

The Facts on Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is the newest type of bullying and has not been studied as much as traditional forms of bullying. Many children report being bullied via the internet or cell phone and the effects can be devastating. Children also report that bullies spread rumors and say other mean things about them online where many different people can see it. The potential audience for cyber bullying is unlimited making it even more appealing to bullies. Bullies will also threaten their victims online and belittle them for their own amusement.

Girls are twice as likely as boys to be cyber bullies as well as be targeted by cyber bullies. Normally boys are the most likely children to bully others but this is not true with cyber bullying. Boys tend to physically bully others while girls use emotional methods, which can be perfectly carried out over the computer. Cyber bullying also can be anonymous and many children who are the victims of cyber bullying never know who was bullying them. Cyber bullying is not restricted to school either, it can happen anywhere children have access to computers or cell phones. Bullying used to be confined to school, but with cyber bullying can now reach children anywhere.

Cyber bullying commonly occurs in IM's and in chat rooms. Cyber bullying can also occur in blogs and on websites when a bully posts damaging things about their victim. The internet makes bullying easy and bullies can torment victims in new ways. Using the internet gives cyber bullies an even more devious way to humiliate others than traditional bullying. About half of pre teens tell an adult about their experiences with cyber bullying and this number drops as children get older. Cyber bullying also makes it easier for the victim to retaliate against the bully as they can just as easily post their own damaging responses. This ease of use makes perpetuating the bullying cycle more common. This is not necessarily the best idea, as it will probably make the bullying worse and only reinforce the idea that bullying is ok.

Cyber bullying can affect anyone and the same stereotypes that apply to traditional bullying do not apply to cyber bullying. Cyber bullies can pick on anyone, even those more confident and popular than themselves. Cyber bullies can even pick on children older and bigger than them because of the anonymous nature of the internet. If a cyber bully wants to hurt another person, the internet gives them the perfect vehicle to do so.

Parents must take steps to stop and prevent cyber bullying just like other types of bullying. Any form of bullying can have serious consequences and cyber bullying can be particularly dangerous because it can reach so many people and be so humiliating. Take cyber bullying seriously so that your child does not

fall victim, or bully others. Make your child aware that cyber bullying is unacceptable and if they are the target they should tell an adult right away. Taking action quickly is the best way to stop cyber bullying before it gets out of hand.