

Preventing Cyberbullying

Top Ten Tips for Teens

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There are a number of steps teens can take to prevent cyberbullying. Here are a few examples:

1. EDUCATE YOURSELF. To prevent cyberbullying from occurring you must understand exactly what it is. Research what constitutes cyberbullying, as well as how and where it is most likely to occur. Talk to your friends about what they are seeing and experiencing.

2. PROTECT YOUR PASSWORD. Safeguard your password and other private information from prying eyes. Never leave passwords or other identifying information where others can see it. Also, never give out this information to anyone, even your best friend. If others know it, take the time to change it now!



3. KEEP PHOTOS "PG". Before posting or sending that sexy image of yourself, consider if it's something you would want your parents, grandparents, and the rest of the world to see. Those who want to cause you harm can use this picture as ammunition to make life miserable for you.

4. NEVER OPEN UNIDENTIFIED OR UNSOLICITED MESSAGES. Never open messages (emails, texts, Facebook messages, etc.) from people you don't know, or from those you know often bully others. Delete them without reading. They could contain viruses that automatically infect your device if opened. Also never click on links to pages that are sent from someone you don't know. These too could contain a virus designed to collect your personal or private information, or install a backdoor on your device.



5. LOG OUT OF ONLINE ACCOUNTS. Don't save passwords in form fields within websites or your web browser for convenience, and don't stay logged in when you walk away from the computer or cell phone. Don't give anyone even the slightest chance to pose as you online through your device. If you forget to log out of Twitter when using the computer at the library, the next person who uses that computer could get into your account and cause significant problems for you.

6. PAUSE BEFORE YOU POST. Do not post anything that may compromise your reputation. People will judge you based on how you appear to them online. They will also give or deny you opportunities (jobs, scholarships, internships) based on this.



7. RAISE AWARENESS. Start a movement, create a club, build a campaign, or host an event to bring awareness to cyberbullying. While you may understand what it is, it's not until others are aware of it too that we can truly prevent it from occurring.

8. SETUP PRIVACY CONTROLS. Restrict access to your online profile to trusted friends only. Most social networking sites like Facebook and Instagram offer you the ability to share certain information with friends only, but these settings must be configured in order to ensure maximum protection. Also don't accept Snapchat friend requests from just anyone.

9. "GOOGLE" YOURSELF. Regularly search your name in every major search engine (e.g., Google, Bing, Yahoo). If any personal information or content comes up which may be used by someone to target you, take action to have it removed before it becomes a problem.



10. DON'T CYBERBULLY OTHERS. Treat others how you would want to be treated. By being a jerk to others online, you become part of the problem. You're better than that—do not stoop to that level. Instead, aim higher and be an example to others. It matters a ton—now and for your future.

