

# BULLYING & INTERNET SAFETY

## What is 'Bullying'?



- ❖ Bullying is a form of inter-child aggression which occurs when a child is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more children.
- ❖ What distinguishes bullying from the usual conflicts between children is that bullying behaviour is a combination of power and aggression.
- ❖ Bullying may be physical (hitting or kicking); verbal (name-calling, insults, racist comments and constant teasing); relational (gossip, ostracism); or reactive (taunting which invites retaliation).
- ❖ Many victims of bullying are different in some way, which often explains their lack of power. Children who are fatter, skinnier, wear glasses, have speech impediments or a learning disability are common victims. They can become isolated and withdrawn, anxious and insecure, which may increase their likelihood of being targeted.

# BULLYING WARNING SIGNS

The following behaviours may indicate that a child is bullying others or, if bullying isn't yet evident or hasn't been reported, has the potential to become a bully.

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|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Enjoys feeling powerful and in control.</li><li>2. Seeks to dominate and/or manipulate peers.</li><li>3. May be popular with other students, who envy his or her power.</li><li>4. Is physically larger and stronger than his or her peers.</li><li>5. Is impulsive.</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>6. Loves to win at everything; hates to lose at anything. Is both a poor winner (boastful, arrogant) and a poor loser.</li><li>7. Seems to derive satisfaction or pleasure from others' fear, discomfort, or pain.</li><li>8. Seems overly concerned with others "disrespecting" him or her; equates</li></ol> |
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- others "deserved it," "asked for it," or provoked him or her; a conflict is always someone else's "fault."
9. Seems to have little or no empathy for others.
10. Seems to have little or no compassion for others.
11. Seems unable or unwilling to see things from another person's perspective or "walk in someone else's shoes."
12. Seems willing to use and abuse other people to get what he or she wants.
13. Defends his or her negative actions by insisting that
14. Is good at hiding negative behaviors or doing them where adults can't notice.
15. Gets excited when conflicts arise between others.
16. Stays cool during conflicts in which he or she is directly involved.
17. Exhibits little or no emotion (flat affect) when talking about his or her part in a conflict.

18. Blames other people for his or her problems.
19. Refuses to accept responsibility for his or her negative behaviors.
20. Shows little or no remorse for his or her negative behaviors.
21. Lies in an attempt to stay out of trouble.
22. Expects to be "misunderstood," "disrespected," and picked on; attacks before he or she can be attacked.
23. Interprets ambiguous or innocent acts as
- purposeful and hostile; uses these as excuses to strike out at others verbally or physically.
24. "Tests" your authority by committing minor infractions, then waits to see what you'll do about it.
25. Disregards or breaks school and/or class rules.
26. Is generally defiant or oppositional toward adults.
27. Seeks/craves attention; seems equally satisfied with negative or positive attention.

28. Attracts more than the usual amount of negative attention from others; is yelled at or disciplined more often than other students.

29. Is street-smart.

30. Has a strong sense of self-esteem.

**Tip: This is contrary to the prevailing myth that bullies have low self-esteem. In fact, there's little evidence to support the belief that bullies victimize others because they feel bad about themselves.**

31. Seems mainly concerned with his or her own pleasure and well-being.

32. Seems antisocial or lacks social skills.

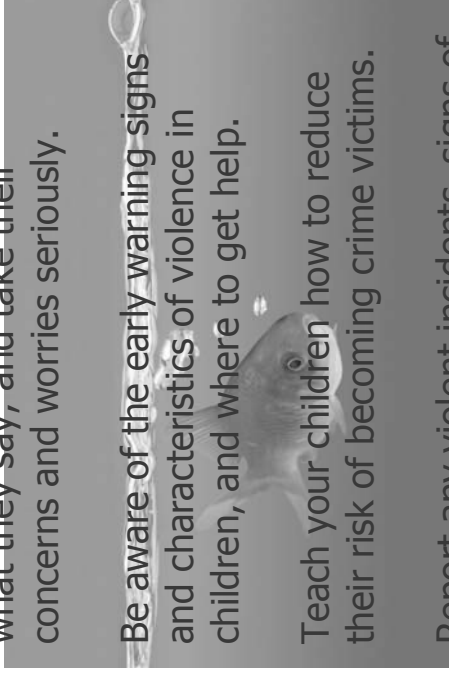
33. Has difficulty fitting into groups.

