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TIPS for youngsters and parents
Sharing is caring - APP



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Youngster

What to do when you are being bullied

- Don't respond

The first step is to ignore the malicious person. Cyberbullies love the attention they get, and the more you react the more they will return to bother you.

If someone's sending you hurtful email texts or posting insulting or hateful things on your blog, use any of the tools at your disposal to delete, ban, or report them.

Responding to cyberbullying isn't productive. Don't try to initiate a meaningful or constructive dialogue with cyberbullies, as the mere act of engaging them in a conversation will invite more activity from them.

It's a natural response to want to defend yourself and set things straight, but in this particular case, it's best to disregard their hurtful comments and be unresponsive to them so that they will be bored and move on.

- Know that your cyberbully just wants attention

Maybe you won't see the immediate, practical uses, but it's always useful to know more about the problems you face.

In general, bullies thrive in the attention they get from bothering people. They have made it their speciality to test people's patience or to create conflict between people who would otherwise have no issues with each other.

That's why it's useless to argue with a cyberbully: it's like trying to have a grown-up discussion with a 2-year-old child throwing a tantrum to get attention. They're not interested in your opinion, all they want is attention.

In other words, by knowing how they act and what their objectives are, you'll be in a better position to arm yourself.

- Keep evidence of the cyberbullying

In most cases, cyberbullies will get bored if no one is reacting to them and will move on. Sometimes, however, they will take things to a new level and continue being abusive, even if they're banned or blocked.

If things get out of hand and the bully doesn't go away, keep all abusive emails, comments, and cell phone text messages in a folder—complete with dates and times—so that if you or the authorities find out the identity of the bully, you have proof of their shameful behaviour.



Of course, it's very rare to find the identity of a cyberbully, but you never know, it's happened before!

- Get help

If you ever feel cyberbullying is getting way out of hand, you can—and should—talk to an adult and get help from someone you trust (for example, a parent, teachers or even school counselors!).

Think about it: even mature and experienced adults need help handling bullies!

On the Internet, you never know who you're dealing with; it could be a disgruntled kid from your school trying to get you angry or it could be a deranged and/or dangerous individual.

In any case, better be safe than sorry!

As you can see, bullying incidents don't have to be worse than they are. There are many ways to deal with the problem before it gets out of hand or before your self-esteem takes a hit (*What Should You Do If You Are Being Cyberbullied?*, s. f.).

Warning signs for Cyberbullying

- Uneasy, nervous or scared about going to school or outside.

This is a major warning sign that your child is uncomfortable in their school environment or being around their classmates. Some other signs to look out for are if your child continuously asks you if they can skip school by staying home or if they make calls asking to come home early during the school day.

- Nervous or jumpy when texting or using social media.

Does your child become extremely anxious about their phone, tablet or laptop, especially while you're in view of the device? Keeping devices in commonly used areas is an easy way to help maintain a watchful eye.

- Upset or frustrated after going online or gaming.

Have you ever witnessed your child get so angry at what's happening on screen that they slam their device shut or throw it mid-use? This outburst of anger can be a red flag, as kids may do this as a way to distance themselves from bullies.



- Unwilling to discuss or share information about their online accounts and activity.

Increased secretiveness is another big warning sign when it comes to online bullying. Children will try to hide what is going on in order to keep it quiet since many victims are afraid to speak out, especially to parents. Having a family contract that establishes rules for your children and their online passwords and accounts is just another way to help protect them from bullying and give you, as parents, some peace of mind.

- Unexplained weight loss or weight gain, headaches, stomachaches, or trouble eating.

Health-related symptoms like these are just some of the many ways bullying can take its physical toll on a child. Parents need to be aware of these signs because if they continue for a long period, their child's health can go downhill very fast.

- Trouble sleeping at night or sleepiness during the day.

Restlessness is a huge factor when it comes to cyberbullying. Children are unable to sleep because they are tormented by what the cyberbullies are saying about them. This fatigue can then affect the child throughout the rest of the day, making their school day even harder, as they attempt to deal with schoolwork and classmates.

- Loss of interest in favorite hobbies or activities.

