

# Cyberbullying

Unwanted text messages, phone video recordings, or web posts being used to threaten, abuse or harm someone.

Cyberbullying is defined as 'any behaviour performed through electronic or digital media by individuals or groups that repeatedly communicates hostile or aggressive messages intended to inflict harm or discomfort on others'

**TABLE 1: Types of cyberbullying.**

Type of cyberbullying	Definition
<b>Harassment</b>	Rude, insulting or threatening messages, which attack the victim's physical or social attributes
<b>Flaming</b>	Offensive, rude and vulgar language to insult and threaten someone
<b>Denigration</b>	Messages that are untrue, harmful or even cruel often with 'evidence' of a digitally altered picture so as to present a false image of the victim
<b>Identity theft or masquerade</b>	Pretending to be someone else to send abusive messages
<b>Outing</b>	Involves posting personal communications/images containing intimate and potentially embarrassing personal information
<b>Trickery</b>	The victim is tricked into thinking that communication is private to share intimate details after which the bully will threaten to distribute the information
<b>Exclusion</b>	Bully decides who is allowed to a member of an online group by 'unfriending' those not deemed worthy
<b>Cyberstalking</b>	Sending repeated messages that threaten to harm, intimidate or is extremely offensive to the victim

## Who is currently being affected by cyberbullying?

- Anyone (children, teens, and adult) WITH ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY
- Majority of serious cyber-bullying cases involve the tween and teen age groups (ages 10-19)
- Teenagers do not report as often
- Embarrassing and damaging pictures, sometimes without permission (sexually suggestive, nude)
- Cell phones are used regularly, hourly = popular and easy to bully
- Most common type of cyberbullying = mean, hurtful comments

## **Consequences of cyberbullying**

- Psychological harm – can't remove everything (what if it follows me)
- Academics
- Future work
- Dignity, privacy, sense of safety, belonging
- Other negative developmental and behavioural consequences, such as school violence and delinquency, substance use, being absent
- Emotional distress may lead to not-healthy coping mechanisms
- Self harming and suicide (everyone at school)
- Loneliness and isolation

## **Signs of possible cyberbullying**

- Behavior changes (when phone not on)
- Academics: Grades are being negatively influenced,
- Moodiness: is mood connected to phone use/not phone use
- Habitual use: phone is always buzzing
- Secretive or evasive behavior – not allowed to see onscreen, switched quickly, locks
- Multiple accounts: Not necessary for children/teenagers. Red flag