

# CYBERBULLYING

**Quick Fact:** Did you know that About one-third of online teens (ages 12-17) have been cyberbullied, and girls are more likely to be involved.

Lenhart A. Cyberbullying and Online Teens. Pew Internet & American Life Project, 2007.



Wikipedia defines cyberbullying as “actions that use information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is intended to harm another or others.” In other words cyberbullying is just what it sounds like, bullying through the internet, cell phone, or instant messaging. It can start out all too easily and often spiral out of control.

Cyberbullying may transpire in many forms:

- Flaming and Trolling – sending or posting hostile messages intended to “inflame” the emotions of others
- Happy-Slapping – recording someone being harassed or bullied in a way that usually involves physical abuse, then posting the video online for public viewing
- Photoshopping – doctoring digital images so that the main subject is placed in a compromising or embarrassing situation
- Threats – sending messages that involve threats to a person’s physical safety
- Rumor Spreading – spreading gossip through e-mail, text messaging, or social networking sites

These are signs your child may be a victim of cyberbullying:

- Avoids the computer, cell phone, and other technological devices or appears stressed when receiving an e-mail, instant message, or text
- Withdraws from family and friends or acts reluctant to attend school and social events
- Avoids conversations about computer use
- Exhibits signs of low self-esteem including depression and/or fear
- Has declining grades
- Has poor eating or sleeping habits

# TIPS

## PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM BULLYING

- **Tell** your child not to respond to rude e-mails, messages, and comments.
- **Save** the evidence, such as e-mail and text messages, and take screenshots of comments and images. Also, take note of the date and time when the harassment occurs.
- **Contact** your Internet service provider (ISP) or cell phone provider. Ask the website administrator or ISP to remove any Web page created to hurt your child.
- **Block**, If harassment is via e-mail, social networking sites, IM, and chat rooms, instruct your child to “block” bullies or delete your child’s current account and open a new one. If harassment is via text and phone messages, change the phone number and instruct your child to only share the new number with trustworthy people. Also, check out phone features that may allow the number to be blocked.
- **Inform**, report cyberbullying to Clark administration.