34. Has a close network of a few friends (actually "henchmen" or "lieutenants"), who follow along with whatever he or she wants to do.

35. May have problems at school or at home; lacks coping skills.

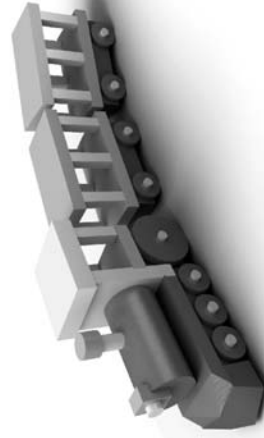
## What Parents Can Do

- Be aware of what your children are doing, who they are with and where they are at all times.
- When you ask your children about their day at school, carefully listen to what they say, and take their concerns and worries seriously.
- Be aware of the early warning signs and characteristics of violence in children, and where to get help.
- Teach your children how to reduce their risk of becoming crime victims.
- Report any violent incidents, signs of gang activity, threats, weapons or rumours of potential incidents in your community to the police.
- Help your children learn nonviolent ways to handle frustration, anger and conflict.



- Create opportunities to discuss violence issues and prevention methods in your home.
- Encourage your children to report crimes or activities that could potentially be of a violent nature.
- Encourage your school and community to take an active stand against violence.
- If your school or community has a Safe School Plan, help promote it by encouraging youth- and parent-led antiviolence activities and programs.

From the *Canadian Safe School Network* -  
[www.canadiansafeschools.com](http://www.canadiansafeschools.com)



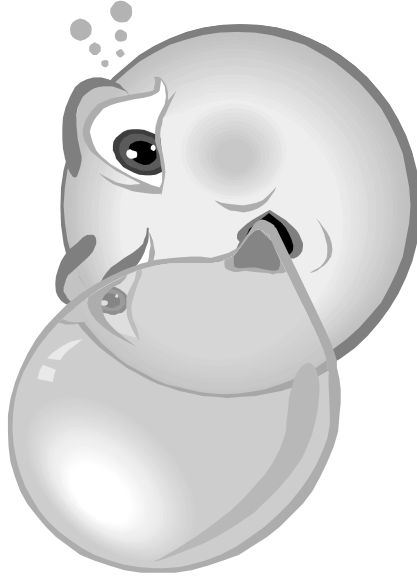
## If Your Child is a Victim

- Be available for and reassure your child that you will help sort out the problem.
- Validate your child's feelings as normal.
- Let your child know it's not their fault.
- Help your child be specific.
- Believe your child. Make no value judgements.
- Never blame. Bullying is *never* the victims fault.
- Do not suggest physically fighting back... ever!
- Ask how he/she has tried to stop the bullying.

- Suggest possible alternatives.
- Suggest he/she play in a different, safer school area, closer to a supervising adult.
- Privately share your child's concern with school personnel.
- Remember your child might be scared or embarrassed to tell you. Be patient.
- Acknowledge to your child that name-calling *does* hurt.
- Do *not* approach the family of the other child.

- Do *not* blame the teacher or the administration.
- Offer to assist with anti-bullying initiatives at

- school or become a school volunteer.
- Remember, you are your child's most important teacher.



## If Your Child is Bullying

- Bullies rarely have close friends and often have difficulty getting along well with others.
- Check whether your child has more money, possessions or purchases than he/she can explain.
- Think through whether your child is or might be a bully.
- Ask yourself whether your child is imitating behaviour from your home.
- Avoid severe punishment. It doesn't work.

- Check out the fairness of your rules and limits.
- Be aware that he/she will likely deny or minimize his/her involvement.
- Do *not* lose your temper ...but *do* say that bullying is not okay.
- Get the facts and ask to be kept informed. Privately talk to the child's teacher.
- Be open and share information with school personnel.
- Use role play to teach different viewpoints.

- Acknowledge the positive side of your child.
- Seek out parenting

- classes or workshops.
- Don't hesitate to ask for help.

## Student Checklist

### You and your classmates

- Do you know about the different roles students play in bullying, such as
  - bully
  - victim
  - bully-victim; or
  - bystander
- Do you know how bullying, sexual harassment, and racial discrimination hurt others?
- Do you feel comfortable solving problems with other students at your school?
- Are you part of school teams, clubs or other activities?



