

Cyber bullying is repeated aggressive behavior using cellphones or the Internet. It includes things such as sending hurtful emails and text messages, or posting embarrassing comments or pictures on social networking sites, such as Instagram or Snapchat.

What Parents Need to Know

- **There is a large audience for cyber bullying.**
 - Messages can be shared quickly and easily with a large audience.
 - It's particularly hurtful and overwhelming because other peers become more like bullies when they "like" a mean post or picture.
- **The attacks often cannot be deleted.**
 - It can be difficult to remove or permanently delete messages, posts and pictures from cyberspace, making it hard for the victim to move past the bullying episode.
- **Cyber bullying is under-reported to adults.**
 - Youth are often embarrassed and concerned that parents will make the problem worse, take away their electronic devices, or invade their privacy by monitoring their usage.
- **Cyber bullying is not always limited to cyberspace.**
 - Children who are being cyber bullied are often also experiencing traditional in-person bullying (relational, physical and/or verbal).
- **There are differences between boys and girls.**
 - Girls are more likely to report being cyber bullied.
 - Boys are more likely to experience cyber bullying while playing online games through consoles or the Internet.

Strategies to Handle Cyber Bullying

- Keep lines of communication open between you and your child so they feel comfortable confiding in you.
- Do not threaten to take their electronic devices away.
- Take all instances seriously and remain calm.
- Gather as much information about the cyber bullying as possible, such as any saved text messages, posts, pictures, etc.
- Contact the school even if the cyber bullying did not occur on school grounds.
- Do not contact the bully's parent or the bully, or try to respond for the child online or by text, as these may make the situation worse.
- Encourage your child to delete online accounts where cyber bullying is occurring and block unfriendly peers from gaining access to any new accounts they create.
- Encourage your child to make positive and supportive friendships. Look for out-of-school activities in adult-supervised settings where your child can have positive interactions with peers.

The "All About Bullying" fact sheets are brought to you by the Partner for Prevention Program at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's Violence Prevention Initiative, a Hospital-wide effort to interrupt the cycle of violence. For more information about bullying, visit chop.edu/violence.