

Parents: Help Kids be Smart Online or While Texting

Our Character Counts program encourages our students to be cyber-safe. With an ever growing and changing world of technology, it is more important than ever for parents to stay current with Internet and cell phone safety.

Facebook

- You must be at least 13 years old to join Facebook.
- If you are under 18, you must be enrolled in secondary school (high school) or college.
- Parents are encouraged to enforce this age restriction with their children.

What is Cyberbullying?

Using the Internet, mobile phones, video games, or other digital technology to harm others.

Tips for Parents to Prevent Cyberbullying

(from www.stopbullying.gov)

- Communicate with your children. Set up a daily time to check in with your son or daughter, and listen to any concerns about online activities that they are involved in. Talk specifically about cyberbullying and encourage your children to tell you immediately if they see or experience cyberbullying.
- Be aware of where your children go online. Familiarize yourself with the technology they are using.
- Develop and enforce rules. Work together and come to a clear understanding about when, where, and for what purpose phones and computers can be used. Develop clear rules about what is and what is not appropriate online. Decide on fair consequences and follow through consistently.

Tips for Kids to Prevent Cyberbullying

(from www.stopbullying.gov)

- Always think about what you post or say. Do not share secrets, photos or anything that might be embarrassing to you or others. What seems funny or innocent at the time could be used against you. You do not have complete control over what others forward or post.

If you or someone you know is being cyberbullied, know that it does not have to be this way.

There things you can do to help you and your friends:

- Talk with someone you trust. Talking to someone could help you figure out the best ways to deal with the problem. Reach out to a family member, friend or another adult that you trust.
- Do not respond to cyberbullying. Sometimes people post or text teasing or name-calling to get a reaction. If someone has posted or sent a message that could be hurtful to others, refuse to pass it along or respond to it.
- Keep evidence of cyberbullying. Record the dates, times and descriptions of instances when cyberbullying has occurred. Save and print screenshots, e-mails, and text messages.
- Block the person who is cyberbullying you. Many websites and phone companies let you block people. Also, cyberbullying may violate the “Terms and Conditions” of these services. Consider contacting the service provider to file a complaint.