online activities so they have a safe space and get a break from the online world

#### 2. Educational steps

- addressed to parents:
  - learn what cyberbullying is and how to spot it,
  - prepare strategies on how to deal with possible cyberbullying,
  - engage your child in building a social network outside the online world so that he/she could take a break in a safe space,
  - decrease the time spent online all together to reduce the possibility of cyberbullying.

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## PARENTS REMAIN OBLIVIOUS

Source: [Teens on the Web Scene](#)

**25%** of teens claimed to be targets of cyberbullying

**2/3** of all teens have witnessed cruel behavior online

**10%** of parents are aware their teens are targets of cyberbullying

b) addressed to children:

- avoid posting pictures or videos on the Internet as any material once posted can be shared without the child's consent and be used to harass or mock,
- avoid online contact attempts from anyone they don't know in the real world as it is crucial to be extremely guarded online, even though one can meet a lot of interesting and fun people on the Internet,
- explain that attacks by the child on anyone else opens up a possibility for it to come back at him/her as revenge,
- learn what cyberbullying is and the long-lasting harm it can cause the victim.

When a teenager is cyberbullied, he/she feels all alone against the world and extremely helpless, but there are two important things a parent can do to help: rebuilding his/her self-confidence and regaining control over his/her situation. It is worth creating a wide support circle in the real world that includes anyone significant to the teenager and turn to professionals for help.

*"(...) violence feeds on silence and sometimes kills!"*

*- Anonymous*

## NEGATIVE EMOTIONS – WHEN THE CHILD NEEDS HELP

Some children are born more impatient, intolerant and aggressive when frustrated than others. Such behaviors are acceptable for a 2-year-old or a preschooler from time to time, however it is important to observe if their frequency diminishes with age and how your child is coping with negative emotions.

Below are a few signs that your child may need help and a refreshment course in coping with negative emotions:

- difficulty in building relationships – frequent anger outburst, especially towards siblings and close friends are clear symptoms of needing to learn how to build relationships and how to have self-control,
- disrupting family life – when family members are constantly walking on eggshells or forego family outings in public places due to the child's uncontrollable anger outburst, it is a sign or rather a call for help that cannot be ignored and needs an in-depth look so to assess if the disruptive behavior is only an anger management issue,
- aggression: when a child has a short fuse and uses anger outbursts to achieve desired results they want, it is a clear sign he/she needs to re-learn problem solving and conflict management skills,
- behavior not adequate to age: though a 2-year-old can have a "melt down" in the middle of the store, an 8-year-old is expected to not behave that way as he/she should be able to cope with such strong emotions, However, if the "melt downs" are still occurring, it is time to revisit the lesson on building self-control,
- constant frustration: with age a child naturally copes better and better with obstacles and difficulties, hence there should be less frustration, helplessness, and anger. However, if these do not diminish, it is a clear sign that they still need help in building frustration resistance.

We learn, re-learn, and repeat the lessons again on how to deal with anger and negative emotions as there is not straight line in a learning curve. Children need to be observed and reminded about the coping techniques as anger management is a tool for life. How are you dealing with negative emotions and anger? Children are watching us adults very closely.

***Don't wait, call now!*** If You or Your child are cyberbullied, a specialist will help you create an effective plan to stop the abuse. ***We are here to support You!***