

Cyberbullying Glossary

Brief Overview of Common Terms



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Acceptable Use Policy (AUP): A policy that organizations create to define the responsibilities and appropriate behaviors of computer and network users.

Android: Operating system created by Google. Android powers smartphones and tablet computers.

Anonymizer: An intermediary website that hides or disguises the IP address associated with the Internet user. Generally, these sites allow a person to engage in various Internet activities without leaving an easily traceable digital footprint.

App: Abbreviation for “application,” it is a piece of software, primarily referring to those used on smartphones, tablets, and other touch-based devices.

Ask.fm: A website where users can ask and answer others’ questions with the option of doing so anonymously.

Bash Board: An online bulletin board on which individuals can post anything they want. Often, posts are malicious and hateful statements directed against another person.

Blocking: The denial of access to particular parts of the Internet. Usually a message will be shown on screen to say that access has been denied. For example, instant message users can block other screen names from sending them messages.

Blog: Interactive Web journal or diary, the contents of which are posted online where they are viewable by some or all individuals. The act of updating a blog is called “blogging.” A person who keeps a blog is referred to as a “blogger.” The term was created by combining web and log.

Buddy List: A collection of names or handles (also known as screen names) that represent friends or “buddies” within an instant messaging or chat program. They are useful in informing a user when that person’s friends are online and available to chat.

Bullying: Repeated and deliberate harassment directed by one in a position of power toward one or more. Can involve physical threats or behaviors, including assault, or indirect and subtle forms of aggression, including gossip and rumor spreading. The term bullying is usually reserved for young people and most often refers to these behaviors as they occur at or near school.

Chat: An online real-time conversation, typically carried out by people who use nicknames instead of their real names. A person can continually read messages from others in the chat room and then type and send a message reply.

Chat Room: A virtual online room where groups of people send and receive messages on one screen. Popular chat rooms can have hundreds of people all communicating at the same time. Typed messages appears instantly as a real-time conversation. All of the people in the room are listed on the side of the screen with their screen names.

Cookie: A file on a computer that records user information when visiting a website. Cookies are often used to identify the websites that the computer has visited, save login information and customization preferences, and enable the presentation of more personalized information or content.

Cyberbullicide: Suicide caused directly or indirectly from cyberbullying victimization.

Cyberbullying: Intentional and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices.

Cyberspace: The electronic “universe” created by computer networks in which individuals interact.

Cyberstalking: Repeated harassment using electronic devices and networked technology that includes threats of harm or that is highly intimidating and intrusive upon one’s personal privacy.

Cyberthreats: Electronic material that either generally or specifically raises concerns that the creator may intend to inflict harm or violence to himself- or herself or others.

Digital evidence: Tangible signs, proof, information, or data that demonstrates some behavior. This could be a screenshot, a record of Internet activity, a saved piece of content, etc.

Digital Footprint: Evidence of a person’s use of the Internet, typically focusing on dates and times of specific websites visited. This includes anything that can be linked to a users existence, presence, or identity. See also, “cookie.”

Digital Immigrant: A person who has not grown up with digital technology, such as computers, cell phones, and the Internet, but has adopted it later. Many adults are referred to as digital immigrants, because they have known a time when the Internet and cell phones didn’t exist.

Digital Native: A person who has grown up with digital technology, such as computers, cell phones, and the Internet. Many adolescents or young adults would be classified as digital natives, because they have not known a time without the Internet or cell phones.

E-mail: Electronic mail. Allows Internet users to send and receive electronic text to and from other Internet users.

Facebook: The most popular social networking website with over 1.3 billion active monthly users (as of 2014). Users create personal “profiles” to represent themselves, listing interests and posting photos and communicating with others through private or public messages.

Filtering: The act of restricting access to certain websites (usually using software programs). For example, a filter might compare the text on a web page against a list of forbidden words. If a match is found, that web page may be blocked or reported through a monitoring process. Generally speaking, a filter lets data pass or not pass based on previously specified rules.

Firewall: Hardware or software that restricts and regulates incoming and outgoing data to or from computer systems. Firewalls allow or disallow using certain websites or certain web-based software programs.

Flaming: Sending angry, rude, or obscene messages directed at a person or persons privately or an online group. A “flamewar” erupts when “flames” are sent back and forth between individuals repeatedly.

Friending: The act of requesting another person to connect with your online social network (like MySpace or Facebook).

Gaming: Participation in online games, which often involve individuals adopting roles of fictional characters, thereby directing the outcome of the game.

Gaming Console: A device designed for users to run video games on a television. Popular consoles include the Sony Playstation, Microsoft xBox, and Nintendo Wii.

Happy Slapping: An extreme form of bullying where physical assaults are recorded on mobile phones or digital cameras and distributed to others. This term is more commonly used in the United Kingdom.

Harassment: Unsolicited words or actions intended to annoy, alarm, or abuse another individual. Often based on a protected status (e.g., sex, race, disability, or sexual orientation).

Harm: Physical, psychological, or emotional injury to someone.

Hashtag: A descriptor or label preceded by the pound (#) sign that helps others easily find content related to that word or phrase. Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, for example, allow users to look up and click through hashtags to find other users' content that are also listed (tagged) with that hashtag.

