



ALBERTA ASSOCIATION FOR MEDIA AWARENESS

Cyberbullying, a very brief summary

Compiled & edited by Henry D. Johns, Secretary-Treasurer, AAMA Oct. 2008
For more information, explore the references on the next page.

1. What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is an electronic message or messages sent or posted by one minor intended to frighten, embarrass, harass or otherwise target another minor. Unlike bullying, in Cyberbullying, the victim may not know who the sender is. If one of the people involved is an adult, it is called **Cyberharassment**.

2. How prevalent is Cyberbullying in Canada?

Statistics vary in various studies. A reasonable **estimate** seems to be that between one eighth (12%) and one quarter (25%) of students have been cyberbullied.

3. How is technology used in Cyberbullying?

A Cyberbullying message may be verbal, written, or pictorial. Cyberbullying messages can be sent by a **cell phone**, or a Personal Digital Assistant, or **online** by e-mail, in instant messaging or a chat room, or in an interactive game, or **posted** on a website, blog, voting booth, online profile, or bash board. If someone learns another person's **password**, he can even **impersonate** the other person in an electronic message!

4. Who are likely Cyberbullies and Cybervictims?

Cyberbullies may be: 1. Someone who seeks revenge for bullying of himself or friends
2. Someone who also bullies others face to face. 3. "Mean" girls who gang up on another girl.
4. Someone who doesn't think about others' feelings.

Cybervictims may be:

1. Racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual minorities. 2. Economically disadvantaged students.
3. Exceptional students, either gifted or disadvantaged.

5. What symptoms may Cybervictims show?

For information on this subject, readers are referred to Bill Belsey's website on Cyberbullying. <http://cuberbullying.ca>. At the home page of this website, click on "What Can Be Done?"

At "What Can Be Done", scroll down until you reach "Are You Aware of, or Are You Supporting Someone Who Is the Victim of cyberbullying?", the last section of "What Can Be Done?" In this section, you will find symptoms indicating that someone may be cyberbullied.

6. How can we lessen or prevent Cyberbullying?

What parents can do:

Learn about the Internet and what your children are doing online. Talk to them about their online places and activities. Be aware of what your children are posting online. Encourage your children to tell you if anything online makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened. Stay calm. Keep lines of communication and trust open. Don't "freak out."

Encourage children to develop their own moral code so they will choose to behave ethically online: Talk to your children about responsible Internet use. Teach them to never post or say anything on the Internet that they wouldn't want the whole world - including you - to read. Create an online agreement or contract for computer use, with your children's input. Make sure your agreement contains clear rules about ethical online behaviour.

Take action if your child is being bullied online: Watch out for signs that your child is being bullied online. If the bully is a student at your child's school, meet with school officials and ask for help in resolving the situation. Report any incident to your local police and your Internet

Service Provider (ISP). If your child is bullied through a cell phone, report the problem to your phone service provider. If it's a persistent problem, you can change the phone number.

What kids can do: If you don't know them, don't tell people your cell phone number, instant messaging name or e-mail address. Only you and your parents should know passwords. If you are harassed online, take the following actions: Tell an adult you trust - a teacher, parent, older sibling or grandparent. Leave the area or stop the activity (i.e. chat room, news group, online gaming area, instant messaging, etc.). If you are bullied through e-mail or instant messaging, block the sender's messages. Never reply to harassing messages. Save and forward harassing messages to your Internet Service Provider (i.e. Hotmail or Yahoo). Most service providers have appropriate use policies that restrict users from harassing others over the Internet - and that includes children! If the bullying includes physical threats, tell the police.

Take a stand against cyber bullying with your peers. Speak out whenever you see someone being mean to another person online. Most kids respond better to criticism from their peers than to disapproval from adults.

List of Sources (References) for Further Information

Internet Sources (Google Cyberbullying for hundreds) Note: Most of the websites here are Canadian and can be googled from Cyberbullying (Canadian Sites Only).

1. **www.cyberbullying.ca** www.cyberbullying.ca A website by Bill Belsey , Cochrane, AB
A very comprehensive website with much more information and references.
2. **Media Awareness Network Websites**
Be Web Aware – Cyber Bullying www.bewebaware.ca/english/CyberBullying.aspx
Challenging Cyber Bullying [www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/special/Safe Passage \(Know the Risks-Cyber Bullying\)](http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/special/Safe_Passage_(Know_the_Risks-Cyber_Bullying).htm)
[www.media-awareness.ca/english/teachers/wa teachers/safe passage Press Kit – Cyberbullying www.mediaeducationweek.ca/press_articles_cb.htm](http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/teachers/wa_teachers/safe_passage/press_kit.htm)
Informative websites, sometimes overlapping. (Power point presentation is from MNET)
3. **Cyber Bullying (PDF)** [www.bullyfreealberta.ca/pdf/CS Cyberbullying.pdf](http://www.bullyfreealberta.ca/pdf/CS_Cyberbullying.pdf)
Alberta Government. Good legal content.
4. **Safe Canada.ca–Cyber Bullying** www.safecanada.ca/link_e.asp?category=28&topic=16
A website with information from across Canada, including Edmonton Police.
5. **About Cyberbullying-What is Cyberbullying?**
www.slais.ubc.ca/COURSES/libr500/04-05-wt2/www.D...
From U.B.C. School of Library and Information Science an article with academic references.
6. **Home | International Cyber-Bullying Project** shariff-research.mcgill.ca/
A list of worldwide resources.
7. **(PDF) Cyber-bullying** org.kidshelpphone.ca/media/21704/2007_cyber_bully...
A very long article with many suggestions.
8. **BCTF>Issues in Education>Cyberbullying** bctf.ca/IssuesInEducation.aspx?id=15960
A list of many other sources, particularly for teachers.
9. **Bully Free Alberta** www.bullyfreealberta.ca/cyber_bullying.htm
A brief description of cyberbullying with information on legal and ISP responsibilities/options.
10. **(PDF) Cyber Bullying** www.opp.ca/Intranetdev/groups/public/documents/pu...
A tip sheet.
11. **deal.org | choice.org –Cyberbullying**
www.deal.org/content/index.php?option=com_content...
A fact sheet developed in co-operation with the RCMP.
12. **Cyberbullying in the Global Village** <http://members.shaw.ca/alappel/cyber.html>
A long and informative article (thesis) from a student at the University of Winnipeg.
13. **Webopedia Online Computer Dictionary** <http://www.webopedia.com>
The Webopedia Dictionary covers all computer terms.
14. **Webopedia Quick Reference Area** http://www.webopedia.com/quick_ref/
Comprehensive coverage of Instant Messaging and Email abbreviations.

Books in Public Libraries in Alberta (You can borrow them through Interlibrary loan.)

1. (Non-fiction) **101 facts about bullying: what everyone should know** by Meline Kevorkian
2. (Non-fiction) **Cyberbullying and cyberthreats: ...** by Nancy E. Willard
3. (Non-fiction) **Mean girls: 101 ½ creative strategies ...** by Kaye Randall
4. (Non-fiction) **Policing the Internet .** Peggy Daniels book editor
5. (Fiction) **Sophie loves Jimmy** by Nancy Rue

DVD's Available from Public Libraries in Alberta

1. Cyberbullies
2. The bully's mark
3. The big deal about bullying.