

# Cyber Bullying

## Information for parents and carers

**The use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.**

Department for Children, Schools and Families 2007

**For example.....**



- Sending nasty or threatening texts
- Sending horrible photos/video clips of someone to other people
- Making silent or threatening phone calls



- Sending unwanted emails to someone; sending horrible emails about someone, sending emails from someone's address
- Sending threatening or upsetting messages to someone in a chat room or Instant Messenger
- Putting pictures, horrible blogs or pages, online polls or messages to or about someone on social networking or other internet sites

## Some tops tips...

- **Talk with your child about cyber bullying. They are as likely to cyber bully as to be cyber bullied, simply by not thinking about what they are doing.**
- Learn about the technology and the safety precautions that are available. Do this with your child if you can – they probably know more than you and it provides a good opportunity to talk about the issues. Some things you need to find out about include
  - What sites and services your child likes to use
  - How to report problems
  - How to set things to 'private'
  - How to 'block' people
  - How to keep records of online conversations
- Draw up a family pledge with your child/ren about using technology responsibly - and get everyone to sign it.
- Save the evidence – texts, emails, records of chat conversations will all help if there is a problem
- Report any problems – there are different people you can tell depending on what is happening, for example
  - The school
  - The service provider
  - The police

### From common sense to cyber sense....

#### In the real world we tell our children...

- When you go out we need to know where you are and who you're with
- Be in by 9
- Don't talk to strangers
- Don't tell everyone your personal business
- Treat others how you want to be treated

#### So in the virtual world ...

- Talk with them about which sites they use and who they talk to online
- Agree some boundaries about the time they spend online
- Make sure they understand that you can't always be sure who you are talking to online
- Remember that everything that goes online is there for the world to see
- Remind them to treat others how they want to be treated online and on their phone



**People who cyber bully may be fined or sent to prison for up to six months**

## A bit about technology...

**Social Networking Sites...**these are online spaces where they can create pages about themselves, socialise with their friends, ask people to vote on things or respond to questions, post pictures/videos and so on. The main ones used by young people in the UK are Bebo, Habbo Hotel, Facebook and My Space. Some sites allow people to set levels of privacy so that not everything can be seen by everyone.

*mobile phones*  
*social networking*  
*instant messenger*  
*chat rooms*  
*email*



**Mobile Phones....**a vital part of most young people's lives - great for keeping in touch with friends and family. Things can be passed quickly and easily from phone to phone, and many phones can be accessed by other phones that are nearby using 'bluetooth' technology so you don't even need credit to send things on. Many phones also now have internet access.

**Email...**electronic letters – you write something, send it and it gets received at the other end. You can attach things like pictures, videos and document.

**Chat Rooms and Instant Messaging...** online spaces where people can talk to each other in 'real time', usually by writing or sometimes by speaking. Many internet sites have instant messaging or chat room facilities.

Chat rooms are often 'themed' so you can meet people with similar interests. Some chat rooms are 'moderated', that means that nothing goes online until the person receiving it has looked at it, or someone is keeping an eye on everything that happens. Some are not.

Instant messaging is often one-to-one with each person having a list of 'friends' or 'buddies' they can talk to. A common IM service that young people use is MSN.

Some chat rooms and IM services allow you to save records of conversations.

## Useful contacts

### Phone helplines

- **Childline** – free 24 hour helpline for children and young people. Tel: 0800 1111.
- **Get Connected** – free confidential helpline for young people (open 1pm-11pm every day). Tel: 0808 8084994.
- **Parentline Plus** – support for parents/carers Tel: 0808 800 2222
- **Samaritans** – helpline for those in distress. Tel: 08457 90 90 90.

### Websites

- **Childnet** – a range of resources for primary and secondary schools, for children and young people, for teachers and for parents ([www.childnet-int.org](http://www.childnet-int.org)).
- **Cyberbullying.org** – one of the first websites set up in this area, for young people, providing advice around preventing and taking action against cyberbullying. A Canadian-based site ([www.cyberbullying.org](http://www.cyberbullying.org)).
- **Chatdanger** – a website that informs about the potential dangers online (including bullying), and advice on how to stay safe while chatting ([www.chatdanger.com](http://www.chatdanger.com)).
- **Netsmartz** – an American online safety site with activities for children, young people, parents/carers and professionals ([www.netsmartz.org](http://www.netsmartz.org))
- **StopText bully** – a website dedicated to mobile phone bullying, contains advice for young people including how to contact your operator ([www.stoptextbully.com](http://www.stoptextbully.com)).
- **Thinkuknow** – UK online safety site of the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre with lots of information and activities ([www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk))
- **Wired safety** – an American internet safety site with lots of information and activities ([www.wiredsafety.org](http://www.wiredsafety.org))
- **Many of the internet service providers, mobile phone companies and social networking sites have useful advice and safety tips for users and parents on their own websites.**



**For local support email [bullying@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:bullying@warwickshire.gov.uk)  
or go to [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/bullying](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/bullying)**

