

## Safeguarding Bulletin – Cyberbullying

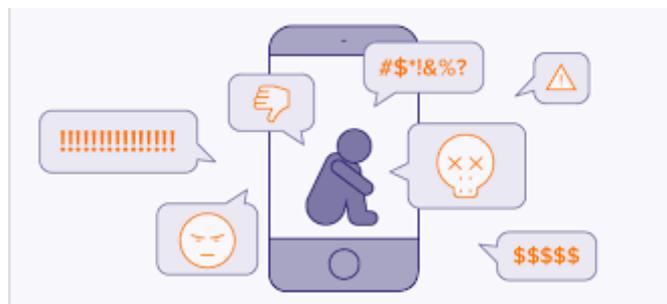
As you may be aware, in school, we deal with cyberbullying reported by our students on a daily basis. Most of these incidents happen outside of school and the school hours. Below are a few tips on what to do if your child is being bullied.

**However, please be aware that most social media sites do not allow children under 13 to sign up. It is the parents /carers responsibility to make sure that their child does not open these accounts**

### What is cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is bullying which takes place online. This can include:

- Sending threatening or abusive texts
- Creating and sharing embarrassing images/videos
- Creating fake accounts to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
- Sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
- Excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- Encouraging young people to self-harm
- Shaming someone online
- Trolling – the sending of upsetting messages on social networks
- Pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations
- Setting up hate sites/groups about a particular child
- Voting for or against someone in an abusive poll



### What should I say if I suspect my child is being cyberbullied?

**Answer: Recognise.**

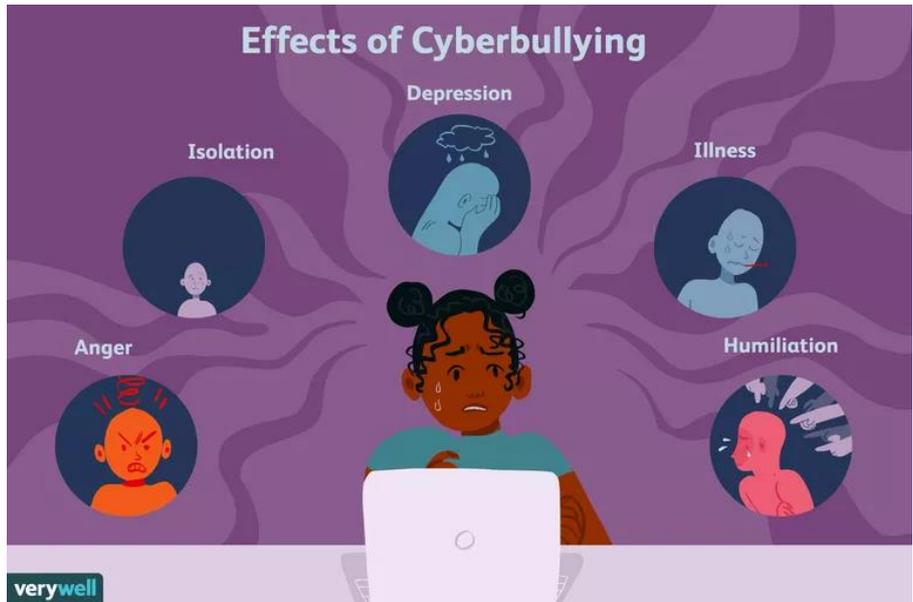
Explain to them what bullying is, and ask if anything like this has happened to them. Keep calm, and listen carefully to what they say. Remember to check in with them regularly. Remind them that they can talk to you about how they're feeling whenever they want.

**What should I do if I suspect my child is being cyberbullied?**

**Answer: Talk to your child and block the person**

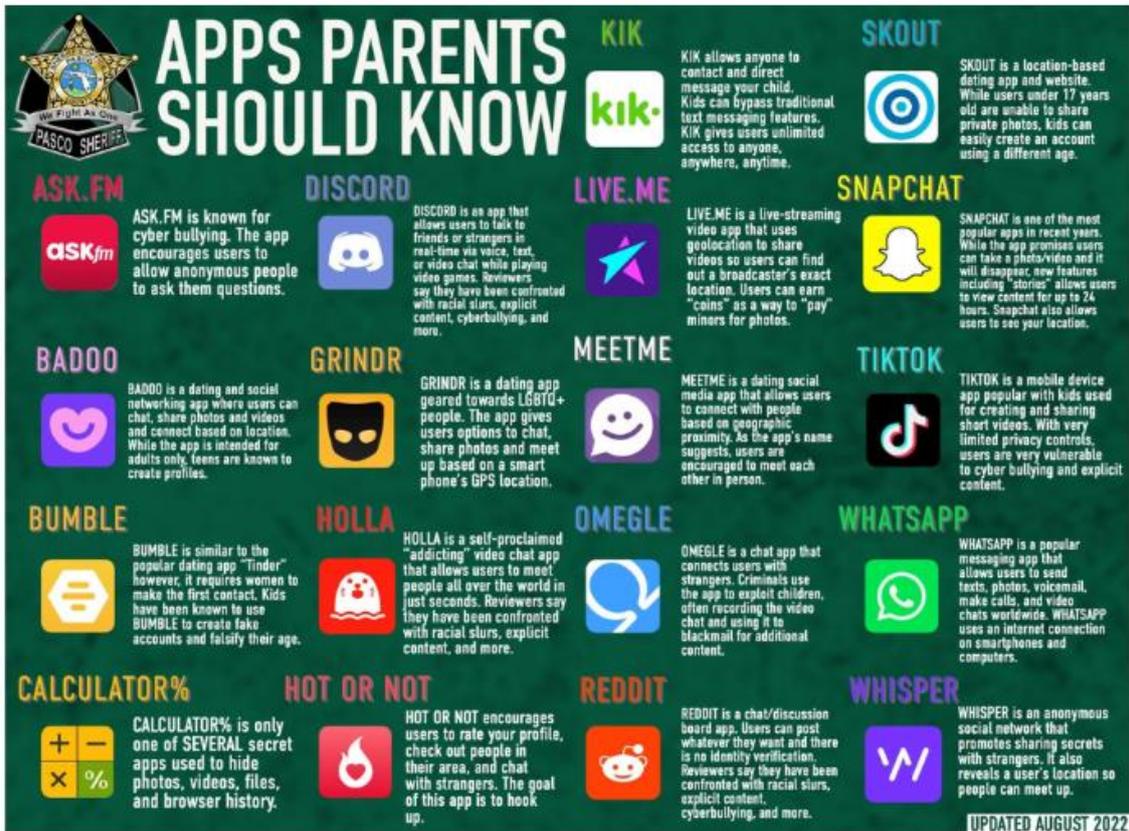
Make sure your child knows how to block anyone who posts hateful or abusive things about them on each app or online service they use. You can usually find details of how to do this in the help or online safety area, under Settings.

