

Find out more about Cyberbullying

Understand bullying -- what it is, how to recognize it, and what to do about it. Cyberbullying is the same dynamic, only the behavior happens via electronic technology. Look up additional literature and Internet resources on your own! In addition to a wide array of printed literature, type "bullying" in a search engine to explore the many online sites dedicated to stopping it!

Learn more about Cyberbullying. Type "cyberbullying" in a search engine and read on!

Learn more about protecting yourself and your family on the Internet.

Stay SAFE online!

A True Story:

While walking home from school one day, Sarah could have sworn someone was following her. She walked quickly and finally breathed a sigh of relief when she made it through the front door. Instead of telling her parents, she went right to her room and turned her computer on. A few minutes later, she was telling one of her online friends what a freaky feeling she had walking home from school. "It must have been my imagination," she typed. Her girlfriend asked when her next soccer game was. "Oh, on Friday afternoon! We play those stupid Cougars. I really hate their yellow and purple uniforms! We should cream them!"

On Friday, at the game, Sarah was out in the field when she noticed a man smiling at her. She smiled back, and didn't think anything of it. Later, when she was talking with her coach, he was still there. He smiled again. She smiled back, and then went to pack up her things to go home.

He had bided his time and done his homework well. During their months of online conversations, she had told him she was in 7th grade, that she played soccer and her team came in 2nd in the state championships, that her uniform was blue and gold, and she wore the number 7. Her profile provided the state she lived in. He got into his car and followed behind at a safe distance until he saw her walk into her home. He knew her parents would not be home until 6:30 because she told him they both worked. He sat in the car and read the newspaper.

Later than evening, the doorbell rang, but she was upstairs doing her homework. Then her father called her down. She couldn't believe it! The man who had smiled at her at the game that afternoon was in their living room! Her father asked her to sit down. "Sarah, we have something important to talk with you about." "This man said he knows you. The two of you chat online." "Oh, no, I don't know him! I don't chat with anyone but kids my own age!," she told them.

"You do know me," the stranger said. "My name is SoccerPro." Sarah cried out, "No, you're not! SoccerPro is a 13-year-old girl who lives in Michigan!" Sarah found out that the stranger had pretended to be a 13-year-old girl, and that over the course of bits of information she provided each time.

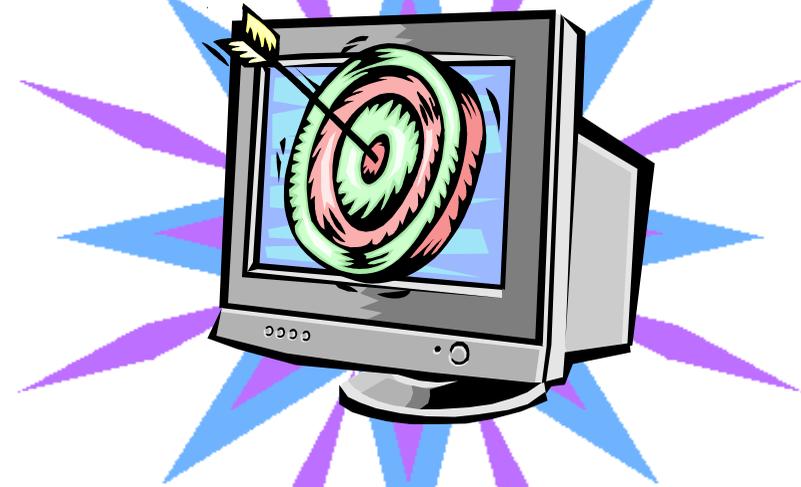
The good news was he was a police officer, and worked online to try to keep children and teenagers safe. Sarah and her parents learned a valuable lesson that night, and bowed their heads together to give thanks that the story had a happy ending.

We have drawn from the writings of many sources in this brief informational brochure, and gratefully acknowledge their succinct advice and willingness to let us share them with you. In addition to www.cyberbullying.ca and <http://grafx-specs.com/News/Cybstlk2.html> we would especially like to thank Jayne Hitchcock, founder and president of Working To Halt Online Abuse (www.haltabuse.org).

Cyber-Bullying

On The High Tech Playground

The bully's arsenal has grown, and now includes computers and mobile gadgetry such as cell phones and pagers.



Learn how to **protect yourself**
and how to **"bust" the bully!**



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1776 Raritan Road, Scotch Plains, New Jersey 07076 -- (908) 889-9028

What IS Cyber-Bullying?

