

Ways to prevent cyberbullying

■ Always respect others.

Be careful what you say online and what images you send. It is good to ask permission before you upload a photo or video of someone else.

■ Keep it private!

Remember, friends made online may not be who they say they are, and people online may not always tell the truth. Only give your mobile number, email addresses and other personal information to trusted 'real-world' friends.

■ Think before you post or send

Think about what you are sharing and who you are sharing it with. Whatever you share can be made public very quickly and could be online forever.

■ Protect your personal information and your online reputation.

The content you post online can affect not only yourself but other people too. You can set your privacy settings to control who can see your content and make sure that you use strong passwords for all accounts.

■ Don't give in to pressure.

It can be easy to get caught up in online behaviours that you wouldn't normally be a part of. If you lose your inhibitions online, you've lost control. Once you've pressed send, it is very hard to take something back. It's not a digital footprint – it's a digital tattoo which, in some cases, can never be removed.

■ Respect the law.

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in UK law, there are laws that can apply in terms of harassing or threatening behaviour. It is important to consider the offline consequences of your online actions. Young people said cyberbullying often took the form of peer pressure including pressure to get involved in bullying others or pressure to send images of themselves. This was often done on the promise of friendship or fear or threat of isolation and exclusion from within a peer group. Some young people from the focus groups talked about getting 'into trouble' for things they had done or said online, as they had not realised how the things they said might affect other people, or had not been supported to understand how to communicate appropriately online.

Responding to Cyberbullying

■ Don't retaliate or reply.

Most of the time the person who is bullying is looking for a reaction. If you do reply, you could be giving them exactly what they want.

■ **Save the evidence**

Save any texts, emails, images, website pages or other communications that you receive. This can be helpful for when you want to tell someone about it or report the cyberbullying.

■ **Don't keep it to yourself!**

Tell a trusted adult if you are being cyberbullied, or call a helpline like **Childline 0800 11 11** in confidence. An adult at school, such as your class teacher or sports coach, can also help you.

■ **Know where to find help.**

Understand how to report to service providers, or ask an adult to assist you, and take steps to prevent it from happening again by changing privacy settings and using blocking and deleting tools.

■ **Do something!**

If you see cyberbullying going on, support the person being bullied and do whatever you can to help them. Think how you would feel if no one stood up for you.