Cyberbullying is the repeated use of the internet, mobile phones and other technologies to bully, intimidate and humiliate others. It differs from other bullying because it often continues outside of school and school hours. It can be 24/7 and sometimes you may not know who is behind it.

What does cyberbullying look like?

Cyberbullying might occur over the internet, in instant messaging (IM), social networking sites, blogs or through online gaming. It can also occur over the phone, by SMS or MMS, or voice and video calls.

Why do people cyberbully?

There are a number of reasons why people might cyberbully others, including:

- think it's amusing
- don't like the person
- don't consider it to be a big deal, "it's just words"
- don't believe there are any consequences
- think they can be anonymous

None of these reasons, or any others, can justify cyberbullying.

What are the effects of cyberbullying?

Things that happen on the internet or mobile phones can have offline consequences. Some of the effects of cyberbullying may be:

- anger
- embarrassment
- fear
- poor performance at school
- loss of confidence and self-esteem
- revenge cyberbullying or retaliation
- self-harm, even suicide

Cyberbullying hurts people. It can ruin lives. There could even be legal consequences for harassing or threatening someone online.

What can you do about cyberbullying?

Don't start it! Cyberbullying is never acceptable. Think before you post something mean, or send someone a hurtful message.

Don't be a part of it! As a bystander, you can do something to stop cyberbullying. If someone tries to get you involved in cyberbullying, say NO.

Don't let it get out of control! You need to tell someone if you are being cyberbullied so that they can help you to make it stop.

Stand up! Be an active bystander and tell a trusted adult if you see cyberbullying occuring.

How can you stay in control?

- learn how to block and report unwanted communications
- find out your school's policy on cyberbullying
- research what policies your Internet Service Provider (ISP) and any online sites and applications you are using have on cyberbullying
- tell someone!

How can you help your friends?

- support the person who is being bullied - you never know when you might need help too
- encourage them to speak to a trusted adult
- don't forward or pass on any cyberbullying materials such as links to humiliating videos or gossip texts
- create a positive culture in your school and community which doesn't tolerate bullying in any form

Most importantly, know where you can go for help! Speak to an adult you trust if something makes you feel uncomfortable. You can also contact:

- Reach Out: www.reachout.com.au
- Bullying. No Way!: www.bullyingnoway.com.au
- Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
- Youth Beyond Blue: www.youthbeyondblue.com
- The website, application or phone carrier that you were using at the time

The internet and mobile phones provide great ways to express yourself and communicate with others. It's important to make sure they're used responsibly so that everyone has an enjoyable online experience. It's all about respecting yourself and others.

1. Use a strong password, a combination of upper and lower case letters, numbers and symbols, eg P@$$w0rd!

2. Use secure web browers, those with https at the start of the URL and a padlock or other indication that it is secure, when sharing sensitive information.

3. Update your operating system regularly and make sure you have antivirus software installed on your computer and other devices – phones too!

4. Avoid opening or responding to emails from people you do not know and aren't expecting – They could contain a virus or malicious software.

5. Don't give out private information over the internet or mobile phones about you, your family and friends. Also think about what information might be contained in photos you share.

6. Only accept friend requests from people you know and trust. When it comes to friends and followers online it is not a popularity contest!

7. Think before you post! Once you've pressed 'Send' you can't get that back. Who might see that photo, video or comment? Where might it end up?

8. Make sure your social media accounts are set to private or friends only! Also make sure you check your privacy settings regularly as they can change without you knowing.

9. Tell your friends to ask for your permission before uploading or tagging you in a photo – Make sure you do the same!

10. Don't post inappropriate or illegal content - It is impossible to permanently delete digital content once it has been shared.

Most importantly, know where you can go for help! Speak to an adult you trust if something makes you feel uncomfortable online or on a mobile phone. You can also contact:

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- Bullying. No Way!: www.bullyingnoway.com.au
- Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
- Youth Beyond Blue: www.youthbeyondblue.com
- The website, application or phone carrier that you were using at the time

For more information visit www.thinkuknow.org.au