If your child has suddenly lost interest in their favorite sport or hobby, it may be an indicator of cyberbullying. They may be trying to distance themselves from others making fun of them or attempting to fit in. Talk with your child and continue to encourage them to do what makes them happy, not others.

- Child suddenly seems depressed or anti-social.

If your child seems to be severely unhappy and only wants to be in their room by themselves, it could be a warning sign. To boost their mood, try planning a family outing or even a game night to get them up and out of their room. This will also let your child know that your family is there to support them.

- Withdrawn from close friends and family.

This withdrawal could be an attempt to push people away and distance everyone in their life, especially from those doing the bullying. Make sure your child knows you're there for them if they want to talk about anything.

- Making passing statements about suicide or making a suicide attempt.

This is an immediate red flag. These signs should not be taken lightly! Contact a professional immediately and get the school involved, if needed. Make sure your child knows that your actions are only because you're trying to help them.

10 Ways to be an Upstander

An upstander is a person who chooses to help someone that is suffering from cyberbullying. Examples of situations where one can choose to be an upstander are:

- Someone is receiving mean and hurting comments in a gaming chat.
- People are spreading hurtful rumors about someone via social media.
- People are making fun of someone using memes.
- Someone sets up a fake account for a person on social media to embarrass them and/or send bad messages to their friends.
- People are sharing private and sensitive pictures of someone that is not aware of it.

By helping a person that is being cyberbullied, this contributes to making a change for the better. Often, people want to help others in this situation, but they are not sure how to do this, and they can also be afraid of themselves getting targeted because they choose to act. Here are ten ways to help:

1. Educate yourself on what cyberbullying is and how it can happen

There are many different types of cyberbullying, and many different ways one can cyberbully. Knowing about the different types of cyberbullying can help you with noticing cyberbullying early, so that the victim of the bullying also can get help before it gets worse or overwhelming.

2. Reach out to the person who is being cyberbullied

Send a message or talk to the person being cyberbullied. If you don't know the person well, you can also contact a friend of theirs and ask if they can check on the person. You can ask if they are ok, and offer your help. Here it will be important to use supportive language. For example you can say: "Hey, are you alright? I know that people are being mean to you, and it's not okay". In addition, it can be wise to help them with finding confidential support service and counseling, depending on what is available in your school/district/country.

3. Raise awareness of the mean behavior online

If you are confident and feel comfortable with it, you can speak up against CyberBullying online, for example through a post, meme or GIF, saying something like "Online Bullying is NOT OK". Another way of doing this is by leaving a positive comment about the person being bullied, making this person feel better, and taking some negative impact away from this person. In addition, you can report the bullying to the relevant app, game or site it is happening on. For this, it can be wise to collect evidence for proof.

4. Remove the focus from the bullying situation

When the bullying is happening, it can be wise to shift the attention of the victim or the bully on to something else. You can ask the person being bullied to help you with a task, or invite them to sit or eat with you. If you are friends with the person bullying, you can try to alter their attention to another task that you give them.

5. Speak up to the Cyber Bully

Reach out privately to the person being mean or who is cyberbullying. Either they are not aware of the harm they are causing, or they are aware. Either way, letting them know about the consequences of their actions may help them change their behavior.

6. Assess when to react to the cyberbullying

Stepping in and trying to stop cyberbullying can seem dangerous. Also in some cases, it can be wise not to react to the bullying directly when it's happening, but rather to take a step back and assess what the best way to help is. Speaking up online can provide the bully with an audience, and this may cause the bullying to last longer. An alternative approach can be to address the bully later on, either directly or via social media and/or other supportive measures.

7. Get support from others

If the person who is being bullied is really affected, and shows symptoms like not turning up for school, being more isolated, less talkative and withdrawn, it can be wise not to handle the whole situation by yourself. You can contact others like parents,



teachers, principals, older siblings or other people you trust. Explain to them what is happening, and you can also show them more information about cyberbullying and what the person is going through.

8. Don't encourage Cyberbullying

This one may seem obvious, but sometimes it is not easy to know if you are encouraging cyberbullying or not. It can be as easy as liking a post, spreading something you heard or saw to your friends, or standing still and not speaking up. Do NOT support cyberbullying in any way.

