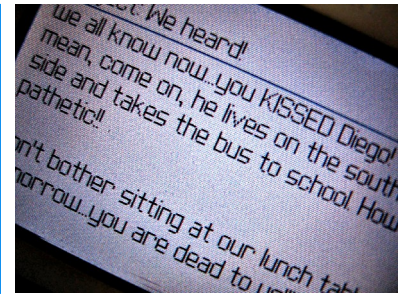


What You Can Do to Respond to Cyberbullying

When a cyberbullying incident occurs, it is important that schools, teens and families work together to minimize the potentially devastating consequences for the targeted individual and the school community as a whole. Following are some ideas on prevention and intervention for administrators, educators, family members and students.



TIPS FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND EDUCATORS

Prevention

- Set clear school guidelines for Internet use
- Teach students about ethical and legal standards for online activities
- Update policies to include guidelines for Internet and cell phone use, and consequences for cyberbullying and online cruelty
- Make reporting of cyberbullying and online hate incidents a requirement
- Establish confidential reporting mechanisms
- Devise supervision and monitoring practices of students' Internet use on school computers
- Educate students about cyberbullying and discuss strategies for reacting to cyberbullying as target and as bystanders
- Promote empathy, ethical decision-making skills and respect among students
- Increase awareness of Internet safety strategies among students and their families

Intervention

- Take action immediately when cyberbullying takes place
- Save the e-mail or other evidence
- Assess the nature and extent of the problem
- Determine appropriate consequences for the perpetrators in accordance with school policies
- Report extremely harmful online speech, such as harassment, stalking or threats of violence, to the police
- Discuss the incident and consequences with the perpetrators' families to establish consistent expectations at home and in school
- Provide social skills education and counseling to perpetrators
- Inform school-based mental health professionals to assist the targets and the targets' families in coping with the impact of the incident



What You Can Do to Respond to Cyberbullying

TIPS FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

Prevention

- Talk to your child about Internet and cell phone safety
- Monitor the amount of time your child spends online
- Set up the computer in the family room or other room where you can supervise your child's Internet use
- Purchase tracking software to block inappropriate Web content and check your child's online activities
- Encourage your child to tell apparent or trusted adult about threatening or harassing messages

Intervention

- Save the evidence
- Protect your child from further bullying by blocking offending e-mail addresses and cell phone numbers
- Change your child's phone number and e-mail address if necessary
- Report cyberbullying incidents to school authorities
- Report extremely harmful online speech to the police
- Report incidents and file complaints with e-mail services, Internet Service Providers, Web sites, cell phone companies, etc.
- Consider canceling services with providers who do not respond adequately to your concerns about safety or harassment

TIPS FOR STUDENTS

- Ignore the bullying; don't prolong it by engaging with the perpetrator or forwarding hateful messages to others
- Save the evidence to show to parents, school administrators and the police, if necessary
- Don't feel shame; tell your parents or a trusted adult and report cyberbullying incidents to school authorities
- Protect yourself from further bullying by blocking offending e-mail addresses and cell phone numbers
- Change phone numbers, e-mail addresses and screen names if necessary

