



How do I talk to my child about cyberbullying?

Tips to help you understand and discuss cyberbullying with your child

TIP 1: Start with the basics!

When discussing cyberbullying with your child, it is important to first make sure they understand what cyberbullying is. You can **start by sharing this definition with them:**

“Cyberbullying is when someone is mean or hurts another person’s feelings online, and they keep doing it over and over again on purpose.”⁴

A way to start the conversation: “Do you know what cyberbullying is? Can I tell you more about it?”

TIP 2: Spot it to stop it!

Helping your child understand the different **types of cyberbullying behaviours** can make it easier for them to recognize when they’re experiencing it.

[Click here for a guide to share with your child from our youth section!](#)

EXAMPLES:

- ➡ If someone leaves hurtful comments under your child’s Instagram photo repeatedly, that’s a form of **Verbal Abuse**.
- ➡ If your child was a part of a class group chat, but was then removed and not allowed to rejoin, this is **Exclusion**.
- ➡ If someone shares embarrassing pictures of your child without permission, this is a form of **Visual Violence**.
- ➡ If someone hacks your child’s TikTok account and starts posting strange content, that’s considered **Impersonation**.

TIP 3: It is NOT a joke!

Help your child understand that **cyberbullying is not a harmless joke**; it can seriously hurt someone’s feelings.²

Tell them: “Even if you can’t see the person, they still have feelings, just like you do!”

TIP 4: Know where it shows up!

Cyberbullying can **appear in different places**. Here are some places to keep an eye out for and step in when needed.¹

- In text messages
- In gaming chat rooms
- In emails
- In social media apps

What cyberbullying is NOT!

- Setting boundaries or blocking someone.
- Accidentally hurting someone’s feelings online but apologizing after.
- Choosing not to respond to messages or ending an online conversation politely.

Remember!

Let your child know that being a bystander comes with power; they can choose to **Support**, **Report**, or **Comfort** someone being hurt online.



I think my child is being cyberbullied...

This is a not an easy situation to be in. Here are some quick tips to keep in mind as you navigate this with your child.

1

A child who has experienced cyberbullying may be dealing with a lot of complex emotions, including low self-esteem.² Remember to show them they are loved and valued through both your words and actions.

Examples: “It’s okay to tell me”, “Thank you for sharing this with me” or even, giving them a hug.

2

Make sure your child is aware it is not their fault.

3

Keep a record of any cyberbullying incidents.³ If the bully involved attends the same school, consider arranging a meeting with the school for support and creating a safer environment for all children.

4

Report the incident directly on the platform where it occurred, as cyberbullying violates the terms and conditions users agree to when signing up.

[Learn how to do this on TikTok through our guide](#)

[Learn how to do this on Instagram through our guide](#)

5

Block the individual(s) to cut off communication.

6

If needed, speaking with a mental health professional could be helpful for your child.

KNOW YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS!

There are legal consequences to cyberbullying in Canada. Cyberbullies can have their devices taken away, have to pay their victims and may even face jail time in severe situations.

For more information, use the link provided below.

Disclaimer: As laws may change, we recommend checking the most recent legal guidelines.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/campaigns/cyberbullying/cyberbullying-against-law.html>

