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How To Deal With Cyber-Bullying?

By Asma Latif

There have always been bullies, but the Internet has opened a whole new realm - cyber-bullying.

Cyber-bullies are children who verbally harass other children online. While this is not officially considered an online crime, it can be detrimental to your child's self esteem. Cyber-bullying can include cursing your child, spreading rumors about them and posing as your child in chat rooms. Sometimes a child may know exactly who their harasser is, but some cyber-bullies hide behind aliases while threatening online children. This might not seem as large a concern as adults who send pornography online to children, but People magazine recently published an article on several children who had been cyber-bullied and ended up taking their own lives because of it.

Parents need to talk openly to their children about online protection against cyber-bullies. First and foremost, encourage your children to talk with you about any problems they may have with online harassment. Encourage them to confide in you or another trusted adult, such as a teacher, if they are being cyber-bullied. The Internet often gives users the illusion of anonymity and therefore, many think they write and say whatever they want without much thought. Teach your child how to block the email addresses in an attempt to stop abusive emails. Because it is easy to get additional email addresses, you may need to block additional addresses obtained by the cyber-bully. Instruct your children to save any messages that are mean or intimidating.

Remind your child that cyber-bullying is just like regular bullying. They are doing it to get a reaction out of them. If you can convince your child to ignore the bully's emails and comments, chances are the bully will get bored and give up. Point out to your child that real online friends won't believe lies the cyber-bully may be spreading.

Finally, if the person bullying your child online goes to his or her school, for your child's safety, you may need to seek the advice of a teacher or principal. Online activity like this can lead to a diminished self esteem, cause learning problems and prolonged exposure to abuse and demeaning treatment.

Asma Latif is a pro-active parent, a California CPA and a founder of OnlineSafetyPAL Inc. (

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Bully Zapper Techniques Two and Three: Report and Keep a List!

By Paula McCoach

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The Second Basic Technique for Zapping Bullies –
Report the Bullying to an Adult!

After you have told the bully to stop several times, you need to report the bullying to an adult. Don't continue to put up with the bullying hoping it will go away.

I tell students that they need to report the bully at several points – if the bullying continues with no improvement and if you experience the bullying getting worse.

Reporting the bullying to an adult is your second most important Bully Zapping Technique. If a student cannot stop the bullying, they need to care about themselves enough to let an adult help them. Adults have more authority to deal with the bully.

Students need to tell teachers, school counselors, administrators, assistants, etc. that other kids are bothering them!

The Third Most Basic Technique for Dealing with Bullies –
Keep a List!

So the bully still has not stopped! Not to worry. At this point I tell the student to begin keeping a written list of what is said by the bully. Verbatim! I tell them to write down every word the bully is saying to them.

How To Deal With Cyber-Bullying?

I provide a paper to some students with columns on it. The column headings are 'Name,' 'Date,' 'Comments.'

I tell the student to give me the list anytime they want. If they want to give it to me every day, I will talk to the bully daily until it stops. If they want to give it to me once a week, I will talk to the bully weekly – until the bullying stops.

Often when the bully realizes that their comments are being written down with their name beside them, they will stop. If not, you just keep on keeping on...It's a win/win situation for the student and a lose/lose situation for the bully.

If you would like the first basic Bully Zapper Technique, send an email to coach@bullyzapper.com

For more information on Basic Techniques for Dealing with Bullies, check out the Bully Zapper Mentor Program at <http://www.bullyzapper.com>

Paula McCoach has been in public education for 23 years. She has been a school counselor for the past 10 in an Alternative school and an elementary/middle school in Maryland. She has spearheaded mentor programs, Character Education initiatives, & Bully awareness. For more information, send an email to coach@bullyzapper.com or visit <http://www.bullyzapper.com>

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