



Anti-Cyber Bullying Code

Being sent an abusive or threatening text message, or seeing nasty comments about yourself on a website, can be really upsetting. This code gives you seven important tips to protect yourself and your friends from getting caught up in cyberbullying, and advice on to how to report it when it does happen.

Always respect others

Remember that when you send a message to someone, you cannot see the impact that your words or images may have on the other person. That is why it is important to always show respect to people and be careful what you say online or what images you send. What you think is a joke may really hurt someone else. If you stand by and let this happen to somebody else you are part of the problem! Always ask permission before you take a photo of someone.

If you receive a rude or nasty message or picture about someone else, do not forward it. You could be assisting a bully and even be accused of cyberbullying yourself. You could also be breaking the law.

Think before you send

It is important to think before you send any images or text about yourself or someone else by email or mobile phone, or before you post information on a website. Remember that what you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever. Do you really want your teacher or future employer to see that photo? And you may be committing a criminal offence.

Treat your password like your toothbrush

Don't let anyone know your passwords. It is a good idea to change them on a regular basis. Choosing hard-to-guess passwords with symbols or numbers will help stop people hacking into your account and pretending to be you. Remember to only give your mobile number or personal website address to trusted friends.

Block the Bully

Most responsible websites and services allow you to block or report someone who is behaving badly. Make use of these features, they are there for a reason!

Don't retaliate or reply

Replying to bullying messages, particularly in anger, is just what the bully wants.

Save the evidence

Learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations. These will help you demonstrate to others what is happening and can be used by your school, internet service provider, mobile phone company, or even the police to investigate the cyberbullying.

Make sure you tell

You have a right not to be harassed and bullied online. There are people that can help.

- **Tell an adult you trust** who can help you to report it to the right place, or call a helpline like ChildLine on 0800 1111 in confidence.
- **Tell the provider of the service** you have been bullied on (e.g. your mobile-phone operator or social-network provider). Check their websites to see where to report.
- **Tell your school.** Staff at St. Julie's can support you and can suggest ways you can combat this type of bullying
- **Finally, don't just stand there. If you see cyberbullying going on, support the victim and report the bullying. How would you feel if no one stood up for you?**

Cyber-Bullying

Advice for parents & carers



Today's children and young people have grown up in a world that is very different from that of most adults. Many young people experience the internet and mobile phones as a positive, productive and creative part of their activities and development of their identities; always on and always there. Above all, information communication technologies support social activity that allows young people to feel connected to their peers.

Unfortunately, technologies are also being used negatively. When children are the target of bullying via mobile phones or the internet, they can feel alone and very misunderstood. They may not be able to identify that what is happening to them is a form of bullying, or be confident that the adults around them will understand it that way either. Previously safe and enjoyable environments and activities can become threatening and a source of anxiety.

As mobile phone and internet use become increasingly common, so has the misuse of this technology to bully. Current research in this area indicates that cyberbullying is a feature of many young people's lives. One study carried out for the Anti-Bullying Alliance found that 22% of young people reported being the target of cyberbullying.

What's different about cyberbullying?

Bullying is not new, but some features of cyberbullying are different from other forms of bullying:

1. 24/7 and the invasion of home/ personal space. Cyberbullying can take place at any time and can intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe or personal.
2. The audience can be very large and reached rapidly. The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages means the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying. Electronically forwarded content is hard to control, and the worry of content resurfacing can make it difficult for targets to move on.
3. People who cyberbully may attempt to remain anonymous. This can be extremely distressing for those being bullied. The person cyberbullying may never be in the same physical space as their target.
4. The profile of the bully and target. Cyberbullying can take place both between peers and across generations; teachers have also been targets. Age or size are not important. Bystanders can also become accessories to the bullying; for example, by passing on a humiliating image.
5. Some instances of cyberbullying are known to be unintentional. It can be the result of not thinking (something sent as a joke may be deeply upsetting or offensive to the recipient)

or a lack of awareness of the consequences - for example saying something negative online about another pupil, or friend that they don't expect to be forwarded or viewed outside their immediate group.

6. Many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as evidence. This is one of the reasons why it's important to know how to respond!

Key Advice for Parents and Carers

- **Be aware**, your child may as likely cyberbully as be a target of cyberbullying.
- **Be alert** to your child seeming upset after using the internet or their mobile phone. This might involve subtle comments or changes in relationships with friends. They might be unwilling to talk or be secretive about their online activities and mobile phone use.
- **Talk with your children** and understand the ways in which they are using the internet and their mobile phone. See the seven key messages for children in our Anti Cyberbullying code to get you started.
- **Use the tools** on the service and turn on in-built internet safety features.
- **Remind your child** not to retaliate.
- **Keep the evidence** of offending emails, text messages or online conversations.
- **Report cyberbullying**: Contact the service provider.
- **If the cyberbullying is serious** and a potential criminal offence has been committed, you should consider contacting the police.