



Cyberbullying is any bullying behaviour that takes place 'virtually' via many different devices and platforms.

Unlike other forms of bullying, cyberbullying can happen at any time of day or night – whenever and wherever you or your friends have access to the internet.

From inappropriate texts or blog posts, to sending offensive images over the internet and excluding people from group chats, cyberbullying can take a number of forms – but it's important to remember that it is still bullying and should be addressed in the same way as any other form of bullying.

## TOP TIPS FOR BEING AN UPSTANDER TO BULLYING\_



If you see someone being bullied, step in. You could try to diffuse the situation using positive language, images or humour.



Offer friendship. Let the person being bullied know you understand what they are going through. This could just be by asking if they are ok and letting them know you are there to talk.



Always report any offline or online bullying you see to a staff member.



Befriend the person being bullied. If they look lonely, ask them to come and sit or play with you. Students are less likely to be targeted if they are with a group or with someone else.



Don't join in with the bullying. Even if you are standing by, watching or laughing you are still encouraging and giving the bully an audience.



Respect each other's differences. Don't judge someone because they may look different or have different interests.



Think about how you would feel if you were the victim and how you would like to be treated.



Encourage your friends and those watching to leave. If the bully doesn't have an audience they are less likely to bully.



Understand the bully as they often need support too – there are often reasons why people bully in the first place. Talk to them and help them understand how their behaviours may be making the victim feel. Don't do this if you think it may make you vulnerable.

## Be Strong Online with our Top Tips



**1. Remember that you're not alone** – If you're being cyberbullied remember that others have felt this way. Cyberbullying can make you feel isolated, hurt and angry – but remember that these feelings will pass. It's important that you follow the advice below to get the support you need.



**2. Choose your online friends carefully** – Remember that anyone you accept as a friend will be able to see what you have made available on that profile. They may be able to share or screengrab your photos or information and post them elsewhere



**3. Make a strong password** for all of your accounts, change them regularly and never share these with anyone. Make sure your password includes a combination of upper and lowercase letters, numbers, and symbols. This will mean people can't access your account, steal any of your info, or post harmful comments or pictures in your name.



**Check your privacy settings** – choose the information you share with people, for example you can set your profile or data to private or only allow certain people to contact you and view particular information. Make sure you never share your address, phone number or email address with anyone online



**5. Google your name** to check what private info about you is available online. If somebody types your name into a search engine, what can they find? You may need to check your privacy settings.



**6. Keep the evidence** and save any cyberbullying texts or conversations you receive



**7. Don't respond immediately** if you receive hurtful messages online. Instead...



**8. Tell someone you trust** right away such as your parent, teacher, mentor, relative, brother or sister – anyone! If you are being cyberbullied they will work with you to sort out the problem.



**9. Block the person bullying you** – there is always a way to stop the bully contacting you – check out the privacy or safety settings of the service you are using to find out how



**10. Report it** - Any cyber bullying you suffer should be reported. Whether it is nasty comments, a text message, online chats or group bullying, it is still bullying and is not ok. Block the person and use the 'report abuse' buttons- all social networks have these.



**11. Stay positive** - Things will get better. Do activities which make you feel happy with people who love and appreciate you.



**12. Be an Upstander** and support others experiencing bullying by following our advice on the next page.

**For lots more information and advice check out**

<http://www.antibullyingpro.com/how-to-stay-safe-online>.

**Other people you can tell include...**



**24/7 advice** for young people on a range of issues

**Available 24 hours** a day for confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress, despair or suicidal thoughts.

**Call** on **08457 90 90 90** or visit [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

**School-** if the cyberbullying is happening at school, it's important to tell them and ask them to investigate it.

**Service provider-** e.g your mobile phone network or the social network site. Most service providers in the UK have special teams whose job it is to investigate complaints of harassment and abuse so make sure you let them know about what is happening on their service. So check out their websites or give them a ring to find out more.

**Police-** if you feel that the cyberbullying is particularly serious you should contact your local police



## HOW CAN I TELL IF MY CHILD IS BEING CYBERBULLIED?

It can be hard for parents to know whether a child is being bullied, especially if they don't want to tell anyone. You can't always see the signs, and nothing indicates for certain that a child is being bullied. But things to look out for include:

- Becoming upset, withdrawn, or has a change in behaviour – especially after looking at their phone, computer or device
- Being afraid to go to school or skipping school
- Suddenly stops using their phone or computer

### What is bullying?

Bullying is any behaviour that makes someone feel upset, uncomfortable and unsafe. This is usually deliberate and repetitive and can take many forms such as Verbal, Indirect and Physical.

There are more signs and symptoms to look out for on the NSPCC website – check out the link at the bottom of this page.

### What should I do if I think my child might be being cyberbullied?

1. Make sure they know they can talk to you and reassure them that you won't overreact or do anything that might make it worse.
2. Find out other sources of help that you can share with your child. If your child is being bullied they might be scared to ask you directly for help, so their school is a good place to start for other sources of support. Let your child know that if you are not available to talk to, they can always talk to a teacher, another trusted adult, or ChildLine (0800 1111).
3. Help them relax and take time out – give your child opportunities to build their confidence. Help them find things to do that make them feel good such as going swimming, walking the dog, baking cakes, making pizza, or going for a bike ride.
4. Talk to them about how they can stay safe online using technology. Sit down together and look at how they can block people or report posts. There are more tips to help keep your child safe online in the list below
5. Talk to your child's school or club. Arrange to meet with a teacher or club leader, talk to them about your concerns and ask what action they can take

6. Talk about bullying – explain what bullying is, and ask your child if this is happening to them (see the box 'What is bullying' for help). Keep calm and remember that it's normal for a child to feel embarrassed or worried if they're being bullied.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD HAS TOLD ME THEY'RE BEING BULLIED?