“Cyber-Bullying

involves the use of
information and communication
technologies
such as e-mail,
cell phone and pager
text messages,
instant messaging,
defamatory personal Web sites
and online personal
polling Web sites,
to support
deliberate, repeated,
and hostile behavior
by an individual or group,
that is intended
to harm others.”

Bill Belsey, www.cyberbullying.ca

The Internet and modern gadgetry has opened up the world of communication and all of its exciting possibilities.

However, these technologies provide another avenue for abuse. The same crimes that can happen in “real life” are also happening electronically.

Many youth view the Internet as their “second home.” However, this “home” is not a safe place anymore. The new, hurtful trend becoming popular with students is called **CYBER-BULLYING**.

Bullies and other predators have embraced this new high tech playground, enticed by the **relative anonymity, ease of provocation, and infinite source of targets, and environment of lowered inhibitions**. This is their new and preferred method to deliver their verbal, physical, emotional and social/relational attacks.

Anyone who has been bullied face-to-face will tell you it is **humiliating** and makes them feel **alone and isolated**. But this **nameless and faceless bullying** has heightened the sense of **exposure, vulnerability and fear** by the person being targeted and victimized.

There is a greater threat that the abuse will start online, but that the abusers will not stop there but will begin to **hunt you offline** and **haunt your waking and sleeping hours**.

If it happened in school, or if you are being cyberbullied by another student, tell your teacher, principal, guidance counselor or school resource officer what has happened. Bring printouts of the messages or Web pages or anything else that can show them what has been going on.

New Jersey law has mandated that schools have policies and procedures in place to deal with bullying, harassment and intimidation.

If you are online:

Every person online has a screen name and an Internet Service Provider (ISP) (@---.____). Record the cyberbully’s username and ISP.

Sometimes you will not be able to tell because the person will use an anonymous remailer, (e.g., HotMail!, Yahoo!). In that case, try to print out the “full header.” (Sign onto www.haltabuse.org/headers for instructions for most major Internet Service Providers.)

If it is a voice mail or mobile text message:

Try to identify the caller/sender through that person’s voice, user name, or telephone number. Many units have a built-in memory or memory card which can store a limited number of sent and received messages, and which identify the call number, so check your “recent calls” log.

Dial *69 to identify the originating call number.

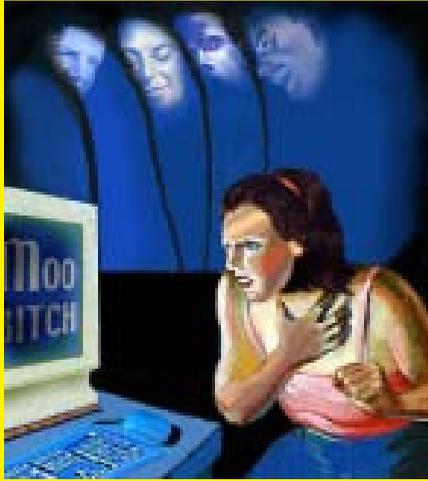
CONTACT YOUR SERVICE PROVIDER (telephone company or Internet Service Provider) to **report the harassment**, and to ask for **assistance in identifying the sender or caller**, obtaining a copy of the data, **tracing** the messages or call(s) and investigating the abuse. Provide them with copies of the messages. **Go online** to find how to contact your Internet Service Provider. Instructions are usually listed under “Member Services” or “Terms and Conditions.” You will also be able to print out a copy of their user agreements, which forbid the type of behavior and abuse you are facing. **Send an e-mail**. Follow that up with a **person-to-person call**. Personal communication is still more effective than electronic ones!

ALSO CONTACT THE SENDER’S SERVICE PROVIDER (telephone company or Internet Service Provider) to **report the harassment**. Most providers have user agreements expressly forbidding abuse, and can cancel the sender’s service. Provide copies of messages.

WHEN TO CONTACT LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT:

If the contact continues after you have asked the cyberbully/harasser to cease and you have notified your Service Provider, you should contact your local police department for an interview. Be sure to have the potential evidence you have collected ready to show to the officer.

Other “online” cybercops also are available to help you -- most notably, www.safetied.com (for minors), www.haltabuse.org, and www.web-police.org.



“You wouldn’t walk down a dark street in an unfamiliar neighborhood alone, would you?”

You wouldn’t divulge where you live or work to a stranger in an elevator, would you?

Surprisingly, many otherwise sensible people throw caution to the wind when they’re online, assuming, apparently, that they are completely safe.

They’re not, no matter how computer savvy they think they are.

Danger lurks on the Internet.”

