GETTING STARTED WITH CYBERBULLYING PREVENTION

CyberSmart!
21st century skills
for education

Your child is taking part in classroom lessons from the CyberSmart! Student Curriculum to begin a dialogue about cyberbullying prevention. CyberSmart!'s approach to this subject is standards- and research-based. We focus on adopting best practices from face-to-face bullying prevention, school violence prevention, character education, and cyber security education.

CyberSmart! believes that students should have access to and instruction in the use of the Internet and other information and communications technologies for learning, for socialization, and for preparing for college and 21st century work and citizenship. Filters and other technological solutions for protecting children online are not a substitute for teaching children how to stay safe online.

What is cyberbullying?

The formal definition of *cyberbullying* is intentional and repeated use of computer and cell phone networks by kids and teens to cause harm or distress to other kids and teens.
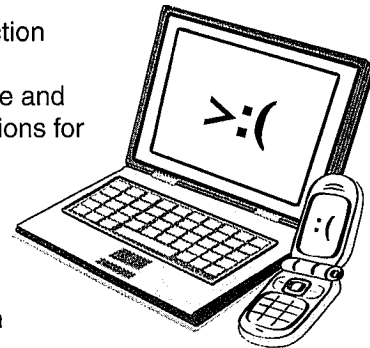
Here's what we teach second and third graders about cyberbullying:

- Everyone wants to have friends.
- Sometimes bullies try to exclude a child from their group of friends.
- Bullying can happen face to face, on the Internet, or with cell phones.
- Bullying, wherever it happens, is never acceptable behavior.
- If bullying happens online, get off the computer.
- Don't share computer and Web site passwords with anyone except your parents.
- If children witness or are the target of bullying, they should tell a trusted adult.

Here's what families can do:

- Start a conversation with your children about bullying and cyberbullying. Ask them if they have ever seen bullying in school or after school. Talk with your children about positive roles they can take when they witness bullying or cyberbullying, such as supporting the targeted child and letting the bully know that the behavior is not acceptable.
- Talk about ways to handle these incidents when your children are the target of bullying or cyberbullying, following the rules to the left. If necessary, talk to the school about these incidents.
- Tell your children that you understand that cyberbullying is just as serious as face-to-face bullying. In fact, because it can take place when your children are in your home at night or on weekends, it can often be more intrusive and upsetting than schoolyard bullying.
- Supervise your children when they are online—even when they are playing on age-appropriate, password-protected Web sites.
- Reinforce that your family's values—such as being caring, honest, fair, responsible, and respectful of self and others—should also be applied when children are outside the home, including in school, at the playground, and when using computers and cell phones.