

CYBER–STALKING / CYBER–BULLYING SAFETY TIPS

Some of the advice/guidance that parents and educators can provide to young people to help reduce cyber-stalking and cyber-bullying specifically are outlined below. (Note: This list is not exhaustive.)

Keep personal information private. Personal photos, phone numbers, passwords, home addresses, birthdays and other information is frequently used by cyber-stalkers/bullies.

Refrain from responding to derogatory and harassing online communications as the bully is likely looking to get a reaction to gain power. However, do not ignore the problem; keep a record of the communications in case they are needed as evidence.

Save the evidence. Keep copies of all communications, including e-mails (with header information) and text messages. Also, take *screen shots* of comments and images and note the time and date of the harassment. (on Windows PC PrintScreen feature on MAC Command+shift+4)

Utilize reporting or abuse tools on social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat) in order to have offensive content and accounts of cyber-bullies removed. If the abuse includes threats of physical harm, inform parents and contact the police.

Refrain from retaliating by sending nasty or derogatory e-mails back to the cyber-bully as this reinforces the bully's behaviour and maintains the cycle of bullying.

Block or ban the cyber-bully by utilizing privacy tools on social media, or leave any chat room where cyber-bullying is occurring. Aggressors sometimes get bored and stop the harassment when they receive no reaction.

Seek help by talking to a friend or trusted adult, such as a parent, school counsellor, teacher, principal or police school resource officer.

Do not just be a bystander. Forwarding harassing messages or doing nothing only empowers cyber-bullies. Try to help victims by offering support and assisting them to report the abuse. (Schools can really help create a supportive environment by providing reporting systems that allow students to report incidents anonymously).