### At School

- Has your school given you information about these issues?
- Do you know if your school has an anti-bullying/harassment committee? Do you know what the committee does?
- Do adults supervise the areas of your school where bullying happens most?

- Is there a Safe School or Anti-bullying assembly planned for this year? Will you go to the assembly?
- Are student problems talked about at school assemblies? Do you have a role or job you enjoy at the assembly?
- Do teachers and adults help to explain and supervise peer helper or peer mentoring programs?
- If you have problems with teachers or school staff, do you talk to an adult about it?
- Is there a way to privately report bullying, harassment, and racial discrimination at your school?
- Do you know if your school provides students with help and counseling? Are parents invited to these sessions?

### **In Class**

- Does your school help students who are suspended from school by telling them what their homework is, or offering counseling?
- Does your teacher set aside time to discuss student relationships with the whole class?
- Have you filled out (completed) a student survey?

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- Have you talked about the topics on the survey with your parent/guardian, teacher or other adult?



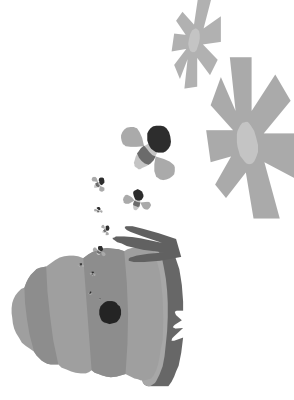
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## Some Tips / Suggestions on How You Can Deal with Bullying

- ❖ Tell your parents or other trusted adults. They can help stop the bullying.
- ❖ If you are bullied at school, tell your teacher, school counselor, or principal. Telling is not tattling.
- ❖ Don't fight back. Don't try to bully those who bully you.
- ❖ Try not to show anger or fear. Students who bully like to see that they can upset you.
- ❖ Calmly tell the student to stop...or say nothing and then walk away.
- ❖ Use humor, if this is easy for you to do. (For example, if a student makes fun of your clothing, laugh and say, "Yeah, I think this shirt is kind of funny-looking, too.")
- ❖ Try to avoid situations in which bullying is likely to happen. You might want to:

- Avoid areas of the school where there are not many students or teachers around.
- Make sure you aren't alone in the bathroom or locker room.
- Sit near the front of the bus.
- Don't bring expensive

- Sit with a group of friends at lunch.
- Take a different route through hallways or walk with friends or a teacher to your classes.



# Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying occurs where bullies use modern technology - cell-phones, the internet, web pages, etc., as a means to harass others.

This type of bullying takes bullying beyond the school and into the private life of the bullied.

Examples of this can be creating 'hate' web pages about a certain student, online harassment, or taking compromising photos of individuals and mass distributing them.

Cyberbullying doesn't have to occur from someone you know, the bullying could be someone the bullied has never met before.



# Preventing Cyberbullying



- Keep computers in accessible, commonly used spaces and keep tabs on your child's internet activity.
- Tell your child not to reply to bullies online.
- Encourage your child to not keep bullying to themselves.
- Talk to your cell phone/internet provider about incidents.
- Don't delete messages from bullies. They are necessary for proving your case to the proper authorities.
- Inform the proper authorities – principals, teachers, police.

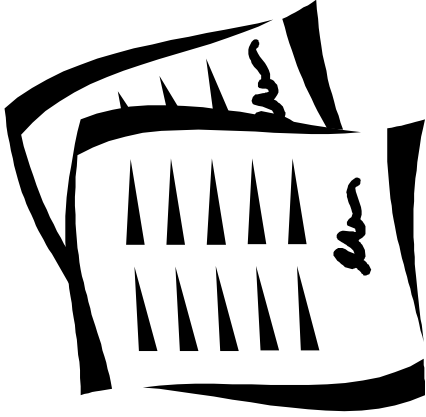
For more information on cyberbullying and how to prevent it visit [www.cyberbullying.ca](http://www.cyberbullying.ca).

## Creating a Family Internet Agreement

**A family Internet agreement is a set of guidelines or rules for home Internet use.**

An online agreement should offer your kids very clear guidelines on:

- where they can go and what they can do online
- how much time they can spend on the Internet
- what to do if something happens that makes them feel uncomfortable
- how they can protect their personal information
- how to stay safe in interactive environments
- how to behave ethically and responsibly online



## Sample Family Online Agreements

Carol and Mike Jones have three children: Sally is 7, Jason is 9 and Brad is 14. Sally loves anything that has to do with space, and Jason thinks dinosaurs are really cool. There are no museums in the Jones's small town, so Sally and Jason like to go to places on the Internet where they can learn more about their interests. Sally favourite Web site is the Canadian Space Agency's KidSpace. Jason searches all over the Web for great dinosaur stuff, like newsgroups, Web sites and games. Brad uses the Internet for homework and chatting with friends.

