

## Social Media Bullying Information

### What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is the use of electronic devices and media to repeatedly harass, threaten, humiliate and otherwise hassle people.

According to [Common Sense Media](#), “Whether it’s creating a fake social media page (i.e., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat) to impersonate a fellow student, repeatedly sending hurtful text messages and images, or posting cruel comments on the internet, cyberbullying can have a devastating effect. Nasty comments, lies, embarrassing photos and videos, and snide polls can be spread widely through instant messaging (IM) or phone texting, and by posts on social networking sites. It can happen anytime — at school or home — and can involve large groups of children. The combination of the boldness created by being anonymous and the desire to be seen as “cool” can cause a child who normally wouldn’t say anything mean face-to-face to show off for other children.”

### Defining Bullying/Cyberbullying

*“Isn’t ‘cyberbullying’ just another form of ‘bullying’? Why label it as a separate issue?”*

In addition to Common Sense Media’s definition, we also reference [stopbullying.gov](#) when asked the difference between bullying and cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is a form of bullying. Ideally, there would not be a need to add “cyber” in front of “bullying.” However, based on regional, community and school events we have attended in the past few years regarding “cyberbullying,” we believe it is important to continue to make the distinction. While anonymity is difficult in a physical setting, typically online, students falsely assume they can remain anonymous and therefore will not be held accountable for anything they post/upload. For this reason something that perhaps would have never been an issue face-to-face, becomes one. Images or video are often altered using editing tools and then uploaded to YouTube, spreading the reach far beyond school hours and school grounds.

Whether a bullying incident happens in the cafeteria or online, the damage to a student’s well-being and the negative impact on the school culture can have far-reaching consequences. We appreciate that many of our favorite go-to resources on bullying, such as [StopBullying.gov](#), also recognize both the differences and the connecting threads between bullying and cyberbullying.

### Possible forums for social media bullying

- Internet websites with free registration and/or easy registration
- Internet websites offering peer-to-peer instant messaging
- Internet websites offering comment forums or sections
- Internet websites offering image or video posting platforms

## Defining Bullying and Cyberbullying

### Bullying

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.
- Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

### Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites.

Why cyberbullying is different from bullying:

- Cyberbullying can happen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and reach a kid even when he or she is alone. It can happen any time of the day or night.
- Cyberbullying messages and images can be posted anonymously and distributed quickly to a very wide audience. It can be difficult and sometimes impossible to trace the source.
- Deleting inappropriate or harassing messages, texts, and pictures is extremely difficult after they have been posted or sent.

Examples: mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles

## Pioneer Board Policies – Bullying

The Board of Trustees recognizes the harmful effects of bullying on student well-being, student learning, and school attendance and desires to provide a safe school environment that protects students from physical and emotional harm. No individual or group shall, through physical, written, verbal, visual, or other means, harass, sexually harass, threaten, intimidate, cyberbully, cause bodily injury to, or commit hate violence against any student or school personnel, or retaliate against them for filing a complaint or participating in the complaint resolution process.

### Examples of Prohibited Conduct

Bullying is an aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power between individuals with the intent to cause emotional or physical harm. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or social/relational and may involve a single severe act or repetition or potential repetition of a

deliberate act. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, any act described in Education Code 48900(r).

Cyberbullying includes the electronic creation or transmission of harassing communications, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account or assuming that person's online identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

Examples of the types of conduct that may constitute bullying and are prohibited by the district include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical bullying: An act that inflicts harm upon a person's body or possessions, such as hitting, kicking, pinching, spitting, tripping, pushing, taking or breaking someone's possessions, or making cruel or rude hand gestures
  2. Verbal bullying: An act that includes saying or writing hurtful things, such as teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting, or threats to cause harm
  3. Social/relational bullying: An act that harms a person's reputation or relationships, such as leaving a person out of an activity on purpose, influencing others not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors, or embarrassing someone in public
  4. Cyberbullying: An act such as sending demeaning or hateful text messages or emails, spreading rumors by email or by posting on social networking sites, or posting embarrassing or sharing photos, videos, web site, or fake profiles
- [BP 5131.2 – Bullying](#)
  - [BP 5145.3 – Nondiscrimination/Harassment/Intimidation/Bullying](#)

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## **Pioneer Incident Reporting System**

Students, parents, or community members may email principals directly to report incidents of bullying/cyberbullying, discrimination and/or harassment, harm to school and/or property or harm to self. Principal email addresses can be found on each schools' website.

For emergencies and/or urgent situations requiring immediate help, people will still be encouraged to call 911.

In Pioneer District, the community is encouraged that “if you see something, or know something, to say something.”

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## Leading Cyberbullying Research Institutes

- The [Cyberbullying Research Center](#) is dedicated to providing up-to-date information about the nature, extent, causes, and consequences of cyberbullying among adolescents. Researchers Justin Patchin and Sameer Hinduja regularly update this site to provide “information about the nature and extent of online aggression among adolescents.”
  - PEW Internet and American Life Project – [Teens, kindness and cruelty on social network sites](#).
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## Cyberbullying Prevention – 5 Things Parents Can Do

