



What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over devices like cell phones, computers and tablets. It can occur through text messages, apps, or online via social media, forums or games.

Caregivers may think of bullying as name-calling or repeated teasing and harassment, but cyberbullying can also include sharing personal or private information to cause embarrassment or humiliation.

Cyberbullying is unique because it is:

Persistent

Digital devices allow bullies to immediately and continuously communicate 24 hours a day, making it difficult for children experiencing cyberbullying to find relief.

Permanent

Most information communicated electronically is permanent and public, if not reported and removed. A negative online reputation, including for the bully, can impact college, employment, and other areas of life.

Hard to Notice

Because teachers and parents may not overhear or see cyberbullying, it's harder to prevent, recognize or stop.

What to do when cyberbullying occurs

Because cyberbullying happens online, responding requires a different approach.

Notice

If there has been a change in mood or behavior, explore the cause. Try to determine if these changes happen around a child's use of their devices, and investigate your child's devices and apps.

Talk

Ask your child if they are being bullied online. Listen and try to learn what's happening, how it started, and who is involved.

Document

Keep a record of what is happening and where. Screenshot harmful posts or content. Most laws and policies note that bullying is a repeated behavior, so records help to document it.

Report

Most social media platforms and schools have clear policies and reporting processes.

- * If a classmate is cyberbullying, report it to the school.
- * Online, contact apps or social platforms to report offensive content and have it removed.
- * If a child receives physical threats or engages in illegal behavior, report it to the police.

Support

Peers, mentors and trusted adults can intervene publicly to positively influence a situation where negative or harmful content has been posted about a child. You can also offer professional support, such as speaking with a guidance counselor or mental health professional.

Learn more at stopbullying.gov



Our Kids is a Nashville-based clinic that provides expert medical evaluations and crisis counseling in response to concerns of child sexual abuse. For more, visit OurKidsCenter.com