

Overcoming Cyberbullying

From a Child's Viewpoint

Q: Could you share your experience when you were cyberbullied?

A: [The bully] not only cyberbullied me but his harassment was mostly at the school grounds on [a] daily basis.

Q: What piece of advice would you give to someone who is being bullied?

A: I advise them to let [all] adults at home and at the school know about it. This is the only way to fight back[.] [My family and I] paid a great price for me taking an action to retaliate via a hurtful text, so I don't recommend it.

Cyberbullying and the Law

You could be committing a crime when engaging in cyberbullying

- *Sexting and distribution of child pornography*
- *Sending online threats of death or bodily harm*



Children and the Law Commission

Young Lawyers Conference

Virginia State Bar

Shutdown Cyberbullying

Tips for Parents

Cyberbullying

Definition

Cyberbullying occurs when someone uses an electronic device to send online messages or images to inflict willful and repeated harm against a victim.

Example 1

Becky used the camera on her phone to take photos of Vicki when Vicki was changing in the locker room. Becky posted the photos online with the caption "slut" and texted them to other students to embarrass Vicki. Many students saw these photos and teased Vicki.

Example 2

In the cafeteria, Brian sent Mike several texts stating he was going to beat him up. Brian also got his friends to create an online group to spread vicious rumors about Mike.

If your child is a victim of cyberbullying

- Talk to your child and get the support you need from community leaders, school officials, or counselors.
- Remind your child not to retaliate.
- Keep a record of the evidence. Make copies. Use the "Print Screen" key on the keyboard to cut and paste messages on a word document.
- Report the cyberbullying to the service provider if it is occurring from a fake profile or an anonymous source.
- Contact law enforcement if the cyberbullying is sexually explicit or contains threats of physical harm.

If your child is engaging in cyberbullying

- Remind your child that posting a message or photo online to tease or play a practical joke could be interpreted as a hurtful act.
- Discuss the consequences. A student may be suspended or expelled based on a school's zero tolerance or anti-bullying policy.
- Inform your child that certain types of cyberbullying may be a crime and a conviction could have negative impacts for future career opportunities.
- Monitor or restrict computer and phone activity. Keep the computer in a common area of the house. Phone providers may have the ability to turn off text messaging services.