Instagram: An app where users can apply filters to photos and videos before posting them for others to like and comment on. User can also share their content on other social networks like Facebook and Twitter.

Instant Messaging: The act of real-time communication between two or more people over a network such as the Internet. This can occur through software such as AOL Instant Messenger, Microsoft Instant Messenger, or Google Talk. This can also occur while logged into social networking websites or via a cell phone.

Internet: A worldwide network of computers communicating with each other via phone lines, satellite links, wireless networks, and cable systems.

iOS: Operating system created by Apple Inc. iOS powers iPods, iPhones, iPads, and Apple TV's.

IP Address: "Internet Protocol" address. A unique address assigned to a computing device that allows it to send and receive data with other computing devices that have their own unique addresses.

IRC: "Internet Relay Chat." A network over which real-time conversations take place among two or more people in a "channel" devoted to a specific area of interest. See also chat or chat room.

ISP: "Internet Service Provider." The company that provides an Internet connection to individuals or companies. ISPs can help with identifying an individual who posts or sends harassing or threatening words.

Kik: App which facilitates cross platform (iOS and Android) instant messaging across phones or tablets in an attractive interface. Users can send links, pictures, videos, group messages, etc.

MMORPG: Acronym that stands for: "Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game." A game in which large numbers of individuals from various locations connect and interact with each other in a virtual world over the Internet.

Monitoring: The recording and reporting of online activity, usually through software, which may record a history of all Internet use or just of inappropriate use. A person can also serve this function.

Netiquette: "Network etiquette." The unofficial rules of accepted, proper online social conduct.

Network: Two or more computers connected so that they can communicate with each other.

Newbie: Someone who is new to, and inexperienced with, an Internet activity or technology. Also referred to as a newb, noob, nob, noob, and nub.

Offender: The one who instigates online social cruelty. Also known as the "aggressor."

Profile: When considered in the context of online social networking, this is a user-created web page—the design of which can be customized—where a person’s background, interests, and friends are listed to reflect who that person is or how that person would like to be seen. Streaming music, video, and digital pictures are often included as well.

Proxy: Software or a website that allows one’s Internet connection to be routed or tunneled through a different connection or site. If a user’s computer is blocked from accessing certain websites or programs, the user could employ a proxy to redirect the connection to that site or program. For example, if a software filter prohibits a user from visiting Facebook, a proxy website could be used to circumvent the filter and provide access.

School Climate: The quality, character, social atmosphere, and ‘feel’ of the school, mostly exhibited by patterns of behavior and interactions among and between students and school personnel.

Screenshot: An image that is captured of what is shown on a phone, tablet, or computer screen.

Secret: An app that gives users the ability to share what they are thinking and feeling with friends from their phone’s contact list, while remaining anonymous.

Sexting: The sending or receiving of sexually-explicit or sexually-suggestive images or video via phone or the Internet.

Shoulder Surfing: Peering over the shoulder of someone to see the contents on that person’s computer or cell phone screen.

SMS: Acronym that stands for: “Short Message Service.” A communications protocol that allows short (160 characters or less) text messages over cell phone.

Snapchat: An app that allows users to share pictures and videos with friends from their contact list, which can only be viewed for a period of 1 to 10 seconds before disappearing. See also, “snaps.”

Snaps: Pictures or videos sent between users on Snapchat.

Social Networking Websites: Online services that bring together people by organizing them around a common interest and providing an interactive environment of photos, blogs, user profiles, and messaging systems. Examples include Facebook and Instagram.

Spam: Unsolicited electronic mail sent from someone unknown to the recipient.

Tablet: A mobile computing device growing in adoption and popularity. They are smaller than a laptop and bigger than a smartphone, and provide much of the same functionality as both.

Texting: Sending short messages via cell phone.

Threat: Making a statement of taking an action that indicates harm to another.

Tinder: An online dating app that allows people to be matched based on physical attraction. It initially finds potential matches based on filters like gender and location. If two users like each other’s pictures, they are able to chat.

Trolling: Deliberately and disingenuously posting information to entice genuinely helpful people to respond (often emotionally). Often done to inflame or provoke others.

Tweet: A short (140 character [or less] message) posted on Twitter.

Twitter: Social networking service that allows users to tell their friends or “followers”, what they are doing using 140 characters. See also, “tweet.”

Victim: The person who is on the receiving end of online social cruelty. Also known as the “target.”

Vine: A video app owned by Twitter that allows users to capture moments in six seconds and share them with others.

VoIP: Acronym that stands for: “Voice over Internet Protocol.” The transmission of voice over an Internet connection. Allows users to make phone calls using high speed Internet.

Web: Short for “World Wide Web” or pages linked together via the Internet.

Whisper: An app that allows users to share their secrets anonymously with other users using text and image. Individuals share their secret (or another self-disclosing message) into the app, select a relevant picture as a background, and then post it for others to like, comment on, and share with others.

Wireless: Communications in which electromagnetic waves carry a signal through space rather than along a wire.

Wireless Device: Cell phones, personal digital assistants, handheld PCs, and computers that can access the Internet without being physically attached by a cable or data line.

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