

# Cyberbullying Awareness ~ Activity Supplement

by  
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**"Cyberbullying"** is when a young person is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another young person using the Internet, mobile phones or other digital technologies. There are two kinds of cyberbullying, direct attacks - *messages sent to kids directly* and cyberbullying by proxy - *using others to help cyberbully the victim, either with or without the accomplice's knowledge*. Educating young people about the consequences of cyberbullying can help considerably in preventing and dealing with the consequences of cyberbullying. This activity supplement lists activities that a youth worker can do with their youth group to highlight the consequences of cyberbullying and equip young people with the tools they can use if faced with a cyberbullying situation.



## IceBreaker All Change

**Aim:** To ascertain what the young people's knowledge and usage of the Internet is.

**Materials:** A piece of paper for each participant.

- Ask the young people to move their chairs into a circle.
- Ask for a volunteer and get the volunteer to stand and as they do, take away their chair.
- There is now one less chair than participants.
- Explain to the group that this game is about social networking.
- The volunteer will start the game off by saying something like "stand up and change all those who have a Facebook page".

- Now anyone who has a Facebook page has to get up and change seats.
- This is the chance for the volunteer to get a seat.
- As there is always one less seat there will always be a 'volunteer' standing to ask the next statement.

### Suggested Statements :

Stand up and change anyone who.....

- has blocked anyone
- has a Bebo profile
- has a MySpace account
- has a Nimble profile
- has an IP address (*every computer has one*)
- does Instant Messaging
- has a Twitter account
- has an email address
- has two email addresses
- uses Google
- uses Firefox as a browser
- uses Internet Explorer as a browser
- does not know what a browser is
- uses Yahoo
- has a blog

Source: Social Media Networking Learning Resource Pack

## Activity One What is Cyberbullying

**Aim:** To initiate discussion among young people to the nature and effects of cyberbullying.

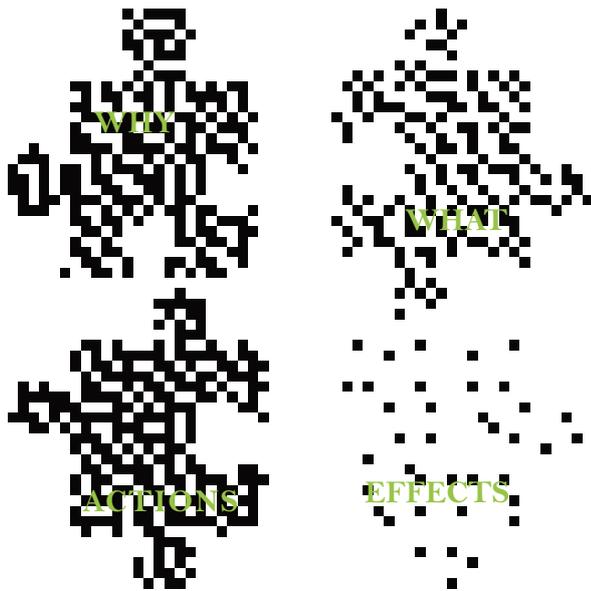
Break the young people into small groups and give them a photocopy of the jigsaw (see next page). Ask the groups to discuss using the following suggestions

**WHAT** is cyberbullying?

**WHY** would someone cyberbully another?

What would be the **EFFECTS** of cyberbullying another person?

What **ACTIONS** would a person take if they were being cyberbullied or to avoid cyberbullying?



Write the feedback on a larger flipchart page for all the young people to see.

Source: Be Safe Be Webwise

## Activity Two Recognising Cyberbullying

**Aim:** To get the young people to respond to cyberbullying scenarios and to learn how to take action when confronted with online situations that make them uncomfortable.

Read out the following scenarios to the young people...

**Niamh** is planning a sleep over to celebrate her birthday. Her parents have set a limit of eight girls, so Niamh can't invite everyone she'd like. Two girls who are left out overhear the plans and get angry, they make a "We Hate Niamh Jones" website. They say that anyone invited to the party should not go and they tell everyone in school the site's address. The girls invite everyone to add new reasons why they hate Niamh and to spread ugly rumors about her. When Niamh hears about the site she tries to ignore it but ends up checking it and finds new nasty comments and jokes about her. She feels hurt and powerless to defend herself. She is too embarrassed to go to school and tells her parents she is sick.

If you were Niamh's friend, what advice would you give her?

For the tenth day in a row, **Andrew** opens an email that says, "I'm getting closer." He doesn't recognise the sender's address. He wonders if someone at school is trying to scare him. On the other hand, it could be a stranger. Whatever the source, Andrew is scared. The next afternoon, Andrew is home alone. The emails come every few minutes. "I'm hiding in your house using a wireless Internet connection. You'll never find me. But I'll find you." Frozen with fear, Andrew can't think what to do.

If he called you for advice, what would you tell him?

### Follow Up

Both Niamh and Andrew are the targets of *cyberbullying*. Whether bullies are face to face or in cyberspace, they feel powerful when they target other people. They may use hurtful words or threaten. Often the cyberbully is someone you know face to face. Bullying should not be tolerated, whether in everyday life or in cyberspace. Trust your uncomfortable feelings — they mean something is wrong.



Here are some things a young person can do if they feel they are being cyberbullied.

