Cyber-Bullying: Suggestions for Schools

► **Update Policies: Have a Cyber-bullying policy and update your AUP to align with this policy**. Clearly spell out definition and consequences. Print in student handbook violations, board policies.

► **Form Technology Abuse Committee**: This committee is part of the Safe School Committee and it should include the technology people and non-tech savvy personnel. The combination will make the team stronger and get the message across teams within the school. This team will heighten awareness, survey students and staff, and review complaints.

► **Professional Development**: Train the staff on cyber-bullying and make them aware of the seriousness of this action.

► **Teach the Students**: Use a comprehensive curriculum to teach internet safety K-12.

► **Inform the Parents**: Hold a parent night or send home information about cyber-bullying. Solicit their help in this battle to stop cyber-bullying at school and at home.

► **Monitor Computer Usage**: Along with filtering more monitoring should occur at school. Each teacher needs to assist with this task.

► **Evaluate Survey and Violation Data**: Annually check the data to assess the gains made in lessening the cyber-bullying problem in your school. If your plan is working successful continue, if the problem is escalating "beef-up" the policies, make sure you are being consistent with violators. Heighten awareness and use the newspaper, newsletters and webpage to get the information to your parents and community.
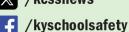
Fact

► Cyber-bullying is a serious issue and the Internet's "Virtual Society" is not going away. We have to learn to live in it as responsible global cyber-citizens.

For More Information
Kentucky Center for School Safety

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 (877) 805-4277

www.kycss.org

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When cyberbullying happens, it is important to document and report the behavior so it can be addressed.

► **Steps to Take Immediately**
  ► Don't respond to and don't forward cyberbullying messages.
  ► Keep evidence of cyberbullying. Record the dates, times, and descriptions of instances when cyberbullying has occurred. Save and print screenshots, emails, and text messages. Use this evidence to report cyberbullying to web and cell phone service providers and social media sites.
  ► Block the person who is cyberbullying.
► **Report Cyberbullying to Law Enforcement**
  When cyberbullying involves these activities it is considered a crime and should be reported to law enforcement:
  ► Threats of violence
  ► Child pornography or sending sexually explicit messages or photos
  ► Taking a photo or video of someone in a place where he or she would expect privacy
  ► Stalking and hate crimes

Resource: https://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/how-to-report

Surf Smart
► **Explore the internet with skill and direction!**
Share Less
► **Keep your personal information private!**
Think First
► **Interact online appropriately!**

► Cyberbullying is related to low self-esteem, suicidal ideation, anger, frustration, and a variety of other emotional and psychological problems (Patchin, J. W. & Hinduja, S., 2024).

Resource: https://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying

Survey Says

► 28% of middle schools, 15% of high schools, and 10% of elementary schools reported the occurrence of bullying at school at least once a week (Burr, R., Kemp, J., and Wang, K., 2024).

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