1. **Teach your child empathy.** Nothing drives home a point faster than walking a mile in someone else’s shoes. If children truly understand what someone else is going through, they’re less likely to bully someone — or passively witness others being bullied.
  2. **Help children understand the line between funny and cruel.** Children’s online communication is often purposely ambiguous or accidentally cruel — both of which can lead to misunderstandings. If drama starts brewing, ask your child to call or speak face to face with his/her friend to clear it up.
  3. **Make sure they talk to someone (even if it’s not you).** As children enter the middle school years, their circle of friends and trusted adults widens. Children need a responsible adult to confide in — their school counselor, their music teacher, even the parent of a friend. Talk to your children about who they can go to if trouble is brewing.
  4. **Help your child be an upstander — not a bystander.** Children are hesitant to get involved, in case the bully turns their sights on them. But there are ways to allow your child to work behind the scenes to reach out to the victim, get an adult involved, and prevent more cruel behavior.
  5. **Show your child how to stop cyberbullying.** Tell children not to respond or retaliate. Not feeding the bully can stop the cycle. And — if anything does happen — save the evidence.
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## 5 Ways to Stop Cyberbullying

1. **Don’t respond or retaliate.** If you are angry or hurt, you might say things you regret later.
2. **Block the bully.** Block phone numbers, screen names and email addresses and remove the person from friend/buddy lists.
3. **Save the evidence.** Print out or take screenshots of abusive messages and keep them as proof.
4. **Report it.** Most websites/apps have rules against cyberbullying. Check out the sites community guidelines or terms of use to report abuse.
5. **Tell a friend or trusted adult.** Telling a teacher or a parent isn’t tattling, it’s standing up for yourself.

Source: Common Sense Media – [5 Ways to Stop Cyberbullies](#)

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## Cyberbullying Resource Links for Students

- [Hero in the Hallway](#) – Video created by a team of high school and college students to empower younger students to take a stand against bullying and exclusion.
- [Be an Upstander](#) – Video by the NED show, gives four tips that help kids go from bystander to upstander.
- [It Starts with Me](#) – Video created by Ryan Miller and staff/students at the Stevenson School in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.
- [Wanted](#) – PSA created by EGUSD students Antone & team (Foulks Ranch Elementary School).
- [It's Ok to Tell](#) – Netsmartz: Clicky, Nettie, and Webster race to stop Look-At-Dis Louie from spreading bad pictures online. But they better get to him fast, before he turns the whole town gray!
- [Bystander Revolution](#) – Over 300 short videos for a wide variety of problems and situations, each with a focus on simple but powerful actions bystanders can take to help. – “No matter who you are or what you’re facing, you can find personal stories, suggestions, and encouragement from someone who has dealt with a similar issue. Search by problem or solution to find tips from people who have been targets, people who have been bystanders, and even people who have bullied.”
- [NetSmartz – Cyberbullying](#) – Keeping Kids and Teens safer on the Internet.

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## Cyberbullying Resource Links for Parents

### Comprehensive Parent Guides/Fact Sheets

- Common Sense Media – [Parenting, Media, and Everything in Between – Helpful articles, resources and information related to Cyberbullying](#)
- Connect Safely – [A Parents’ Guide to Cyberbullying](#)
- Connect Safely – [Parent, Educator & Youth Guide to LGBTQ Cyberbullying](#)
- Center for Parent/Youth Understanding (CPYU) Digital Kids Initiative – [A Parent’s Guide to Cyberbullying](#)
- Cyberbullying Research Center – [Cyberbullying Fact Sheet: Identification, Prevention, and Response](#)
- StopBullying.gov – [What is Cyberbullying?](#)

### Video Resources

- [4 Ways to Help Teens Avoid Digital Harassment](#)
- [5 Tips for Dealing with Haters and Trolls](#)
- [5 Social Media Rules for Teens and Tweens](#)

### Family Tip Sheets and Activities – Common Sense Media

- [What would you do if your kid was cyberbullied?](#)

- [What is Digital Harassment?](#)
- [Help Kids Fight Cyberbullying and Other Mean Online Behavior](#) (Grades K-12) | [Spanish](#) | [More Languages](#)
- [Family Activity – Cyberbullying, Digital Drama & Hate Speech](#) (Grades 3-5) | [Spanish](#)
- [Family Activity – Cyberbullying, Digital Drama, & Hate Speech](#) (Grades 6-8) | [Spanish](#)
- [Family Activity – Cyberbullying, Digital Drama & Hate Speech](#) (Grades 9-12) | [Spanish](#)

## **Español**

[¿Qué es el ciberbullying y cómo prevenirlo?](#) – El ciberbullying es un problema en de la era digital. Te explicamos qué es y cómo puedes aconsejar a tus hijos para evitarlo. By [Common Sense Latino](#)

## **Videos sobre ciberbullying**

- [Consejos sobre ciberbullying](#)
- [Más consejos sobre ciberbullying](#)
- [Cómo combatir el ciberbullying](#)
- [4 formas de evitar el ciberacoso](#)

[¡Explora el Nuevo “Be Internet Awesome” en Español!](#) – Google – “Be Internet Awesome” ayuda a los niños a ser seguros y confiables exploradores del mundo en línea.

## **Other Resources**

- [Cyberbullying Is a Serious Problem, But Is It an Epidemic?](#) – Technology journalist and internet safety advocate Larry Magid advises that we approach cyberbullying programs based on research rather than media hype.
- [Cyberbullying and Online Gaming](#) – From StopBullying.gov, tips on preventing cyberbullying for gamers.
- [Tips, Discussion Starters and Videos](#) – From NetSmartz, a program of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.
- [That’s Not Cool](#) – Once you register for the That’s Not Cool Adult Allies section of the website, you’ll have access to extensive campaign research, interactive videos, That’s Not Cool Callout Card designs, support information, and helpful tips on engaging teens in your local community – building on the belief that young people must lead the way in creating change online, in their schools, and in their communities. That’s Not Cool works to lift the voices of the most silenced and marginalized communities of young people including (but not limited to – we are always looking to grow!) LGBTQI youth, Native youth, youth living with disabilities, and youth of color.