



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOLS

KA2 ACTION, ERASMUS+ PROGRAM

THE VIRTUAL UNIVERSE WE WANT

PROJECT NO: 2016-1-RO01-KA219-024515

CYBERBULLING PREVENTION

GUIDE FOR PARENTS

What is Cyberbullying?

Internet aggression, also known as online bullying or cyberbullying, is bullying by computer or cell phone. Bullying takes place on blogs, personal pages, forums, e-mail, SMS, MMS, sometimes aggression by uploading pictures or video on the Internet without taking into account the victim's privacy.

By cyberbullying is meant to offend, threaten, mock and humiliate others with premeditation by means of modern means of communication - usually for a long time. This type of bullying takes place on the Internet (for example via emails, Messenger, social networks or via video on specific portals), on the mobile phone (for example via messages / SMS or repeated upsetting calls). The perpetrator - also called bully - usually acts anonymously so that the victim does not know who is behind the attacks.

When it comes to bullying children or young people in virtual space, victims and perpetrators are often known in real life. As a rule, victims already assume who the aggressors are. This type of bullying comes from the environment of the students - the school, the neighborhood, the village or the ethnic community to which the victims belong. The cases in which a stranger was the perpetrator are very rare.

Internet bullying has already reached alarming levels, and victims of the phenomenon do not have



many weapons available to protect themselves from this. Physical appearance, passions and material status are among the main reasons. The main weapons of attack used on the Internet to assault victims are linked to the appearance and the way they dress. Other common reasons why young people are bully are daily hobbies and concerns, the material situation of their family, school results, and sexual orientation.

Two-thirds of those who are bully did not tell anyone about the incident, with young people citing reasons such as fear, lack of confidence that they might change something, or the fact that they did not think it necessary to involve other people even though they were directly affected by aggression.

The most popular social networks where cyberbullying takes place are Facebook, Messenger and Instagram, and the means of propagating the most commonly used phenomenon are threatening and negative messages received in the private channel followed by negative comments photos and identity theft. Most say that incidents of this kind have lowered their self-confidence and have led them to isolate themselves. Few, but not neglected, are those who have said they have entered depression or compensated for the lack of online friends by drinking alcohol or

drugs. Moreover, many say they have witnessed such an attack without being aggressors or victims, but only a few have intervened in the conflict between the two sides. Although most would have liked to take the part of the bullying, most become indifferent or even aggressor for fear of being attacked and turning into victims.

Parents or any other person to whom an abused person feels attached must provide unconditional and trustworthy support. The victim has to report any action that has taken place on him, but he needs extremely trusted allies to provide the comfort of talking.

Parents need to be aware of the phenomenon and know how to identify the victim's changed behavior and intervene when identifying the effects of cyberbullying in its behavior. Any sign indicating changes in psychological status such as depression, social anxiety, isolation, low self-appreciation, negative reactions, and stress with regard to the use of electronic devices must be questioned and verified. It is useful for the victim to succeed in imposing limits. From blocking and reporting the abuser on social networks, changing passwords or phone numbers to direct abuser interventions, done in a more assertive manner, without offering the aggressor the satisfaction they are looking for. The harassed person will be pleased if he/she causes the victim to suffer, so it is recommended to avoid showing any trace that indicates that it has been affected.

Cyberbullying can happen anywhere at any time, even in places where teenagers normally feel safe, such as your home, and at times they'd least expect. A lot of cyberbullying can be done anonymously, so teenagers cannot be sure who is targeting them. This can make them feel even more threatened and can embolden bullies, as they believe online anonymity means they're less likely to get caught.

Cyberbullying can be witnessed by potentially thousands of people. Emails can be forwarded to hundreds of people while social media posts or website comments can often be seen by anyone. Technology offers a perceived anonymity that leads some people to behave abusively online in ways they'd never contemplate in the real world. Content can potentially exist forever, despite best attempts to remove it. A victim of cyberbullying is potentially vulnerable 24/7 and no longer has a safe haven away from the bully. The inability to permanently remove online content and images can further add to the suffering of the victim.



Tips for parents of the third millennium

Almost 90% of children access the Internet daily or almost daily: in the case of a regular school day, the average time spent on the Internet varies between two to three hours, increasing to over four hours on a free day, showing different studies. In this context, dear responsible parents, how can we control the behaviour of our children on the Internet?



1. Discover the Internet with your child.

Be the initiators of the child using your computer and mobile phone. The child should know he can talk to his parents about any subject. The positive aspects of the Internet outweigh the negative aspects, so openly communicate to children the advantages and disadvantages of the virtual world.

2. Establish with your children rules for using your computer and mobile phone.

Obtaining consensus often leads to responsible behavior on the part of children. There are some sensitive issues that you should agree on, such as types of sites and family activities as well as prohibited ones, or the length of time spent by children on the computer and on the Internet. Personal data rules (family name, age, phone number, photos, address, school, children's place of work, details of credit cards) are essential. Discuss and set up rules about the behavior you have adopted against strangers in the virtual environment (chat, email, SMS, etc.).

3. Do not overdo and unreasonably restrict access to the computer and the Internet.

The child will be tempted to hide the Internet's concerns from family members.

4. Place your computer in the most accessible room.

For example, in the living or dining room, you can more easily track the sites the child is visiting. Avoid as much as possible letting your child navigate unattended on the Internet in the privacy of his room.

5. Discuss the risks to which they may expose if they accept meetings with unknown people they communicated with by email, chat or mobile phone.

