

## **SIGNS YOUR STUDENT IS A CYBERBULLYING VICTIM**

### **LOOK OUT FOR:**

LOWER GRADES  
DIFFICULTY IN CONCENTRATION

MOOD CHANGES IN CLASS AND AT BREAKS  
LESS INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

ABSENTEEISM FROM SCHOOL  
COMPLAINTS ABOUT ILL-HEALTH

## **WHAT TO DO IF YOUR STUDENTS ARE INVOLVED IN CYBERBULLYING**

### **1. FOLLOW SCHOOL POLICY**

- Consider offering a mandatory course where students learn proper Internet safety and how to deal with cyberbullying
- Consider the use of student contracts

### **2. MAKE IT A PRIORITY**

- Ensure students know that stopping cyberbullying is a priority for your school
- Key Messages for students:
  - Never to give out any personal information online
  - They won't be punished for reporting
  - You are there to help
  - You will show them the best ways they can report

### **3. RESPOND TO THE INCIDENT**

- Encourage the victim to keep all hurtful messages or proof so it can be used to determine punishment
- It isn't always about the punishment; many bullies need to understand the impact of their actions and would, therefore, benefit from counselling

### **4. UNDERSTAND THE MOTIVATION**

- Understanding the reason your student has engaged in cyberbullying will help understand what to do (**see next page**)
- Victims don't often tell teachers or parents of their issues because they:
  - Are too traumatised
  - Think it is their fault
  - Worry about what greater problems could arise if they "tattle"

### **5. INVOLVE PARENTS**

- Invite parents and community members to workshops
- Follow school protocols to inform parents of specific incidences

### **6. HARNESS THE POWER OF PEERS**

- Encourage bystanders to report incidents and stand up for the victims by telling a trusted adult, or replying "This is not cool" on an inappropriate post
- Use of peers to find answers is more effective than having teachers do it
- Often it is the other students that know which students are being cyberbullied

USEFUL DOCUMENTS [http://www.asdk12.org/middlelink/avb/bully\\_topics/educatorsguide\\_cyberbullying.pdf](http://www.asdk12.org/middlelink/avb/bully_topics/educatorsguide_cyberbullying.pdf) <http://www.accem.org/pdf/cbcteducator.pdf>

## MOTIVATIONS FOR CYBERBULLYING

Understanding the reason your student has engaged in cyberbullying will help understand what to do:

### 1. THE ACCIDENTAL CYBERBULLY

- Typically doesn't consider themselves as cyberbully. This cyberbully may be acting tough online, role-playing, or reacting to hateful messages they have received
- Sometimes are just 'following the pack' and adding comments to a feed without considering the affects this has on the recipient
- May feel hurt, or angry, because of a message sent to them, or something they have seen online.
- Responds quickly, not understanding that the emotion they are feeling is being exposed in their message and could be adding fuel to the fire
- Don't think before they click

#### WHAT TO DO

If a hateful message or link is sent to them, he or she should delay a response, or not respond at all, to help diffuse the situation.

### 2. GIRL GANGS

- Are bored or looking for entertainment. It is mostly ego-based and the most immature of all cyberbullying types and is done in gangs, more commonly girls
- Requires an audience; want others to know exactly who they are and that they have the power to cyberbully others
- Grows when fed by group admiration, cliques or by the silence of bystanders
- If there is no audience to watch, the group is quickly broken apart and will move on

#### WHAT TO DO

Act fast. If a meeting is not an option, sit down with the victim and explain that these bullies will get bored and move to another target. Try to make them understand that it is not personal.

### 3. POWER SEEKING

- Some cyberbullies want to show anyone who will watch and/or listen exactly how much power they think they have. They are OK with making others do what they want, and having complete control
- Need an audience
- Brag about what they do and look for a reaction
- Is typically the victim of offline bullying
- May be female or physically smaller than others, or part of the 'un-popular' crowd. They thrive off of the anonymity that the Internet has to offer

#### WHAT TO DO

Understand why the power-hungry cyberbully needs power. Is there something going on at home, or with his or her friends?

### 4. VIGILANTE

- Doesn't see themselves as a bully, but rather as protecting themselves or their friends who have been bullied in the past
- Typically works alone, but may share their activities with others who may have been victimized by the person he or she is now cyberbullying

#### WHAT TO DO

Explain that fighting cyberbullying with cyberbullying only makes things worse, and this behaviour does not make them protectors.