

## How to Stop Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is the new way that bullies target their victims. They use IM's, chat rooms, and websites to threaten, humiliate, and belittle their victims. If your child has experienced cyber bullying you should take it seriously. Discourage your child from responding to cyber bullying and make sure you save all the messages and pictures that were used to bully your child. You should also try to identify the person or people who are doing the bullying, and if the bullying breaks the law you can have authorities trace it for you.

Sometimes using inappropriate language violates the terms of chat room and IM service agreements and the bully may be banned from using these services if they are reported.

It is also possible to block most cyber bullying attacks on the phone and computer. Screen names and phone numbers can be blocked so that your child will not continue to receive inappropriate messages. Bullies can assume new names but chances are they will lose interest if they are continually blocked. If your child's cyber bullying occurs at school, you should contact the school administrator so they can stop it. Sending messages that are considered bullying is against school rules and action will be taken if it occurs on school property. There is little schools can do if the cyber bullying occurs off school property, but depending on what is happening, you may be able to take legal action.

You may not know the identity of the cyber bully as the internet can be anonymous. If you do know the identity of the cyber bully, contacting their parents is a good idea.. You should make your contact written and be sure to explain the situation in a non confrontational manner. The bullies parents may not be aware that their child is bullying others online and will probably be willing to help. If you have proof of the cyber bullying instances show them to the bullies parents so that they can see what is going on.

Children are often not aware of the damage and the ramifications that can occur as a result of cyber bullying, and will continue if adults do not step in to stop them. Even if children know the damage they can cause, chances are they will not stop until adults take action.

If cyber bullying is serious enough, it can actually be against the law. If cyber bullying is harassing, threatening, or pornographic in nature you should contact authorities because this type of bullying may be illegal and you may be able to take legal action. Sometimes cyber bullies will steal passwords and accounts, which is also illegal. Contact your local police department and tell

them what has been going on. Make sure you take action as soon as you realize that your child is being bullied online. Sometimes cases of cyber bullying can get out of hand and have serious consequences. The huge audience that cyber bullying can attract make it much worse than traditional bullying and can permanently damage a child emotionally.