JAYNE HITCHCOCK, founder and president of Working To Halt Online Abuse (WHOA) (www.haltabuse.org) and author of *Net Crimes and Misdemeanors: Outmaneuvering the Spammers, Swindlers and Stalkers and Who Are Targeting You Online* (www.netcrimes.org)

Protect Yourself and Your Family!

Over 100,000 million strangers can visit you at home every time you sign onto your computer, and they are not always honest about who they are or what their intentions are. Because the technology is impersonal, most people do not think twice about providing personal information through their user names or profiles, or even divulging personal details during online “chat.”

If you are online, **guard your real identity**. Pick a user name that does not give your name, gender, age, birthdate, or that might be offensive to anyone. **NEVER** use your primary e-mail account for **ANYTHING!**

Only give your username/phone number(s) to family and close FRIENDS.

While you are online, **DO NOT** give people any “hints” to help them figure out who you are or how to find you in real life. In fact, go online and search for yourself!

NEVER give anyone your password!

NEVER let anyone use your computer!

DO NOT fill out PROFILES!

Or, if you do, be very vague, and change them regularly. Where do you live? Under the stars. Age? Probably older than you!

Do not believe everyone or everything you see or read online.

Senders can play tricks or lie.

Behave **ethically and responsibly**. **Apologize** if you have seemed to offend someone.

DO NOT OPEN e-mail from senders you do not recognize.

DO NOT OPEN ATTACHMENTS.

DO NOT FORWARD e-mails. (If you want to forward, COPY the message, open a new message, paste it and then send it.

DON’T SPREAD THE HARM!)

NEVER meet in person anyone you’ve met online without an adult knowing about it and accompanying you to ensure your safety.

IMMEDIATELY tell an adult you trust if you ever feel uncomfortable or pressured, or if you are receiving any requests or materials you know are inappropriate, vulgar or illegal.

If you are being bullied or harassed online, Try to Stop It Before Things Get Out Of Hand!

Ignore the chat/remarks/messages.

Do not open any messages from that sender.

Block the caller’s/sender’s messages.

Don’t answer your phone -- let the caller leave a message.

NEVER REPLY OR RESPOND to the person bullying or harassing you!

Leave the area or stop the activity for a while.

Do not return to that site until it is safe.

Sign off the computer if you have to.

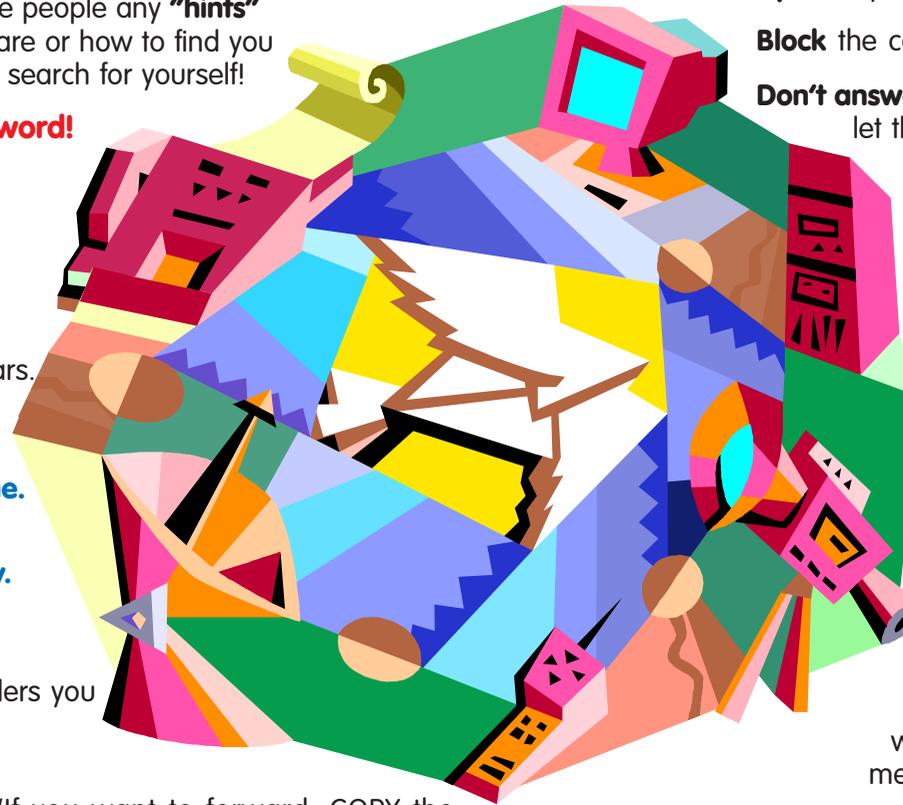
Save the messages (do not delete them!)

