

Cyberbullying

Has your child suffered from bullying carried out through the use of technology?

This is cyber bullying. It is intentional and repeated, cruel and hurtful behaviour carried out via the use of technology such as email, chat rooms, discussion boards, instant messaging, use of cameras and using social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Snapchat, Bebo, Twitter. Some examples of cyber bullying include:

- creating fake profiles that are mean or hurtful
- people trying to stop individuals from contacting others
- sending unwanted messages or material which may be cruel or threatening online
- putting embarrassing photos of people on the web.

In Tasmania, it is illegal to intentionally send someone with offensive material (such as emails, photos or messages) or act in any other way for the purpose of causing them physical or mental harm, apprehension or fear.

Help your child by teaching the following protective behaviours:

- Don't give out private information such as passwords, names, addresses, phone numbers, school names, photos or family information etc online to people you don't know or people you don't trust. This information can be used by bullies and others to harm.
- Don't exchange photographs/other images or give your email address to people on the internet that you don't know and trust.
- Don't send messages when you're angry/don't reply to messages from a bully; they will often get bored and stop the bullying if you don't respond.
- Log out and stop messaging if you are feeling harassed.
- If you are being bullied online or on your mobile you can block the person and report them.
- Keep a record of calls, messages, posts and emails that are hurtful or harmful.
- Set up the privacy options on social networking sites to reflect what you are comfortable with.
- Take a stand against cyber bullying. Speak out whenever you see someone being mean to another person online. Most young people respond better to criticism from their peers than to disapproval from adults.

What can your child do if they are being cyberbullied?

Tell someone about it. Tell a trusted adult, whether it's a parent, a teacher, school counsellor, a family friend, an older brother or sister. If your child is being cyberbullied by someone at school let a teacher or school counsellor know. Our policies and practices here at school ensure that reports of bullying are investigated and dealt with appropriately.

Use these web sites to contact experts:

- [Bullying No Way](#)
- [Kids Help Line](#) 1800 55 1800
- [Reach Out](#)
- [LifeLine](#) 13 11 14

Report any incident of online harassment and physical threats to your local police and your Internet Service Provider (ISP).

Further action can be taken out by contacting the Ombudsman:
ombudsman@justice.tas.gov.au

Some good websites which deal with cyberbullying:

- www.bullyingnoway.com.au can provide you with tactics that you can use to respond to bullying
- www.staysmartonline.gov.au
- <http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/>
- www.netsmartz.org
- www.thinkuknow.org.au/
- www.soso.org.au/

To find out more about cyberbullying and how to get help you can also go to the [Australian Communications and Media Authority \(ACMA\) Cybersmart Program](#)

The Australian Human Rights Commission (1300 656 419) has a complaint handling service that may investigate complaints of discrimination, harassment and bullying:

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/complaints_information/index.html