Carol and Mike both work full time, so they sat down with their kids to determine a family online agreement that the baby-sitter, Kim, can refer to when they're not around. They've also made a separate agreement for their teenager.

## Sally and Jason's Online Agreement

- Either Mom or Dad or Kim has to be with us when we go on the Internet.
- We are allowed on the Web for one hour on school nights, only after we've done our homework and cleaned up the supper table. Sally gets to do the surfing Mondays and Wednesdays, and Jason gets to do the surfing Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- We will only use Berit's Best Sites for Children or Yahoo!igans! to find Web sites.
- When searching for information online we will use these filtered search engines: Ask Jeeves for Kids or KidsClick!
- We will not give out any personal information online without Mom or Dad's permission.
- Only Mom or Dad can download our e-mail. They will tell us if we have any new mail in the family mailbox.
- If we get any e-mail from a stranger, we will tell Mom or Dad right away.
- We won't open it without their permission.
- We are only allowed to use monitored chat rooms and Mom or Dad must be with us when we're chatting.

- We will never be rude or mean to anyone online.
- We will check with Mom and Dad before downloading software or games from the Internet.

In signing this family online agreement, we promise to follow these rules. If we break our family agreement, we understand that we will not be allowed on the Internet at all for one week.

Mom \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dad \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Sally \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Jason \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



### **Brad's Online Agreement**

- The maximum I can be online for fun is one hour on weekdays and two hours on weekends. There is no time limit when using the Internet for homework.
- I will not buy or sell anything over the Net without my parent's permission.
- I will tell my parents before downloading any games, music files or software from the Internet.
- I will not visit gambling sites or sites containing offensive or illegal material.
- I will not disable any filtering software that my parents have put on the computer.
- I will not open any e-mail or files from strangers.
- I will read the privacy policy of a Web site before giving out any personal information and make sure they will not share my info with a third party.
- I will only use monitored chat rooms for teens and I will stay in the public area and not go off into private rooms with strangers.
- I will only talk to people in instant messaging that I have met in person.
- I will always behave responsibly and ethically when online. I will always use Netiquette when using instant messaging, chat rooms and e-mail.

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- If I ever arrange to meet an Internet friend in person, I will tell Mom and dad and one of them will accompany me for the meeting.
- I will tell my parents right away if I get into any kind of trouble or if I feel uncomfortable in any situation on the Net.

In signing this family online agreement, I promise to follow these rules. If I break my family agreement, I understand that I will not be allowed on the Internet at all for one week.

Mom \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dad \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Brad \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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## Online Safety Resources

- CyberTipline and the Internet Safety Quiz for Kids - [www.missingkids.com/cybertip](http://www.missingkids.com/cybertip)
- Operation Blue Ridge Thunder - [www.blueridgethunder.com](http://www.blueridgethunder.com)
- The Librarian's Guide to Cyberspace for Parents and Kids  
[www.ala.org/parents/greatsites/guide.html](http://www.ala.org/parents/greatsites/guide.html)

## Parental Information Websites

- [www.getnetwise.org](http://www.getnetwise.org)
- [www.safekids.com](http://www.safekids.com)
- [www.safeteens.com](http://www.safeteens.com)
- [www.safesurfin.com](http://www.safesurfin.com)

## Sites for Parents and Caregivers

- Child Safety on the Information Highway - [www.safekids.com/child\\_safety.htm](http://www.safekids.com/child_safety.htm)
- Connect for Kids - [www.connectforkids.org](http://www.connectforkids.org)
- KidsHealth.org - [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)
- Mother Goose Pages – <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~pfa/dreamhouse/nursery/rhymes.html>

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## Sites for Kids

- Harry Potter - [www.scholastic.com/harrypotter](http://www.scholastic.com/harrypotter)
- Seussville - [www.seussville.com](http://www.seussville.com)
- Time for Kids - [www.timeforkids.com](http://www.timeforkids.com)

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