9. Take care of yourself.

It's important that you also consider your own safety when you want to stand up against cyberbullying. Seeing someone getting cyber bullied can raise a lot of emotions, especially if one is in online spaces where a lot of online abuse is happening. Don't let it get the better of you, and don't threaten other people.

10. Don't give up!

Stopping cyberbullying can be hard and sometimes seem impossible. Use other people and services and resources online to think creatively on how to stop cyberbullying.

How to deal with it

1. Contact the accountable people (Teachers, Police, etc)

When you are being bullied online you should contact people with the authority to help you. If the bully is someone from your school then contacting the teachers or any staff member of the school will help. They would offer you support through it but also punish the bully.

2. Get evidence

Providing screenshots or recordings of the online incidents that happened to you would be very helpful in the situation where you report the harassment towards you. This will help the accountable people take care of the problem and help you get through it.

3. Talk to your family or friends

Talking to your loved ones would help you to get through the situation. With their help you can get the support you need back at home or of your friends to become more relaxed and feel more secure!

4. Block/Report the bully

This is a very direct way to stop the bully by blocking him online he wouldn't be able to contact you anymore! In a case where he is indirectly harassing you by his posts or stories reporting him will also help cause that would lead to punishments from the application where he is posting.

5. Take care of yourself!

The most important thing to do is to take care of yourself, to do what you feel would be best for you! Like taking a break from social media, finding a new hobby, going out with your friends, etc.. In doing so you would take care of your mental health and overall well being.

What not to do

Cyberbullying has become an all-too-common occurrence in today's digital age, and its impact on individuals can be severe and long-lasting. While there is a lot of information out there on how to prevent cyberbullying, it's equally important to know what not to do when it comes to this issue. In this article, we'll highlight some of the common mistakes people make when dealing with cyberbullying and what you should avoid doing.

1. Don't ignore the problem

One of the biggest mistakes people make when dealing with cyberbullying is ignoring the problem. It can be tempting to brush off hurtful comments or messages as insignificant, but this can only make things worse. Cyberbullying can have a significant impact on an individual's mental health, and ignoring it can lead to feelings of isolation and helplessness. Instead, it's important to address the issue head-on and seek help if needed.

2. Don't retaliate

Another common mistake people make when dealing with cyberbullying is retaliating. It can be tempting to respond with an insult or mean comment, but this only adds fuel to the fire. Retaliating can also escalate the situation and make it more difficult to resolve. Instead, it's best to stay calm and report the incident to the appropriate authorities.

3. Don't blame yourself

Victims of cyberbullying often blame themselves for the harassment they receive. They may think they did something wrong or that they somehow deserve to be treated poorly. However, it's important to remember that no one deserves to be bullied, and the responsibility lies with the person doing the bullying, not the victim. Blaming yourself can only make you feel worse and prevent you from seeking the help you need.

4. Don't isolate yourself

Cyberbullying can make you feel isolated and alone, but isolating yourself is not the solution. It's essential to reach out to trusted friends, family members, or professionals who can provide support and guidance. Keeping the problem to yourself can make it seem insurmountable, but sharing your experience with others can help you feel less alone and more empowered.

5. Don't underestimate the impact of cyberbullying

Finally, it's important not to underestimate the impact of cyberbullying. The effects of cyberbullying can be severe and long-lasting, including depression, anxiety, and even suicide. It's crucial to take all incidents of cyberbullying seriously and seek help if needed. Whether you're a victim or a bystander, you can make a difference by speaking out against cyberbullying and providing support to those affected.

In conclusion, cyberbullying is a serious issue that requires attention and action. Knowing what not to do when dealing with cyberbullying is just as important as knowing what to do. By avoiding these common mistakes, you can better protect yourself and others from the harmful effects of cyberbullying. Remember, no one deserves to be bullied, and there is help available for those who need it.

