

# Cyber-Bullying: Suggestions for Parents

**Cyber-bullying** can range from rude comments to lies, impersonations, and threats, therefore your responses may depend on the nature and severity of the cyber-bullying.

Here are some actions that you may want to take after-the-fact.

- ▶ **Strongly encourage** your child not to respond to the cyber-bullying.
- ▶ **Do not erase** the messages or pictures. Save these as evidence.
- ▶ **Try to identify** the individual doing the cyber-bullying. Even if the cyber-bully is anonymous (e.g., is using a fake name or someone else's identity) there may be a way to track them through your Internet Service Provider.
- ▶ If the cyber-bullying is coming through e-mail or a cell phone, **it may be possible to block** future contact from the cyber-bully.
- ▶ **Contact your school.** If the cyber-bullying is occurring through your school district's Internet system, school administrators have an obligation to intervene. Even if the cyber-bullying is occurring off campus, make your school administrators aware of the problem. They may be able to help you resolve the cyber-bullying or watchful for face-to-face bullying.
- ▶ **Contact the police** if cyber-bullying involves acts such as:
  - ▶ Threats of violence
  - ▶ Extortion
  - ▶ Obscene or harassing phone calls or text messages
  - ▶ Harassment, stalking, or hate crimes
  - ▶ Child pornography

## Survey Says

- ▶ One in five (20.9%) tweens (9 to 12 years old) has been cyberbullied, cyberbullied others, or seen cyberbullying ([Patchin & Hinduja, 2020](#)).

### For More Information

Kentucky Center for School Safety



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 (877) 805-4277

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

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## How to Prevent Cyber-bullying

- ▶ Discuss with your child openly what is appropriate and what is not appropriate to communicate online.
  - ▶ Don't give out private information (Passwords, PIN)
  - ▶ Be careful about posting personal information such as name, address and cell numbers
  - ▶ Delete messages from people you don't know
- ▶ Assume no digital communication is private
- ▶ Use privacy settings on social media sites
- ▶ Explain the problems of posting pictures online
- ▶ Teach how to identify a threatening communication

### Surf Smart

- ▶ Explore the internet with skill and direction!

### Share Less

- ▶ Keep your personal information private!

### Think First

- ▶ Interact online appropriately!

## Remember... long-term effects of cyber-bullying include:

- ▶ Poor academic performance
- ▶ Anxiety and loss of interest in socializing
- ▶ Aggression or violence toward others
- ▶ Depression and suicidal thoughts

Resource: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
<http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov>

## Fact

- ▶ The type of cyberbullying tends to differ by gender. Girls were more likely to say someone spread rumors about them online while boys were more likely to say that someone threatened to hurt them online  
([Patchin et al., 2019](#))

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