

Pascack Valley Regional High School District
Digital Citizenship
Cyberbullying

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place through technology, including but not limited to devices such as cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites.

Examples of cyberbullying include mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.¹

Why is awareness of Cyberbullying important?

Bullying is harmful whether in person or online. Many tend to dismiss the toll cyberbullying can take on a person, as it is happening “virtually;” however, in many cases cyberbullying is actually worse. Physical bullying often takes place with a limited audience, where cyberbullying often has a wider audience. Additionally, people may find relief from physical bullying when in a safe place such as their home, but with cyberbullying in our connected world, the victim can be a target 24/7.²

To further complicate the issue of cyberbullying, the victim often may struggle to identify the attacker(s) as messages might be sent anonymously, or through fake profiles. Situations such as this can leave a victim emotionally scarred and without hope of being able to confront the person causing them harm. The emotional and psychological toll this can take on a person might cause them more harm than that of a physical incident. Cyberbullying must be treated with the same concern and care as traditional bullying.

What can we do to help students?

Here is a short list of examples educators may use to discuss the relevance of Cyberbullying:

- Following this [lesson](#), students will be able to understand how cyberbullying can quickly escalate, the role they may play in cyberbullying, and ways to help stop cyberbullying
- Have students review a case where cyberbullying actually was brought to trial. Reviewing all aspects of the case, from what was done, to technologies used, to how bystanders behaved, to the actual consequence may open their eyes to the significance of cyberbullying
- With students, review samples of Twitter conversations and determine if cyberbullying actually took place
- Have students join the Twitter #cyberbullying discussion, sharing information, bringing awareness or participating with words of encouragement
- Facilitate a classroom discussion on how oversharing online can invite Cyberbullying to occur

Where can I learn more?

- <http://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/index.html>
- <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/educators/scope-and-sequence#grades-9-12> - then click on “Cyberbullying”
- <http://cyberbullying.us/>
- <http://stopcyberbullying.org/teens/index.html>
- <http://www.ncpc.org/topics/cyberbullying>
- http://www.teachhub.com/bully-free-classroom-advice-educators?utm_content=buffer0c62f&utm_medium=social&utm_source=linkedin.com&utm_campaign=buffer
- [YouTube](#) has some great videos that demonstrate examples of cyberbullying and their effects on the victim. Please note that unfortunately, many people who have commented on these videos are cyber-bullies themselves and their language in these comments are vulgar and inappropriate. If using YouTube as a resource for this topic, be sensitive to your audience and the comments found for the various videos available.

¹ <http://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/>

² <http://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/#whycyberbullying>