



## BULLYING: A BIG PROBLEM WITH BIG CONSEQUENCES

# Steps for Dealing with Cyberbullying

Adapted from: Kowalski, R. M., Limber, S. P., & Agatston, P. W. (2012). *Cyberbullying: Bullying in the digital age*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

### TAKE ACTION

Here are some actions parents and caregivers can take to prevent and stop cyberbullying:

- Save evidence of messages or images that are threatening or offensive. Teach your children to turn off the monitor rather than shutting down the computer, so you can go back and save evidence.
- If you know the identity of anyone bullying your child, send names to the Internet service provider or cell phone provider as soon as possible. In extreme circumstances, consider notifying the police.
- Teach your children not to respond to cyberbullying messages, since that may add fuel to the fire. Help your children block text messages or “unfriend” people who post harassing messages on Facebook. [WiredSafety.org](https://www.wiredsafety.org/safety/chat_safety/phone_safety/) explains how to block text messages: [https://www.wiredsafety.org/safety/chat\\_safety/phone\\_safety/](https://www.wiredsafety.org/safety/chat_safety/phone_safety/)
- If the person posting harassing messages responds to your attempts to stop the bullying behavior by creating a new account or screen name, or by doing anything to continue the online harassment, consider posting a warning on behalf of your child saying you will contact law enforcement authorities if the bullying behavior continues.
- If cruel comments about your child are posted on a social networking site, such as Facebook, or on any type of public website, contact the site administrator with a request to remove the offensive content. Visit [Stopcyberbullying.org](http://Stopcyberbullying.org) or [CyberBullyHelp.com](http://CyberBullyHelp.com) for information on reporting abuse on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other media. At the same time, consider contacting the police about the situation.
- Contact your child's school and alert the staff to watch for bullying behavior during school hours.
- In some cases, it may be helpful to contact the parents of the teen who posted offensive material. Calmly present them with the evidence and ask for the bullying behavior to stop. When talking to the other parents, do *not* label their child a “bully.”
- Consider seeking help from a mental health professional or school counselor if your teen shows signs of distress.
- Consider monitoring your child’s online behavior, starting by Googling their name. You may also want to use a web app like one of the following:
  - [Web Safety: www.websafety.com/](http://www.websafety.com/)

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Kowalski, R. M., Limber, S. P., & Agatston, P. W. (2012). *Cyberbullying: Bullying in the digital age*. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

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