- Sign off the computer
- Leave the chat room or website
- Block the bully's messages
- Save the bully's emails and the message logs
- Never reply to a bully
- Talk over how to handle the situation with a friend
- Report the experience to a parent, teacher, or other trusted adult

If you witness cyberbullying, you can help by supporting the target and letting the bullies know that their behaviour is not acceptable.

Source: <http://cybersmartcurriculum.org>

## Activity Three

### Acceptable Social Networking

**Aim:** To analyse online behaviours and their consequences and to generate solutions for dealing with a cyberbullying situation. This activity creates a list of tips that young people can use to help avoid cyberbullying situations.



#### Think About It

It's easy to try out new identities online, and many teens do it. Being online is all about expressing your self with social networks, blogs, chat, messaging, and videos. But when self-expression is at the expense of another person, it is wrong. Sometimes it can cross the line from "just kidding" into *cyberbullying*? Take the following scenario and ask the young people to discuss it.

**Ian** made a plan to get back at **Mike** for telling some personal stuff about him to a friend. He created a fictional profile on a social networking site so he could carry on a fake online romance with Mike. The cyber romance went on for weeks. Mike was hooked by a person he thought was a student at a nearby school. Ian encouraged Mike to carry on this cyber romance and tell their friends about his new 'girlfriend'. Ian also told all their friends about his trick on Mike. When asked why he did it, Ian said, "*To teach him a lesson.*"

#### What's the Problem?

Get the young people to discuss this scenario using the following questions as guide prompts:

1. Was Ian justified in teaching Mike a lesson?
2. How do you think Mike felt when he found out his "relationship" was only a cruel trick?
3. If this happened to you would you think it was just a bit of fun or cyberbullying?
4. What problems might result due to Ian's actions?

Source: <http://cybersmartcurriculum.org>

## Activity Four

### Are you a cyberbully?

**Aim:** To make the young people aware of their own activities on the Internet. Often, people who are victims are also bullies. Taking the quiz below will highlight their online behaviour.

Get the young people to rate themselves on the following point scale according to if, and how many times they have done the below activities.

#### Point Structure

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>0 points</b> | if they have never done it             |
| <b>1 point</b>  | if they have done it 1 or 2 times      |
| <b>2 points</b> | if they have done it 3-5 times         |
| <b>3 points</b> | if they have done it more than 5 times |



#### Have you ever...

1. Signed on with someone else's screen name to gather info?
2. Sent an email or online greeting card from someone's account?
3. Impersonated someone over IM or online?
4. Teased or frightened someone over IM?
5. Not told someone who you really are online, telling them to "guess"?
6. Forwarded a private IM conversation or email without the permission of the other person?
7. Posted pictures or information about someone on a website without their consent?
8. Used information found online to follow, tease, embarrass or harass someone in person?
9. Sent rude or scary things to someone, even if you were just joking?
10. Used bad language online?

11. Signed someone else up for something online without their permission?
12. Used an IM or email address that looked like someone else's?
13. Used someone else's password for any reason without their permission?
14. Hacked into someone else's computer or sent a virus or Trojan horse to them?
15. Insulted someone in a game room?
16. Posted rude things about someone online?
17. Posted to a guestbook saying rude or mean things?

**Now calculate your total score:**

**0 – 5 Points - Cyber Saint**

Congratulations! You're a cyber saint! Your online behaviour is exemplary! Keep up the good work!

**6 - 10 Points - Cyber Risky**

Well, you're not perfect, but few people are. Chances are you haven't done anything terrible and were just having fun, but try not to repeat your behaviours, since they are all offences. Keep in mind the pain that your fun might be causing others!

**11 - 18 Points - Cyber Sinner**

Your online behaviour needs to be improved! You have done way too many cyber no-no's! Keep in mind that these practices are dangerous, wrong, and punishable and try to be clean up that cyber record!

**More than 18 - Cyber Bully**

Put on the brakes and turn that PC/MAC/text-messaging device around! You are headed in a very bad direction. You need to sign off and think about where that little mouse of yours has been clicking before serious trouble results.

Source: [www.stopcyberbullying.org](http://www.stopcyberbullying.org)



**Useful Websites**

[www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) - Irish Internet safety awareness website, providing educational resources, advice and information about potential dangers of the Internet.

[www.chatdanger.com](http://www.chatdanger.com) - Website providing advice on how to keep safe while chatting online.

[www.watchyourspace.ie](http://www.watchyourspace.ie) - Internet safety initiative aimed at raising awareness and promoting safe, responsible practice by young people when online.

[www.internetsafety.ie](http://www.internetsafety.ie) - Office for Internet Safety, established by the Government to take a lead responsibility for Internet safety in Ireland, particularly as it relates to children, under the aegis of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

[www.cybersmart.org](http://www.cybersmart.org) - Cybersmart fosters 21st century skills to increase student engagement and prepare students to achieve in today's digital society.

[www.stopcyberbullying.org](http://www.stopcyberbullying.org) - Cyberbullying information website, includes prevention training tools.

[www.kidsmart.org.uk](http://www.kidsmart.org.uk) - Award winning practical Internet safety programme website for schools, young people, parents, and agencies, produced by the children's Internet charity Childnet International.

[www.digizen.org](http://www.digizen.org) - Website promotes building safe spaces and communities online by understanding how to manage personal information, and about being Internet savvy.

[www.saferinternet.org](http://www.saferinternet.org) - European network of Awareness Centres promoting safe, responsible use of the Internet and mobile devices to young people.