Parents

What to do when your child is being bullied

1. **MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD IS (AND FEELS) SAFE.** The safety and well-being of your child should always be the foremost priority. Convey unconditional support. Parents must demonstrate to their children through words and actions that they both desire the same end result: stopping cyberbullying.

2. **TALK WITH AND LISTEN TO YOUR CHILD.** Engage your child in conversation about what is going on in a calm manner. Refrain from freaking out. Take the time to learn exactly what happened, and the nuanced context in which it occurred. Also, don't minimize the situation or make excuses for the aggressor.

3. **COLLECT EVIDENCE.** Print out or make screenshots or recordings of conversations, messages, pictures, videos, and any other items which can serve as clear proof that your child is being cyberbullied. Keep a record of any and all incidents to assist in the investigative process. Also, keep notes on relevant details like location, frequency, severity of harm, third-party involvement or witnesses, and the backstory.



4. WORK WITH THE SCHOOL. Seek the help of administrators if the target and aggressor go to the same school. Your child has the right to feel safe at school, and educators are responsible to ensure this through an investigation and appropriate response.
5. REFRAIN FROM CONTACTING THE PARENTS OF THE ONE DOING THE BULLYING. Some parents confronted with accusations that their child is engaging in cyberbullying may become defensive and therefore may not be receptive to your thoughts. Be judicious in your approach to avoid additional drama and possible retaliation.
6. CONTACT THE CONTENT PROVIDER. Cyberbullying violates the Terms of Service of all legitimate service providers (websites, apps, gaming networks, Internet or cell phone companies). Regardless of whether your child can identify who is harassing them, contact the relevant provider.
7. IF NECESSARY, SEEK COUNSELING. Your child may benefit from speaking with a mental health professional. Children may prefer to dialogue with a third party who may be perceived as more objective.
8. IMPLEMENT MEASURES TO PREVENT IT FROM HAPPENING AGAIN. If your child is being bullied through social media (YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, etc.), set up privacy controls within each platform to block the person doing the bullying from contacting them, and file a report (see #6). Also encourage them to keep talking to you before small issues flare up into major situations (Center, s. f.).

Warning signs for Cyberbullying

Uneasy, nervous or scared about going to school or outside.

This is a major warning sign that your child is uncomfortable in their school environment or being around their classmates. Some other signs to look out for are if your child continuously asks you if they can skip school by staying home or if they make calls asking to come home early during the school day.

Nervous or jumpy when texting or using social media.

Does your child become extremely anxious about their phone, tablet or laptop, especially while you're in view of the device? Keeping devices in commonly used areas is an easy way to help maintain a watchful eye.



Upset or frustrated after going online or gaming.

Have you ever witnessed your child get so angry at what's happening on screen that they slam their device shut or throw it mid-use? This outburst of anger can be a red flag, as kids may do this as a way to distance themselves from bullies.

Unwilling to discuss or share information about their online accounts and activity.

Increased secretiveness is another big warning sign when it comes to online bullying. Children will try to hide what is going on in order to keep it quiet since many victims are afraid to speak out, especially to parents. Having a family contract that establishes rules for your children and their online passwords and accounts is just another way to help protect them from bullying and give you, as parents, some peace of mind.

Unexplained weight loss or weight gain, headaches, stomachaches, or trouble eating.

Health-related symptoms like these are just some of the many ways bullying can take its physical toll on a child. Parents need to be aware of these signs because if they continue for a long period, their child's health can go downhill very fast.

Trouble sleeping at night or sleepiness during the day.

Restlessness is a huge factor when it comes to cyberbullying. Children are unable to sleep because they are tormented by what the cyberbullies are saying about them. This fatigue can then affect the child throughout the rest of the day, making their school day even harder, as they attempt to deal with schoolwork and classmates.

Loss of interest in favorite hobbies or activities.

If your child has suddenly lost interest in their favorite sport or hobby, it may be an indicator of cyberbullying. They may be trying to distance themselves from others making fun of them or attempting to fit in. Talk with your child and continue to encourage them to do what makes them happy, not others.

Child suddenly seems depressed or anti-social.

If your child seems to be severely unhappy and only wants to be in their room by themselves, it could be a warning sign. To boost their mood, try planning a family outing or even a game night to get them up and out of their room. This will also let your child know that your family is there to support them.

