

Cyberbullying – What can you do



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Welcome to Term 2 – with Easter and then ANZAC Day it has been a gentle way to get back into things. Bullying is something that most parents worry about and cyberbullying is a particular form, that can be extremely damaging. Whereas bullying might occur at school, in the workplace etc, cyberbullying can come into the home, following you wherever you go.

Bullying is an extremely powerful word, carrying with it damaging connotations for both parties, so it is important that we do not use it carelessly. The definition of bullying according to the Education Department is repetitive and intentional acts that cause harm. This harm may be physical, social or psychological. Single incidents and conflict and fights between equals are not defined as bullying. These can still be very upsetting though and should not be ignored. Cyberbullying is bullying that occurs online.

How do you know if your child or a child in your care is being cyberbullied? If you were at *The Resilience Project* parent night with Martin Heppell, you would have heard that most children would not actively speak out and/or seek help. However, here are some of the signs to look for:

- Being secretive about their online activities
- Avoiding social outings
- Deleting their social media or email accounts
- Noticeable changes in their friendship groups
- Appearing upset after using their mobile, tablet or computer
- A decline in grades or avoiding school

If your child is being cyberbullied here are the recommendations from Julie Inman the eSafety Commissioner:

1. **Report** the cyberbullying to the social media service where it is occurring.
2. **Collect** evidence of the cyberbullying material.
3. If the material is not removed within 48 hours, **make a report to [eSafety](#)**.
4. **Block** the offending user.

I would also like to add a 5th step - let your child's classroom teacher know. The school relies on the parent community to keep us informed, so that we can support you and your child. Together we can stamp out bullying. Further information on this topic can be found by clicking [here](#).

Don't forget to email me with suggestions on topics you would like to hear more about. You can also use the QR code or link at the top of the article to let me know you have read it.

Julie Hall

eSmart Co-ordinator

hall.julie.j1@edumail.vic.gov.au