

Key advice to children and young people on cyberbullying

ANTI-CYBERBULLYING CODE

Being sent an abusive or threatening text message, or seeing nasty comments about yourself on a website can be really upsetting. This code gives you seven important tips to protect yourself and your friends from getting caught up in cyberbullying and advice on how to report it when it does happen.

1) Always respect others

Remember that when you send a message to someone you cannot see the impact that your words or images may have on the other person. That is why it is important to always show respect to people and be careful what you say online or what images you send. What you think is a joke may really hurt someone else. Always ask permission before you take a photo of someone.

If you receive a rude or nasty message or picture about someone else, do not forward it. You could be assisting a bully, and even be accused of cyberbullying yourself. You could also be breaking the law.

2) Think before you send

It is important to think before you send any images or text about yourself or someone else by email or mobile phone, or before you post information on a website. Remember that what you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever. Do you really want your teacher or future employer to see that photo?

3) Treat your password like your toothbrush

Don't let *anyone* know your passwords. It is a good idea to change them on a regular basis. Choosing hard-to-guess passwords with symbols or numbers will help stop people hacking into your account and pretending to be you. Remember to only give your mobile number or personal website address to trusted friends.

4) Block the Bully

Most responsible websites and services allow you to block or report someone who is behaving badly. Make use of these features, they are there for a reason!

5) Don't retaliate or reply!

Replying to bullying messages, particularly in anger, is just what the bully wants.

6) Save the evidence

Learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations. These will help you demonstrate to others what is happening, and can be used by your school, internet service provider, mobile phone company, or even the police, to investigate the cyberbullying.

7) Make sure you tell

You have a right not to be harassed and bullied online.

There are people that can help:

- Tell an adult you trust, who can help you to report it to the right place, or call a helpline like ChildLine on 0800 1111 in confidence.
- Tell the provider of the service you have been bullied on (e.g. your mobile phone operator or social network provider). Check their websites to see where to report.
- Tell your school. Your teacher or the anti-bullying co-ordinator at your school can support you and can discipline the person bullying you.

Finally, don't just stand there – if you see cyberbullying going on, support the victim and report the bullying. How would you feel if no-one stood up for you?