



# What you need to know **Cyberbullying** **Teens**

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1 800 668 6868

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## What is cyberbullying?

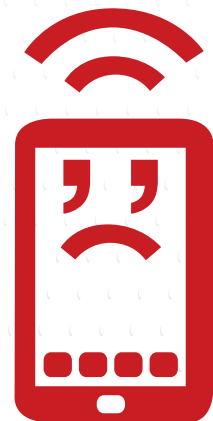
Cyberbullying is the use of any kind of technology to intentionally and often repeatedly intimidate, hurt, or humiliate others.

It's so common that you or someone you know has probably already been involved in it – whether as a target, a bystander, or as the person cyberbullying others.

### Here are some examples of cyberbullying:

- Sending cruel or threatening emails, texts, or instant messages to someone
- Posting photos that you know will embarrass someone
- Creating a website to make fun of someone
- Posting insults on someone's timeline
- Making up fake accounts on social networking sites (like Facebook, Twitter, or Tumblr) to ridicule other players, coaches or officials
- Rating players, coaches or officials in negative online polls
- Spreading secrets or rumours about people online
- Harassing other players in online video games (flaming)

*"It's a horrible feeling knowing a friend or teammate doesn't like you and that they'd make stuff up about you..."*



## Bystander or participant?



If you "like" an abusive comment, pass along a link to cruel content, or circulate embarrassing photos, you stop being a bystander and become an active participant in cyberbullying.





# Are you a target?

## Cyberbullying hurts. What can I do?

### 1. STOP



You might feel like being mean back, but it's better not to. Take a breath and count to 10.

### 2. SAVE



If it's a text or an email, don't delete it. If it's a post on Facebook or another social networking site, take a screen shot. Having a record can help you prove what happened.

### 3. TELL



It's important to tell someone you trust about what's happening, especially if it continues. If you are being threatened, you should contact the police.

### 4. BLOCK



Block the sender from your inbox. Move the message to your Junk folder. If you don't know how to block a sender from your phone, contact the service provider (your cell phone company).

## How do I tell/report?

**Talking is the first step in getting the help you need to solve this problem, and reporting the cyberbullying is often the second.**

- Think about how you are feeling right now, and what would be most helpful. Once you know, it'll be easier to pick who to talk to first.
- Tell the person you talk to what it is you need from them. If you really just need someone to listen, tell them that.
- If you are ready to report the cyberbullying within your hockey organization and need help doing so, be very clear that it's what you want. Ask the person you talk to what they think the first step should be. Learning about your minor hockey association or league's anti-bullying policies is a good place to start.
- If you want the offensive content removed, consider also making an official report directly to the social networking site or internet service provider. All popular sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc. have ways to report offensive content. When a complaint comes from a person who is directly targeted and is under 18, the complaint receives priority.
- If the first person you talk to isn't helpful, tell someone else. Don't give up! It sometimes takes a few tries before you find someone who knows how to help.
- Contact the police if you are being physically threatened or feel that your physical or psychological safety is in danger.

## Staying safe

- Keep your passwords private, even from your friends and teammates.
- Learn about privacy settings and reporting features on any social networking sites you use.
- Be careful about which photos you share online.
- If you don't feel safe at practice or a game, talk to your coach or your parents. Your safety is important.

## Are you a bystander?

Anytime you read an abusive comment posted on someone's timeline, look at embarrassing photos of someone that are being circulated, or follow a link to online content that is designed to abuse or humiliate someone, you are a bystander.

### Here is why bystanders can make a difference:

- Speaking out against what's happening—telling the person or people cyberbullying that it's not funny and not okay—can take away the motivation to keep doing it.
- If you step in, other people are more likely to step in, too. Most young people disapprove of bullying; they're just waiting for someone to take the first step to stop it.
- Young people are more likely to convince each other to stop bullying than adults who try to do so. You can have a bigger impact on bullying than you might think, maybe even more than your coaches or parents.

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## Here are some ways to actively challenge cyberbullying:

- If you see cyberbullying on Facebook, you can report it as abusive. You can use the reporting features built in to most social networking sites to inform site administrators about abusive or embarrassing photos, posts, and impostor profiles.
- If you are friends with the person who is cyberbullying, you can message them to ask what's going on. Let them know that you are uncomfortable with, or upset by, what they are doing, and ask them to stop.
- If it feels safe to do so, you can take a stand by commenting on a post or photo. Don't be aggressive. Instead say something like "I'm going to unfollow this thread because I think it's hurtful. I encourage other people to do the same."

## Are you cyberbullying?

If you've ever sent a cruel text, posted embarrassing pictures of someone to hurt or humiliate them, or said nasty things about someone on Facebook or a blog, you have cyberbullied. It still counts as cyberbullying if they did it first, or if they have bullied you face-to-face. Cyberbullying might seem harmless (you might tell yourself "it's just a joke"), but the consequences for the other person can be very serious.

### Why do I do it?

- Some players believe that what they are doing is harmless or "just a joke."
- Cyberbullying can make a person feel powerful or popular—especially if others seem to think it's funny.
- Players who have been bullied themselves will sometimes resort to cyberbullying as a way of getting back at the people who hurt them.
- Teammates sometimes egg each other on—when a group of people cyberbully together it can get severe very quickly. It's easy to make excuses for why what you are doing is okay, but excuses don't cut it. Try to remember that there is no justification for any kind of bullying. No one "asks for it," and it's never harmless.

**Remember, no one deserves to be cyberbullied, and no one should have to go through it alone. If you're really upset and don't know what to do, you can always contact a professional counsellor at Kids Help Phone.**

### How do I stop?

- Just reading this is a great start. It means that you've recognized that what you are doing is not okay, and you want to stop. Congratulations on being brave enough to take this step. It's an important one!
- To take the next step—which is to avoid or stop cyberbullying altogether—call a Kids Help Phone counsellor at **1-800-668-6868**. They can help you brainstorm ideas on how to stop, and will support you as you try.
- Make a one-minute rule – after you've written something but before you post or send it, step away from your computer or phone for one minute. Come back and quickly review the message, asking yourself "is this hurtful? Would I be okay with this if someone said it about me?"
- You can also try using Kids Help Phone's "[I want to stop bullying](#)" workbook.

Visit [kidshelpphone.ca](http://kidshelpphone.ca)

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