Withdrawn from close friends and family.

This withdrawal could be an attempt to push people away and distance everyone in their life, especially from those doing the bullying. Make sure your child knows you're there for them if they want to talk about anything.

Making passing statements about suicide or making a suicide attempt.

This is an immediate red flag. These signs should not be taken lightly! Contact a professional immediately and get the school involved, if needed. Make sure your child knows that your actions are only because you're trying to help them.

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- People are sharing private and sensitive pictures of someone that is not aware of it.

By helping a person that is being cyberbullied, this contributes to making a change for the better. Often, people want to help others in this situation, but they are not sure how to do this, and they can also be afraid of themselves getting targeted because they choose to act. Here are ten ways to help:

1. Educate yourself on what cyberbullying is and how and where it can happen

There are many different types of cyberbullying, and many different ways one can cyberbully. For parents, it can be hard to know about all the different ways your child or their friends can be cyberbullied. Knowing about the different types of cyberbullying can help you with noticing cyberbullying early, so that the victim of the bullying also can get help before it gets worse or overwhelming. It is also wise to know about which social media and online platforms the kids are using, so that you have more control over potential cyberbullying threats that can arise.

2. Talk to your child about cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is something that is crucial to talk about, so that your child does not suffer from it, or so that they will not cyberbully others. They may not be aware of what cyberbullying is, the legal and personal consequences of it, or how to stop it. Talk to your child about this, and get to know if they have experienced something like this.

3. Be aware of symptoms of cyberbullying

Maybe your child is being cyberbullied, or is cyberbullying others. This can be difficult for a parent to know about. Be interested in what they are doing online, and on which platforms they are spending time on. Also be aware of changes in your child's behavior and mood. Maybe they are spending more and more time on online platforms, or they could be avoiding showing you what is going on online. They can also seem more withdrawn or not acting as usual. They might give out small signals that something is not okay. Make sure to tell them that they can come to you with any problem, big or small, and always be open to talk to them and take what they are saying or showing serious.

4. Reach out to other persons who are being cyberbullied

Maybe you have discovered that your child or someone else is being cyberbullied. Send a message or talk to the person or parents of the person being cyberbullied. If you don't know the person well, you can also contact a friend of theirs and ask if they can check on the person. You can ask if they are ok, and offer your help. Here it will be important to use supportive language. For example you can say: "Hey, are you alright? I know that people are being mean to you, and it's not okay". In addition, it can be wise to help them with finding confidential support service and counseling, depending on what is available in your school/district/country.

5. Raise awareness on Cyber Bullying in meetings with the school and parents

Bring up the topic of Cyberbullying when you are in school meetings. Talk to and discuss with other parents, teachers and principals about the topic. This way it is easier to gather strength to fight the problem. You can exchange experiences, and get to learn more about how the school is addressing the problem.

6. Assess when and how to react to the cyberbullying

Stepping in and trying to stop cyberbullying can seem dangerous. Also in some cases, it can be wise not to react to the bullying directly when it's happening, but rather to take a step back and assess what the best way to help is. Speaking up online can provide the bully with an audience, and this may cause the bullying to last longer. An alternative approach can be to address the bully later on, like talking to the person's parents, teacher or school.

7. Get support from others

If the person/child who is being bullied is really affected, and shows symptoms like not turning up for school, being more isolated, less talkative and withdrawn, it can be wise not to handle the whole situation by yourself. You can contact others like other parents, teachers, principals and other people you trust. Explain to them what is happening, and you can also show them more information about cyberbullying and what the person is going through.

8. Don't encourage Cyberbullying

This one may seem obvious, but sometimes it is not easy to know if you are encouraging cyberbullying or not. Since both youngsters and parents share many of the online platforms, it can be difficult to see what is meant as friendly humor, and what is actually cyberbullying. It can be as easy as liking a post, spreading something you heard or saw to your friends/children, or standing still and not speaking up. Do NOT support cyberbullying in any way.