Make note of the cyberbully’s username.

Create a special folder on your hard drive (name it “ABUSE”), and save all the nasty messages to that folder. Copy and paste text to a word document if necessary, noting the date, time and where you were on the computer when the message was received.

IMMEDIATELY tell an adult you trust. IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT and this is not something you can handle by yourself. Be safe, not sorry!

FINALLY: Send a ONE LINE MESSAGE, ONE TIME ONLY to the cyberbully, stating simply and clearly: **“Do not communicate with me in any way or form from this point forward.” (PERIOD. END!) Then DO NOT COMMUNICATE AGAIN!**





What To Do If It Happens To You!

There are several avenues for action, depending upon who the cyberbully is and what the cyberbully has done. Victims **do** have recourse, and cyberbullies **can** be stopped, and sometimes even prosecuted for criminal or civil offenses. **Federal, state and local laws** protect individuals and personal property from bias-based prejudice, slander and defamation, vandalism, sexual harassment, assault, and other criminal intent and actions. **New Jersey law also criminalizes the use of the Internet and other electronic communications devices to commit harassment and stalking.** (SB1616, enacted August 24, 2001.) Harassment broadly consists of the intentional crossing of your emotional or physical safety boundaries. Again, stalking can begin online, but then transfer to In Real Life stalking.

ACT IMMEDIATELY! The longer you wait, the harder it is to successfully identify the subject.

IF YOU ARE RECEIVING DEATH THREATS or believe yourself or your family to be in immediate physical danger, dial 9-1-1 IMMEDIATELY.

DO NOT ENGAGE IN ANY MORE COMMUNICATIONS WITH THAT PERSON.

Do not respond at all. It will help your "case" if you can prove you are not participating in the chat, or doing anything else to provoke it. You do not have to open or read any printed messages, either.

OPEN A NEW FILE FOLDER, NAME IT "ABUSE", AND USE IT TO SAVE ALL MESSAGES, in whatever manner you have to. If it is text, save it directly in your new folder, or copy and paste it to a Word document. If live, try to record the conversation. Write down the content of the message, the date and time it was sent and/or received, and the caller's name and number.

PRINT COPIES of all messages. In Chat Room or Message Board, PRINT SCREEN and copy/save.

IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY FOLLOWED OUR ADVICE, NOW IS THE TIME TO IMMEDIATELY TELL AN ADULT YOU TRUST -- a parent, guardian, teacher -- someone! **DON'T WAIT! IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT, YOU ARE NOT ALONE, AND YOU CANNOT HANDLE THIS BY YOURSELF! BE SAFE!**

START A JOURNAL.

Record an entry every time the sender or caller contacts you, including the username, date, time and method. Names of any witnesses. Note whether you were able to save the message, and the document name. Record your emotions at that time -- how the message made you feel.

TRY TO IDENTIFY WHO THE SENDER OR CALLER IS.

Many times, the cyberbully is someone you know!

Try to identify the person based upon your relationship and their motive.

Try to make a list of names of anyone who might be angry with you, or generally dislike you.

What Are These Technologies?

TELEPHONE CALLS, VOICE MAIL MESSAGES, TEXT MESSAGES

-- Voice and text messages can be left on standard telephones, mobile (cell) phones, Personal Digital Assistants, two-way pagers, and the like, as well as via e-mail and the Internet.

E-MAIL and INSTANT MESSAGING

-- Respectively, delayed and real-time/live text message on your computer. It is estimated that over one million text messages are sent daily in the America alone.

DIGITAL IMAGES

--from cameras and cell phones.



A FLAME WAR is an online argument.

They are easy to get into, and very difficult to get out of. When a flame

Whether or not you own a computer, you are vulnerable to being targeted in variety of ways:

- Unwelcome, unwanted, and unsolicited abusive and obscene messages sent via e-mail, instant messaging, and text messages (i.e., writing and sending notes)
- Nasty, cruel or derogatory comments made during live chat or Internet Relay Chat (IRC), or on message boards or newsgroups
- Hostile and demeaning Web sites and newsgroup (Usenet) postings
- Being impersonated ("spoofed") online
- Electronic sabotage (such as sending viruses) to you or "from" you

The bigger threat is that the online harassment or stalking can expand from online to offline "in real life."

- Threatening or disturbing phone calls or messages
- Threats of physical harm or death
- Vandalism of property
- Physical attack