1. If your child tells you they are being bullied, thank them for coming to talk to you. It takes a lot of courage to tell someone you are being bullied but it's the first step to sorting out the problem. Try not to get upset (it may be hard!) Remain calm and assure them that you will help them sort things out. Talk to them about the definition of bullying as a repeated action rather than a one-off but don't be dismissive if the incident has only happened once. It has obviously had an impact for your child to report it.
2. Listen to your child. Ask them to tell you in detail about what has been going on, what the bullying has involved and how it has made them feel.
3. Ask your child what steps they would like to take next. It's hard not to take over, but try to avoid this: talk through solutions through with your child. What would they feel comfortable with?
4. If the bullying is happening at school ask to see a teacher. This may involve having a phone conversation initially. You may be tempted to talk to the bully's parents but this can have negative repercussions for your child. A teacher may help to encourage others to keep an eye on your child at school during the day and could also help set up a system (with your child's approval and support) to report any instances of bullying. All schools are required by law to have an Anti-Bullying Policy which outlines how bullying is reported and dealt with in school.
5. Talk to your child about whom they can talk to and where they can go if they are being bullied during the day. There may be clubs at break times where they could go to feel less vulnerable.
6. Encourage them to not retaliate or react to the bullying, as this often fuels bullying behaviour. Get them to practise being assertive and having strong body language and facial expressions. Tell them to remove themselves from the situation as quickly as they can and to report any instances of bullying to an adult.
7. Monitor your child. Ask them how school has gone and check in regularly with a teacher to see how they are getting on during the day. If you don't get a detailed response ask questions. Stay positive.

8. Bullying can hugely reduce a child's confidence and self-esteem. When your child is at home try to highlight their strengths, and do activities which they enjoy and which help relieve stress.
9. Keep a log/record of your child's bullying incidents so you have evidence should you need to take the matter higher up in the school.
10. Don't let the problem get you down. It's understandable to be worried but try to remain positive and not to worry - that's the best route to developing an action plan.
11. Give the school chance to work with your child to try and reduce the bullying. If you feel the school is not doing enough to address the bullying, you may want to take the matter to the School Governors.

## WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP KEEP MY CHILD SAFE ONLINE?

The internet and social media are constantly evolving with new websites and apps for smartphones being launched daily. As new sites and apps develop, so does the number of young people using them. Talk openly with your child about what is available to them, what they use and why there are age restrictions in place with certain sites.



Get to know the sites your child uses and then find out what they can do. This way you can understand the virtual world and talk about it more easily with your child



Educate your child to never give out identifying information about any family member or themselves. This includes: names, addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, passwords or bank card numbers



Encourage your child to tell you if anyone is pressing for personal information



For more advice, see the links below

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

It can be tough to get a teenager to talk to you about something that is worrying them. We've pulled together some ideas that might help:

- 'What is lunchtime like at your school? Who do you sit/play/hang out with?'
- 'What's it like to ride the bus/train to school?'
- 'Is anyone ever left out of activities?'

- 'What do you think needs to happen at school to stop bullying?'
- 'What should parents do to help stop bullying in schools?'
- 'If you had a magic wand or one wish what would you change and why?'
- 'What are some good qualities about yourself?' (Talk about why it's good to feel good about yourself)
- 'What's your biggest goal or ambition this year?'
- 'Do you think your friends talk to their parents about how they are?'
- 'What's the best thing about our family?'
- 'What do you think makes a good parent? What qualities should we have?'
- 'What traits do you most admire about other people?'

## MORE INFORMATION\_

[www.antibullyingpro.com/how-to-stay-safe-online](http://www.antibullyingpro.com/how-to-stay-safe-online)

[www.parentinfo.org/](http://www.parentinfo.org/)

[www.vodafone.com/content/parents.html](http://www.vodafone.com/content/parents.html)

[www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/signs-symptoms-effects/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/signs-symptoms-effects/)

[www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/keeping-children-safe/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/keeping-children-safe/)



## OUR PROGRAMMES

### The Diana Award



[www.diana-award.org.uk](http://www.diana-award.org.uk)



[@dianaaward](https://twitter.com/dianaaward)

### Network/Training & Mentoring



[www.facebook.com/thedianaawardd](https://www.facebook.com/thedianaawardd)



[@dianaaward](https://twitter.com/dianaaward)

### Anti-Bullying Ambassadors



[www.facebook.com/antibullyingpro](https://www.facebook.com/antibullyingpro)



[@antibullyingpro](https://twitter.com/antibullyingpro)

### PLEASE SUPPORT OUR WORK!

Diana Award, 1 Mark Square, London, EC2A 4EG, Telephone: 020 3934 2160

Website: [www.diana-award.org.uk](http://www.diana-award.org.uk) Twitter: [Dianaaward](https://twitter.com/dianaaward)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/thedianaaward](https://www.facebook.com/thedianaaward)