



Cyberbullying Tips for Parents

The Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use defines Cyber-Bullying as “using the internet or other mobile devices to send or post harmful or cruel text or images to bully others.” The internet, instant messaging on computers, text messaging from phones are all tremendous advances in technology that bring great benefits but also open up a whole new avenue for bullying. It is important to be aware of how these can be used for bullying. The following gives some examples:

- ❖ Sending hurtful message or rumors with the click of a key
- ❖ Creating websites that have stories, pictures, and jokes ridiculing others
- ❖ Posting pictures of classmates online and asking students to rate them
- ❖ Engaging someone in instant messaging, tricking the person into revealing sensitive information and forwarding it to others, or using three-way calling in which a person may lead the other into saying something mean about a third person who is also on the line
- ❖ Taking a picture of a person in the locker room using a camera phone; then, sending the picture to others

Being aware that this is our new reality, we need to be prepared as parents to educate our children as to the appropriate use of technology, to monitor the use, and to intervene if necessary.

The following lists some suggestions to combat cyber-bullying:

- ✓ Become computer knowledgeable, educate yourself on the terminology and how to navigate a computer so you can speak the same language as your child.
- ✓ Do not allow your child to have a computer in their room or other isolated area. Computers need to be placed in an area that easily allows you to monitor your child’s activity on the computer and the time that is being spent on the computer.
- ✓ Have a discussion about Internet safety – how the internet can be helpful and when it can be dangerous. Review safety rules for internet usage.
- ✓ Talk to your child about cyber-bullying. Ask your child if she understands what cyber-bullying is and if she has ever been cyber-bullied or has participated in writing or forwarding hurtful messages to others.
- ✓ Inquire about filtering and parental control programs to install on your computer – decide if it is right for you. However, do not rely on them for your only protection against cyber-bullying or other predators.

The following are possible websites that translate text messages and help you define those “techno” terms: www.transl8it.com and www.whatis.com used by your child.

-from Bullying in the Girl’s World (2008) Diane Senn, Ed.S. NBCT