



AFP

AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

CYBER-BULLYING

Don't start it. Don't be a part of it.



Cyber-bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others*.

It differs from traditional schoolyard bullying because it often continues outside of school and school hours. It can be 24/7, and sometimes the bully is anonymous.

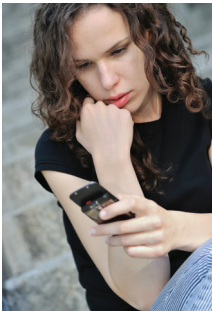


What does cyber-bullying look like?

Cyber-bullying might occur over the Internet, in instant messaging (IM), chat rooms, social networking sites, blogs or gaming sites. It can also occur over the phone, by SMS or MMS, or other technologies.

Most cyber-bullying can be organised into seven different categories:

- 1. Flaming** – what might start off as a fight between two people then spreads, like flames, to include a number of other people.
- 2. Harassment** – tormenting someone with hateful and hurtful text messages, emails, posts and IMs that offend, humiliate or intimidate them.
- 3. Denigration** – putting someone down or ruining their reputation; making others think less of them.
- 4. Impersonation** – by you pretending to be another person online you could make someone tell you things they wouldn't normally talk to you about. Lying hurts.
- 5. Outing and Trickery** – tricking others into believing that you are someone else, and then revealing that someone else is a homosexual is cyber-bullying. This might be done through a fake website, profile, or by editing someone's profile.
- 6. Exclusion** – not letting someone participate in an online group, or excluding them from other activities because they haven't been online.
- 7. Cyber-stalking** – following someone through cyberspace. Moving with them to different sites and applications; posting where they post.



Why do people cyber-bully?

There are a number of reasons why people might cyber-bully someone else, including:

- they think that it is amusing
- they don't like the person
- they don't consider it to be a big deal



- they don't believe there are any consequences
- they think they are anonymous.

None of these reasons, or any others, can ever justify cyber-bullying.

What are the effects of cyber-bullying?

Things that happen on the Internet, or on your mobile phone, have real-world consequences. Some of the effects of cyber-bullying are:

- anger
- embarrassment
- fear
- poor performance at school
- loss of confidence and self esteem
- revenge cyber-bullying
- self-harm, even suicide.

Cyber-bullying hurts people. It can ruin lives.

What can you do about cyberbullying?

Don't start it! Cyber-bullying is never acceptable. Think before you post something mean, or send someone a hurtful message.

Don't be a part of it! As a bystander, you are part of the problem. If someone tries to involve you in cyber-bullying, say NO.

Don't let it get out of control! You need to tell someone if you are being cyber-bullied so they can help you to make it stop.

You can stay in control by:

- learning how to block communications from cyber-bullies
- finding out your school's policy in relation to cyber-bullying
- researching what policies your Internet Service Provider (ISP) and any online applications you are using have on cyber-bullying
- telling someone – you should talk to a parent, teacher, or trusted friend.

Staying in control – if you're not comfortable telling someone about cyber-bullying face-to-face you can contact:

- **Reach out:** www.reachout.com.au
- **Bullying. No Way!:** www.bullyingnoway.com.au
- **Kids Helpline:** 1800 55 1800
- **Lifeline:** 131 114
- **Youth Beyond Blue:** www.youthbeyondblue.com
- **ThinkUKnow:** www.thinkuknow.org.au (information for you and your parents)
- **AFP High Tech Crime Operations:** HTCO-CrimePrevention@afp.gov.au