9. Take care of yourself.

It's important that you also consider your own safety when you want to stand up against cyberbullying. Seeing someone getting cyber bullied can raise a lot of emotions, especially if your child is being targeted or is bullying others. Don't let it get the better of you, and don't threaten other people. Assess what the best way of dealing with the situation is, using the other tips given.

10. Don't give up!

Stopping cyberbullying can be hard and sometimes seem impossible. Use other people, parents, teachers, services and resources online to think creatively on how to stop cyberbullying.

How to deal with it as a parent

1. Talk to your children

Talking to your children will help them feel more comfortable and relaxed to open up to you about certain topics. In the case of cyberbullying, sharing your experiences and knowledge will help them get through it.

2. Be supportive

Offering support to your children can go a long way in terms of helping them deal with cyberbullying. Making them feel safe and comfortable at home is one of the best things



that you can do with the most positive effect on them. Just listening to them without giving them the advice or anything „letting them be heard“

3. Don't blame them or punish them

Making them feel like it's their fault for the incident is the worst thing that you can do. Even if they made a mistake online you shouldn't blame them or punish them but just explain that things happen and that they should be more careful while surfing the net. If you were to punish them for the incident it would only reflect badly on your relationship and dynamic at home.

4. Notify the authorities

In some situations your child doesn't want to contact the authorities because they are afraid, in those situations you should talk to your child and explain to them that it is the best course of action. Depending on the severity of the bullying happening to your child. That could be a teacher in their school or police in case the bullying is happening outside of the school.

5. Encourage your child not to respond to the bully

When your child is being bullied online the worst thing they can do is respond online to the bully via text or a post. In doing so it would just encourage the bully to continue bullying the child. You should tell your child that not responding in a direct way is a good thing, instead they should report/block the account and contact the authorities!

What not to do as a parent

Cyberbullying has become an all-too-common occurrence in today's digital age, and its impact on individuals can be severe and long-lasting. While there is a lot of information out there on how to prevent cyberbullying, it's equally important to know what not to do when it comes to this issue. In this article, we'll highlight some of the common mistakes people make when dealing with cyberbullying and what you should avoid doing.

1. Don't ignore the problem

One of the biggest mistakes people make when dealing with cyberbullying is ignoring the problem. It can be tempting to brush off hurtful comments or messages as insignificant, but this can only make things worse. Cyberbullying can have a significant impact on an individual's mental health, and ignoring it can lead to feelings of isolation and helplessness. Instead, it's important to address the issue head-on and seek help if needed.



2. Don't retaliate

Another common mistake people make when dealing with cyberbullying is retaliating. It can be tempting to respond with an insult or mean comment, but this only adds fuel to the fire. Retaliating can also escalate the situation and make it more difficult to resolve. Instead, it's best to stay calm and report the incident to the appropriate authorities.

3. Don't blame yourself

Victims of cyberbullying often blame themselves for the harassment they receive. They may think they did something wrong or that they somehow deserve to be treated poorly. However, it's important to remember that no one deserves to be bullied, and the responsibility lies with the person doing the bullying, not the victim. Blaming yourself can only make you feel worse and prevent you from seeking the help you need.

4. Don't isolate yourself

Cyberbullying can make you feel isolated and alone, but isolating yourself is not the solution. It's essential to reach out to trusted friends, family members, or professionals who can provide support and guidance. Keeping the problem to yourself can make it seem insurmountable, but sharing your experience with others can help you feel less alone and more empowered.

5. Don't underestimate the impact of cyberbullying

Finally, it's important not to underestimate the impact of cyberbullying. The effects of cyberbullying can be severe and long-lasting, including depression, anxiety, and even suicide. It's crucial to take all incidents of cyberbullying seriously and seek help if needed. Whether you're a victim or a bystander, you can make a difference by speaking out against cyberbullying and providing support to those affected.

In conclusion, cyberbullying is a serious issue that requires attention and action. Knowing what not to do when dealing with cyberbullying is just as important as knowing what to do. By avoiding these common mistakes, you can better protect yourself and others from the harmful effects of cyberbullying. Remember, no one deserves to be bullied, and there is help available for those who need it.

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