

INTERNET SAFETY

Glencoe Central School

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 4

"Dealing with Severe Cyberbullying" - A discussion with therapist Julie Guido.

Be Aware of What Your Child is Doing on the Internet. Some days it may just be research and homework. Extended hours probably mean something else. Check in periodically with your child. Spend a minute or two finding out who she's chatting with online.

Teach Empathy and Respect. Cyberbullying depersonalizes a situation, so we want to teach kids at a young age that words can and do have a huge impact.

Work Through Alternatives. We must offer reality checks and show teens how to change their actions: "This is wrong, but this is how you can do it differently, this is how you won't get in trouble," and "Is this the message you're trying to send? If so, try it another way because this is what I'm getting from this." With a young child, if he throws a brush at me when I've asked him to bring it to me, I know to say, "That's not okay. You go right back out of the room, bring it in and hand it to me correctly." We need to do the same with teens. I am constantly asking my teenager to repeat what she has said so that I can hear the words without the disrespect attached. It does work; she gets what she needs when she is able to be respectful and mature. Teaching how to listen and communicate at any age gives kids tools both to respond to cyberbullies and to deal with people they may want to bully. Teaching kids to *think before responding* in life and online is key to stopping the snowball effect that gives cyberbullies their ammunition.

Address the Situation Honestly. Young teens learn best through seeing, interacting and role-playing, so we can use real-world moments to identify and reinforce good behaviors. Do some self-checking of your own: Do I openly gossip about others around my kids or students? Do I bad-mouth others? How forgiving of mistakes am I? How in touch with my thoughts/feelings am I? How much do I encourage honest, sincere interaction between and among my family members and myself? Do we, as a family, speak with respect to each other? Do I speak respectfully to my partner/spouse? How do we resolve conflict?"

Follow this link for more with Julie Guido on dealing with severe cyberbullying: <http://bnetsavvy.org/wp/students-sound-off-about-online-safety-2/>

More Information about CyberBullying...

[Generation MySpace : helping your teen survive online adolescence](#) by Candice M. Kelsey (2007)

[The everything parent's guide to dealing with bullies : from playground teasing to cyber bullying, all you need to ensure your child's safety and happiness](#) by Deborah Carpenter (2009)

[Cyber-Safe Kids, Cyber-Savvy Teens: Helping Young People Learn To Use the Internet Safely and Responsibly](#) by Nancy E. Willard (2007)

[Mean behind the screen : what you need to know about cyberbullying](#) by Toney Allman (2009)

[Stand up for yourself & your friends : dealing with bullies and bossiness, and finding a better way](#) by Patti Kelley Criswell (2009)

[Frequently asked questions about cyberbullying](#) by Teri Breguet (2007)

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Internet Resources for Parents

Yahoo Safely
safely.yahoo.com

Report CyberBullying on MySpace
http://faq.myspace.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/42/session/L3NpZC82RzhkUk5Nag%3D%3D

KidsHealth
www.kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/net_safety.html

Chat Danger
<http://www.chatdanger.com/>

Cyberbully
<http://cyberbully.org/>

"Confidence, knowing for certain that the person making the call has your safety foremost in their mind. And knowing that the job you are about to take on is the right thing to do, that it makes sense."
(Paul Gleason)



Glencoe Public Library has these books available!

Cyber-Bullying: An Information Sheet for Teachers and Parents

The Benefits of Technology

This information may make the Internet, or mobile phones, or email accounts all seem rather dangerous - but technology is morally neutral and can be a channel for comfort as well as threats. The phone line that carries a threatening text message may also carry information and advice to an anxious parent or a worried child. Whilst technology can be used to bully, the Internet also can be a sanctuary for the victims of bullying by masking their "differences" and allowing them to be part of communities beyond their local one.

The Problems

The digital age has seen the development of new ways in which to bully, slander and abuse. We are now faced with bullying by email, over the phone and by text message; with the use of digital cameras and camera phones to intrude on the privacy of individuals; with so-called 'happy slapping' attacks - the filming and sharing of physical attacks on individuals by groups; the posting of offensive websites; the impersonating of individuals through hijacking email accounts; abusive and threatening behavior in chatrooms, on discussion boards and through instant messaging. We have also seen reports of school reunion sites being used to slander ex-pupils and teachers alike. A Scottish secondary school had to take its chatroom offline due to aggressive bullying activity (Edinburgh Evening News 29.3.06). Recently a phenomenon called "bluejacking" (the sending of anonymous text messages over short distances using "Bluetooth" wireless technology) has been reported. All these examples of cyber-bullying may be taking advantage of cutting edge technology, but the motives of those who are doing this and the excuses they make for their behavior are age-old.

Some Issues

- * Technology allows the user to bully anonymously or from an unknown location, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- * No place, not even a bedroom provides sanctuary from the intrusion of a threatening text message or an abusive e-mail.
- * Cyber-bullying leaves no physical scars so it is, perhaps, less evident to a parent or teacher, but it is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe.
- * Young people are particularly adept at adapting to new technology, an area that can often seem a closed world to adults. For example, the numerous acronyms used by young people in chatrooms and in text messages (POS - Parents Over Shoulder, TUL - Tell You Later) make it difficult for adults to recognize potential threats.

A Code of Conduct

Here are some points that could be included in the code of conduct that you discuss and agree with young people. Use these points to help you start the discussion, but aim to end up with a small number (up to five or so) of short statements that are suitable for the age of the users.

- * If you feel you are being bullied by email, text or online, do talk to someone you trust.
- * Never send any bullying or threatening messages. Anything you write and send could be read by an adult.
- * Serious bullying should be reported to the police - for example threats of a physical or sexual nature.
- * Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images.
- * If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender.
- * Why not log into a chatroom with a different user ID or nickname? That way the bully won't know who you are. You could change your mobile phone number and only give it out to close friends.
- * Contact the service provider (mobile phone company, your internet provider) to tell them about the bullying. They may be able to track the bully down.
- * Use blocking software - you can block instant messages from certain people or use mail filters to block emails from specific email addresses.
- * Don't reply to bullying or threatening text messages or emails- this could make matters worse. It also lets the bullying people know that they have found a 'live' phone number or email address. They may get bored quite quickly if you ignore them.
- * Don't give out your personal details online - if you're in a chatroom, watch what you say about where you live, the school you go to, your email address etc. All these things can help someone who wants to harm you build up a picture about you.
- * Don't forward abusive texts or emails or images to anyone. You could be breaking the law just by forwarding them. If they are about you, keep them as evidence. If they are about someone else, delete them and don't reply to the sender.
- * Don't ever give out passwords to your mobile or email account.
- * Remember that sending abusive or threatening messages is against the law.

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