

Cyberbullying

An overview for Equality
parents and students

What is Cyberbullying?

- **Being cruel to others by sending or posting harmful material using technological means;**
- **An individual or group that uses information and communication involving electronic technologies to facilitate deliberate and repeated harassment or threat to an individual or group.**

Technology Used by Cyberbullies

- **E-mail**
- **Cell phones**
- **Text messages**
- **Instant messaging**
- **Facebook, Twitter and other social networking sites**
- **Defamatory personal web sites**
- **Chat rooms**

Types of Cyberbullying

- **Flaming**: Online fights using electronic messages with angry and vulgar language
- **Harassment**: Repeatedly sending offensive, rude, and insulting messages
- **Cyber stalking**: Repeatedly sending messages that include threats of harm or are highly intimidating. Engaging in other on-line activities that make a person afraid for his or her own safety
- **Denigration**: ‘Dissing’ someone online. Sending or posting cruel gossip or rumors about a person to damage his or her reputation or friendships

Types of Cyberbullying (cont.)

- **Impersonation**: Pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material online that makes that person look bad, gets that person in trouble or danger, or damages that person's reputation or friendships
- **Outing and Trickery**: Sharing someone's secret or embarrassing information online. Tricking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing information which is then shared online
- **Exclusion**: Intentionally excluding someone from an on-line group, like a 'buddy list'

How Prevalent is Cyberbullying?

- **Cyber bullying typically starts at about 9 years of age and usually ends after 14 years of age; the behavior can be upgraded to cyber or sexual harassment after the age of 14.**

Data From Across the Nation

- **An estimates 30% of 6th to 10th graders in the United States were either a bully, a target of bullying or both.**

Nansel, TR., Overpeck M., Pilla, RS., Ruan WI., Simons-Morton, B., Scheidt, P., "Bullying Behavior Among US Youth: Prevalence and Association with Psychosocial Adjustment." 2001.

- **During the 2007-2008 school year, 25% of public school reported that bullying occurred among students on a weekly basis. This was the highest within the middle school population.**

CDC, Division of Violence Prevention, "Understanding Bullying." 2011.

Data From New York City

- **About 4.7% of disciplinary incidents reported in the City's public schools during the 2008-2009 school year were bias-related – including gender, race, and sexual orientation.**
- **About 12% of all Level 4 bias-related behaviors involved intimidation and bullying behavior.**

NYC.Gov/schools. "Findings from First Audit of Bias-Related Bullying and Harassment Incidents in Schools." 2010.

How does Equality Compare?

2010-2011	2011-2012
2.2% of all Minor Referrals were for Harassment/Bullying	4.8% of all Minor Referrals were for Harassment/Bullying
2.3% of all Major Referrals were for Harassment/Bullying	4.8% of all Minor Referrals were for Harassment/Bullying
Overall Average of Harassment/ Bullying Referrals = 2.25%	Overall Average of Harassment/ Bullying Referrals = 9%

We attribute this rise, in part, to the increase of the use of technology to bully; Cyberbullying is on the rise.

What are the Warning Signs?

- Spending long hours online, especially at night;
- Phone calls from people you don't know;
- Your child suddenly turns off the computer when you walk into the room;
- Withdrawal from family life;
- Reluctance to discuss online activities;

What can Families do to Help?

- **Discuss cyber bullying with child(ren)**
- **Supervise and increase effective monitoring of Internet use**
- **Many Internet service providers (ISPs) provide parent-control options to block certain material from coming into a computer**
- **Keep the computer in a common area, not in individual bedrooms, where you can watch and monitor its use**
- **Share an email account with your child so you can monitor messages**