

Cyber Bullying: An in depth look

Although not new another troublesome phenomenon brought about by the internet age is the prevalence of online or electronic, “cyber-bullying”. As access to popular social media platforms for young people continue to grow kid’s today face unparalleled difficulties which are creating major issues in today’s online world.

According to Uknowkids.com and other sources an estimated one fifth to one third of tweens (ages 9-12) and teens have been cyber-bullied at least one time. This bullying is believed to have directly contributed to many suicide deaths giving rise to the term “Bullycide.” There have been reports including some in the national news of young people taking their own lives after continued online harassment or cyber bullying. The US Department of Health and Human Services reports 160,000 children miss school daily because of bullying fears.

In a study from Yale University teens being bullied are 2 to 9 times more likely to commit suicide when compared to those not bullied. Bullying is known to dramatically impact victims and can lead to:

- Decreased self esteem
- Increased risky behaviors (promiscuity and drug use)
- Feelings of powerlessness, diminished social skills
- Fear of going to school, poor grades
- Suicidal thoughts
- Becoming a bully as well

In England one study reports that bullying was a factor in more than half of all teen suicides, an alarming rate and the study adds that girls age 10-14 are at highest risk for bully related suicide.

Types of cyberbullying that have been identified in recent years:

- 1-Harassment-Repeatedly enacting abusive behavior against someone online
- 2-Masquerading-Pretending to be someone you are not in order to hurt someone else.
- 3-Exclusion-When someone is intentionally left out of a group message, event or photo
- 4-Doxing-Releasing someone’s private information to cause them harm
- 5-Trolling-Provoking or baiting someone just to get a rise or reaction out of them.

Group harassment: This type of onslaught can be relentless, especially when groups of kids start harassing someone together, an activity so common it’s known as “brigading”.

Dating back to 2014 Ask.fm had been the most notorious site for cyber-bullying, enabling users to ask questions and receive anonymous answers. References from a past story in the NY Daily News indicate that Instagram is now the place where cyberbullying occurs most often with 42% of those who experience being bullied identifying that social media platform. Not far behind was Facebook at 37%

Nearly 9 in 10 teenagers report having witnessed someone being cruel to others on a social media site. Bystanders can also be impacted and experience feelings of guilt and shame, fear, helplessness or become a target or even join in on the bullying as well.

About six-in-ten parents worry about their own teen getting bullied online, but most are confident they can teach their teen about acceptable online behavior

As with all new and emerging problems connected to the internet and technology, counter measures in response are much slower to evolve. Parents should continuously monitor social media activity and check children's sites and pages periodically. Have a conversation with your child about bullying. Encourage them to alert you immediately.

Maintain an open dialogue with your children and encourage expression of thoughts and feelings. Above all let them know that you are always there for them and to alert you right away if anything occurs that makes them uncomfortable.

For more information and resources to help prevent cyberbullying visit this dedicated website created by the US Department of Health and Human Services
StopBullying.gov

Some additional resources available from that site

There are two sources of federally collected data on youth bullying:

- The 2019 [School Crime Supplement](#) to the National Crime Victimization Survey (National Center for Education Statistics and Bureau of Justice) indicates that, nationwide, about 16 percent of students in grades 9–12 experienced cyberbullying.
- The 2019 [Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System](#) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) indicates that an estimated 15.7% of high school students were electronically bullied in the 12 months prior to the survey.

See also "[Frequency of Bullying.](#)"

Another great resource for parents on many subjects and topics affecting your children is

<https://resources.uknowkids.com/blog>

LECSA EAP 631-851-1295