Data on the identity of unknown people (name, gender, age) are often false, in order to be easier to get into a group of children or young people.

6. Make sure you know your child's e-mail passwords or personalized webpages.

So you can find out in advance if malicious persons are trying to get in touch with him. In the case of adolescents, the recommendation is to proceed with care, and they can always change these passwords or create new email addresses. The non-disclosure of the password can also be considered as an act of responsibility on the part of the teenager, meant to provide him with a degree of autonomy. Do not forget to remind them that in any difficult situation they will find you will be ready to help them.

7. Try to learn more about the virtual friends.

Encourage children to tell you about their virtual friends, where they met or discuss. Suddenly shutting down your computer or changing windows quickly on the monitor may be signs of talking to people you should not communicate with.



8. Remind the children that not everything I read or see on the Internet is true.

Suggest to children and other sources of information (books, magazines) and encourage them to create their own opinions on what is true or false. Today, creating a web page or posting information is simple, easy-to-use. In this way, much of the information is unverified, with the risk of being erroneous.

9. Share your experience with other parents.

Concerns you face may find a solution through solutions that other parents already successfully apply.

10. To make children safer surfing the Internet, use specialized filtering programs or use your favorite search engine filters.

- Teach the child not to respond to spam emails, harassing messages with offensive, aggressive or obscene content.
- Report any form of abuse to the authorities.
- A complete solution for protecting children while using the Internet and controlling their work on the computer or on mobile and Internet devices is web content filtering and parental control. Web content filtering and parental control programs are complex programs for controlling children's access to your computer or the Internet. These programs are either free of charge or free of charge and can be installed either on your children's computer or on your mobile device (phone, tablet). Parental Filtering and Control Programs are the basic solution to block children from accessing certain sites that may have illegal or harmful content. The main functions of these software solutions, both for phones and mobile devices, and computers, are: filtering web content based on address lists or restricted words; control of Internet surfing through a time schedule established by parents; controlling Internet and computer / mobile access to programs and files, as well as monitoring the use of your computer / mobile device and the Internet.

11. Communicate openly to children the advantages and disadvantages of the Internet.

12. Establish with them a list of safe sites and a computer program.

13. The child should know he can talk to parents about any subject.



A solution for protecting the child while using the Internet and controlling his or her activity on the computer or on mobile and internet devices is web content filtering and parental control.



14. Teach your children the first rule of Internet navigation - to remain as anonymous as possible.

This means not disclosing personal information (full name, address, telephone number, CNP, passwords, family members, credit card numbers) or posting photos

15. Discuss the risks to which they may expose if they accept meetings with unknown people they communicated with by e-mail, chat or mobile phone.

16. Familiarize yourself with technology.

Technology is evolving, and we must learn to keep up with it. Our children belong to the generation of "digital natives" and have no problem in using it. You must understand that

technology is your best friend. Use online tools to make sure your little one is safe when using your computer. There are a number of tools that can ease your work:

- Net Nanny – filters content on the internet, blocks pornographic content, timers computer time, monitors social media profiles, and has an alert system alerting you to a threat.
- PureSight PC – protection against cyber bullying on Facebook, pornographic content filtering, online games and activities for parents and children, computer timing system online and offline.
- K9 Web Protection – is a free filter that lets you set and customize your Internet browsing options (you can block some websites that you consider to be harmful).
- Family Cyber Alert – monitors what children do on the computer, online, and on chat platforms through keyboard entries, mouse clicks, and browser activity.
- Anti-Porn Parental Controls – filter that blocks pornographic sites.
- Google Alerts – a free tool that helps you monitor what appears on the internet on certain keywords (for example, your child's name).
- My Mobile Watchdog – app that monitors activity on your mobile phone, from messages, calls, location, installed apps, and time spent on your smartphone.

If you familiarize yourself with the jargon your child uses in his conversations, it will be much easier to understand what you monitor from his online activity.

17. No Facebook up to 13 years old!

Despite the fact that 13 years is the minimum age at which you can create a Facebook profile, over half of parents of 12-year-olds said in a study that they already have an account. Three quarters of parents helped children to do this by their own hands. 30% of parents have admitted to Parenting.com that although they know the rule, they let the children create their account regardless of the restrictions.

18. Monitor and control your child's online activity!

Pay attention to everything: from accounts on social networks to applications on mobile devices. Make sure you keep in mind all the devices you log on, because many of them have dedicated applications and it's important to get rid of anything out of sight.

Here's what you need to do for monitoring and control:

- Make sure you have passwords from all accounts on social networks and chat apps that you can check periodically.
- Check the privacy settings in your browser and make sure they are well restricted.
- Install parental control programs.
- Position your computer or laptop somewhere in sight (in the kitchen or dining room), where it will be harder to hide things that you are not allowed to do on the Internet.
- restrict hours of use of your computer and phone (most parental control tools allow you to do this).



19. Avoid apps that do not keep a conversation history!

You have to make sure that it does not use applications that are not indicated to children, such as Snapchat, Wechat, KLIK and Groupme. These applications do not keep a conversation history, so if something bad happens, you will not find the traces of the facts and you will not be able to act properly.

20. Teach him about responsible use of the internet!

The child should be educated to behave in the online environment just as it would in real life. He must learn about the online reputation and the risks he is exposed to.

21. Show him he can trust you!

This is the most important thing. The child must know that he can rely on you in any situation. He must understand that whatever happens, he can turn to you without being afraid or ashamed.

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