Watch this video to find out some of the issues young people face  
<https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/cyberbullying/>



Parents and students need to know that there are age restrictions for apps. See the graphic, you may be surprised.





## Ways parents can support their children:

### 1. Conversation starters

- See the information below to see how you can start conversations with your children about technology in a positive way:

Start the conversation on a positive note:

- ① What do you like most about the internet and why? What's your favourite game/app/site?
- ② How does going online make you feel?
- ③ How does the internet/technology make your life better?

While many parents and carers may be worried about their children spending more time online during lockdown, it's important to understand what they're doing online rather than setting limits on their total screen time.

For example, a child may spend hours searching the internet, while another child may spend less time each day talking to people they don't know on a livestreaming or video app.

Asking them about the sites, apps and games they use regularly can be a great way to start a conversation and help you identify any risks in what your child's doing online or who they may be talking to.

## Starting a conversation about online safety

It can be difficult to know how to start talking to your child about what they're doing online or who they might be speaking to. But talking regularly, like you would about their day at school, will help your child feel relaxed and mean that when they do have any worries, they're more likely to come and speak to you. It can help to:

- reassure them that you're interested in their life, offline and online. Recognise that they'll be using the internet to research homework as well talking to their friends.
- ask your child to show you what they enjoy doing online or apps they're using so you can understand them.
- be positive but also open about anything you're worried about. You could say "I think this site's really good" or "I'm a little worried about things I've seen here."
- ask them if they're worried about anything, and let them know they can come to you.
- ask them about their friends online and how they know they are who they say they are.
- listen for the reasons why your child wants to use apps or site you don't think are suitable, so you can talk about these together.
- ask your child what they think's okay for children of different ages so they feel involved in the decision making.



2. **Create an online safety plan for ALL** members of the family to follow – see attached sheet to write up a plan

3. **Fake news** – yes it is out there! How do you spot it?



- Consider the source** Where/who has this information come from and do we have reason to trust it? (E.g. An advert will always want to make the product being sold sound good to convince us to buy it!)
- Consider the motive** Why is this information online? Is someone getting paid to post it, or trying to influence public opinion? (E.g. A political campaign will always want to make it sound like their candidate is the best choice!)
- Consider your own knowledge** What do you know about this already? Does what you see online say the same or something different? Do you know enough to decide whether to trust it? If not, then more research is needed.
- Check several sources** Check another website, watch another video or read a different article. The more sources that say the same thing, and the more reliable those sources, the more likely it is that the information can be trusted.
- What are other people saying?** Reach out to friends or family members to get a second opinion. What are others are saying online in comments, reviews, or ratings? Remember, there is a chance these could be influenced by financial or personal gain too.
- Use a fact-check website** There are independent organisations out there who find, uncover and counter any false or misleading claims going around online. In the UK, this is [fullfact.org](http://fullfact.org).
- Take action** The last thing we want to do is spread inaccurate information further. Consider reporting it, or letting friends and family know it can't be trusted. Maybe leave a comment, but don't share it on!

Watch this film to see what children think parents and carers can do to help them online

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2021/i-am-educator/safer-internet-day-films/films-parents-and>

CEOP.police.uk



**Report bullying on social media and online gaming:**

If the incident happens outside of school it is your responsibility to report it. If this is happening to your child or a child you know, you or the child can report it online. You or your child can also contact the police by phone. Call [999](tel:999) in an emergency or [101](tel:101) at other times.

**Useful places to go for information for your son/daughter:**

Samaritans: 116 123

Childline 0800 1111 Specifically online safety 0808 800 5002

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/> 0808 802 5544

<https://www.kooth.com/>

<https://www.bullying.co.uk/cyberbullying/>

