

CYBERBULLYING: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

No one deserves to be bullied whether it happens in person or online. Cyberbullying is less common than other kinds of bullying, but it's just as serious.

What is cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is a kind of bullying that happens over the internet, cell phone or another electronic device or technology. It can have an even bigger impact than bullying that's done in person because a message, photo, or video can be shared with hundreds or thousands of people online and may be anonymous.

Cyberbullying includes:

- receiving a crude, insulting or threatening message
- having a private email or text message forwarded to other people without your permission
- having inappropriate or private information or photos posted without your permission
- having rumors about you spread online

Where does cyberbullying happen?

People can be cyberbullied through:

- emails
- text messages
- instant messages on programs like AIM or Yahoo Messenger
- chat rooms
- blogs
- social networking sites like MySpace or Facebook
- web pages

What are the most common forms of cyberbullying?

Making private information public is the most common form of cyberbullying. For example, when someone takes a private email, instant message or text message and forwards it to someone else or posts it online.

It's simple to copy and send digital content so this kind of bullying has become quite easy to do. It also makes bullies feel more powerful because they can remain anonymous. But it can make the person who is targeted feel alone, angry, scared and powerless. And because it can happen anywhere and at any time, you have no safety from the bully, even in your own home.



What can you do if you are being cyberbullied?

Keep a record. If you're being threatened, keep track of what happened and the date. Print copies of what has been sent. You might need those later to find out who has sent you the messages and to do something about it.

Tell someone you trust about what's happening.

If messages are threatening or serious, you must tell an adult. You might not want to tell your parents that you're being cyberbullied because you don't want them to take away your computer or internet time. But it's really important to tell them (or someone you trust) if the bullying continues or if it gets threatening.

Don't reply to bullying messages. That will give the bully the attention that he or she wants. It'll make the bullying worse.

Change your email address/cell phone number. Get new contact numbers and only give them to close friends.

Keep your usernames and passwords secret.

This will stop people from getting hold of your private information.

Report it to your internet or cell phone service provider. There may be a way to block the messages you're receiving.

Remember: *No one deserves to be bullied. Doing nothing says you think it's okay to bully another person.*

To learn more about issues facing NYC teens and how to deal with them visit:

www.nyc.gov/teen