

“ Ryan Patrick Halligan was bullied for months online. Classmates sent the 13-year-old instant messages calling him gay. He was threatened, taunted and insulted incessantly by so-called cyberbullies. In 2003, Ryan killed himself. ”

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Cyberbullying is serious

Although Ryan’s story may be extreme, it is not unique. The same technology that has made it easier than ever to stay in touch with friends – and make new ones – has also made it easier to antagonize, intimidate and harass others.

But it doesn’t have to be this way. You can help delete cyberbullying. The information here will get you started.

What is cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying, an electronic form of bullying, can include:

- Sending nasty or insulting messages over the Internet or cell phones
- Sending or posting gossip, secrets or rumours
- Pretending to be someone else and sending negative messages or posting negative material
- Purposely excluding someone from an Internet group, chat room or friend list

Cyberbullying is often more harsh than face-to-face bullying and spreads more quickly, too. Cyberbullying can be extremely cruel and vicious, causing great trauma and pain for its victims.

What to do if you’re a victim of cyberbullying...

Everyone has the right to participate in the digital world. If you or someone you know is being bullied electronically:

- Save the evidence
- Use Internet or phone privacy settings to block cyberbullies from contacting you
- Never retaliate or respond to the message
- Report the incident(s) to trusted adults and school administrators
- Notify the police

If you want someone to talk to about being victimized, call the Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868.

Additional Resources

Books

- *Cyberbullying and Cyberthreats*. By Nancy E. Willard. Published by Research Press (2007).
- *Cyberbullying: Bullying in the Digital Age*. By R. Kowalski, S. Limber, and P. Agaston. Published by Wiley-Blackwell Press (2007).

Online Resources

- www.cyberbully411.org
- www.stopcyberbullying.org
- www.bullyingnoway.com.au
- www.cyberbullying.us
- www.kidshelpphone.ca/en/home.asp

This pamphlet was developed through an ongoing collaboration among the Rock Solid Foundation and researchers from University of Victoria’s Centre for Youth & Society.

Centre for
Youth & Society

University
of Victoria



Delete Cyberbullying

A Resource for High School Students



Creating responsive communities for the prevention of peer victimization



Walk Away
Ignore
Talk it Out
Seek Help

www.witsprogram.ca

The real facts about cyberbullying

Myth: Things on the Internet are just a joke

Fact: Cyberbullying has real-life consequences

For victims, cyberbullying can lead to low self-esteem, school avoidance, depression and sometimes even suicide. For those who cyberbully others, it can lead to jail time. According to the Criminal Code of Canada, it is a crime to:

1. Utter, convey or cause a person to receive a threat of death, bodily harm or damage to property (punishable by up to five years in jail)
2. Harass another person, by repeated communication, either directly or indirectly, which causes them to fear for the safety of them or others (punishable by up to 10 years in jail)
3. Communicate statements in public that incite hatred against an identifiable group (punishable by up to five years in jail)

Tips for Protecting Yourself and Others

- **Be kind online: treat others with the respect you want for yourself.**
- **Never post or send anything you wouldn't want the entire world to see or read because they might.**
- **Only disclose your phone number, email address and Internet accounts to trustworthy friends**
- **Use privacy settings on websites like Facebook to make sure that only people you know can access your information.**
- **Don't forward other people's information, e-mail addresses or phone numbers without their permission.**
- **Don't be a bystander – if you witness cyberbullying, do something about it. Let others know that you will not support cyberbullying by providing support for victims and reporting concerns to adults.**

Myth: You can make your Internet or cell phone activities anonymous

Fact: Even if you block your phone number before sending a text message or delete your Internet usage history, both phone and Internet records can be traced by police.

Myth: Freedom of speech allows us to say whatever we want on the Internet

Fact: There are limits to this freedom if our words are harmful to others.

