

# The Digital Generation

- ♦ 90% of Children ages 5 to 17 use computers
- ♦ 53% of Children ages 5-17 use the internet
- ♦ 80% have cell phones
- ♦ Studies show that the majority (85-99%) of adolescents use the internet regularly
- ♦ The world children live in today is increasingly digital

## What is a Cyber-Bully?

- Covert psychological bullying conveyed through electronic mediums such as email, message boards, cell phones, blogs, social networking, video games, etc.
- The anonymity that cyberbullying allows often takes it to a new level as the perpetrator feels like they will not be caught
- Specific types of cyber-bullying:
  - Flaming - A heated online exchange
  - Harassment - Repeatedly sending nasty messages that cause emotional distress
  - Denigration - Online postings of negative or false info, can be used to damage reputation or friendships
  - Impersonation - Pretending to be someone else and posting material to get the person in trouble/danger or damage that person's reputation
  - Outing - Sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing info, images online
  - Cyber stalking - Repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear
  - Happy Slapping - videotaping and electronically disseminating videos of

someone being slapped on the internet

## Who are Cyber-Bullies?

Often times those who cyberbully have been or currently are victims of real-world bullying or cyberbullying

Others participate in cyberbullying because they do not see it as harmful, but rather as funny.



## Who are the Victims of Cyber-Bullying?

Unlike traditional bullying, wherein the victims are commonly targeted because they are perceived to be physically inferior to the bully, the victims of cyberbullying are:

- ♦ Targeted for specific attributes such as physical appearance, weight, ethnicity, etc.
- ♦ Suffer from high levels of social anxiety

## What Are the Consequences of Cyber-Bullying?

- ♦ Emotional responses to cyber-bullying could precipitate into more serious behavior outcomes
- ♦ Most victims didn't feel accepted by peer group - often feel socially excluded

- ♦ 8% of participants have attempted suicide, run away, refused to go to school, or have been chronically ill after bullying
- ♦ In study of 3,000 students, 38% of victims felt vengeful, 37% felt angry, 24% felt helpless

## Reporting Cyber-Bullying

A study found the following reasons to be the most frequently cited for not reporting Cyber-Bullying:

- Fear of retribution (30%)
- The student's problem and not the schools mandate (29%)
- They felt the school couldn't stop the bullying anyways (27%)
- They could get their friends in trouble (26%)
- Their parents would restrict their access to the internet (24%)
- Others would label them as 'informers' or 'rats' (20%)

This same study found that if victims were to report Cyber-Bullying:

- 47% would report to school personnel
- 57% would tell their parents
- 74% would tell their friends
- 25% would tell no one

## What Can be Done to Prevent Cyber-Bullying?

At Home, parents can:

- ♦ Move home computers into easily viewable areas of house
- ♦ Talk with kids regularly about online activities
- ♦ Consider installing parental control filtering software
- ♦ Encourage your child to report bullying

At School:

- ♦ Awareness raising through programs that disseminate information
- ♦ Provide opportunities to report anonymously
- ♦ Post rules and consequences in every school setting as a reminder
- ♦ Holistic school policies stressing the values of fairness and trust
- ♦ Self-esteem building programs

## What Parents Can Do When Cyber-Bullying Occurs



- Contact your child's school. Even if the cyberbullying is not occurring in school, officials might be able to assist.
- If possible, contact the bully's parents. Send them a registered letter detailing the messages and asking them to make the bullying stop. They could be held liable for financial and emotional damages.
- Finally, if the situation is not resolved, or if physical threats are made, contact the police.

## Sources for More Information About Cyber-Bullying

**Cyberbully.org:**  
[www.cyberbully.org](http://www.cyberbully.org)

**Bully Online:**  
[www.bullyonline.org/related/cyber.htm](http://www.bullyonline.org/related/cyber.htm)

**National Cyber Security Alliance - StaySafe Online:**  
<http://staysafeonline.org/>

**Cyberbully Research Center**  
[www.cyberbullying.us/](http://www.cyberbullying.us/)

**Stop Cyberbullying**  
[www.stopcyberbullying.org](http://www.stopcyberbullying.org)

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# Cyber-Bullying: “Sticks and Stones Can Break My Bones, But How Can Pixels Hurt Me?”



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