



Tips for Parents

Kentucky Center for School Safety
www.kysafeschools.org

Because cyber bullying can range from rude comments to lies, impersonations, and threats, 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 cyberbully 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 criminal (or if you suspect that it may be), contact the police and ask them to do the tracking.
- Sending inappropriate language may violate the "Terms and Conditions" of e-mail services, Internet Service Providers, web sites, and cell phone companies. Consider contacting these providers and filing a complaint.
- If the cyber bullying is coming through e-mail or a cell phone, it may be possible to block future contact from the cyberbully. Of course, the cyberbully may assume a different identity and continue the bullying.
- 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 be watchful for face-to-face bullying.
- Consider contacting the cyberbully's parents. These parents may be very concerned to learn that their child has been cyber bullying others, and they may effectively put a stop to the bullying. On the other hand, these parents may react very badly to your contacting them. So, proceed cautiously. If you decide to contact a cyberbully's parents, communicate with them in writing — not face-to-face. Present proof of the cyber bullying (e.g., copies of an e-mail message) and ask them to make sure the cyber bullying stops.
- Consider contacting an attorney in cases of serious cyber bullying. In some circumstances, civil law permits victims to sue a bully or his or her parents in order to recover damages.
- 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

If you are uncertain if cyber bullying violates your jurisdiction's criminal laws, contact your local police, who will advise you.

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
[http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/adult/indexAdult.asp?
Area=cyberbullying](http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/adult/indexAdult.asp?Area=cyberbullying)