

Ways to Deal With College Cyberbullies

How to respond to cyberbullying in college

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Even though [bullying](#) tends to peak in high school and subside as kids mature, [cyberbullying](#) among college students is a growing trend. In fact, expecting cyberbullying to be non-existent in college is a dangerous notion.

Many times, kids who cyberbullied others in high school will carry these tendencies into their college lives. It's a learned behavior and many have not learned how to treat others with respect and dignity.

What's more, a lot of the cyberbullying revolves around relationships and sexual activity and generally involves issues like spreading [rumors and gossip](#), [mean girl behavior](#), [sexual bullying](#) and even [slut shaming](#).

If you are a victim of cyberbullying on your college campus, here are ten tips for responding to it.

Don't engage in the conversation.

The best way to respond to a cyberbully is to ignore the posts, comments, texts and calls. Although it can be challenging to refrain from responding to something untrue, it is better to report the incident than to engage in a battle of words online. Remember, cyberbullies are looking for a response. Be sure you don't give them one.

Cut off communication.

If possible, you need to make it nearly impossible for the cyberbully to make contact with you. This involves blocking numbers and accounts. It also means changing your accounts as well and only sharing your information with a few trusted friends.

Keep copies of the cyberbullying.

Before hitting the delete button take a screen shot of the cyberbullying incident. This includes emails, blog posts, social media posts, tweets, text messages and so on. Be sure to capture the date and time. Then, keep these copies in a safe place where others cannot find the materials and destroy them.

These copies are your evidence and proof that the cyberbullying occurred.

Report the cyberbullying.

At college, it is best to report the cyberbullying to an adult that you trust like the dean of students, a campus counselor or your advisor. If your initial report of the cyberbullying is not taken seriously, find someone else to report it to. Keep reporting the cyberbullying until someone takes your complaint seriously. Also, make sure you leave the meeting with a plan in place of how the college plans to address the issue.

Create a paper trail.

It is also a good idea to e-mail your parents, a trusted relative or another person off campus with the details of the cyberbullying incidents. This will not only add validity to your situation, but it also will serve as a time stamp on when the bullying occurred should your documentation become lost, stolen or destroyed.

Take a break from social media.

Sometimes the best way to combat the emotional pain and consequences of cyberbullying is to take a break from social media.

Stop checking your Facebook page and don't scroll through [Instagram](#). As tempting as it might be to see what others are saying, this does not help you in any way. Besides the fact that it is painful, you also have no control over what others are saying. But you do have control over your reaction and your response. One way to do that is to take a break.

Seek outside support.

Being a victim of cyberbullying can be a traumatic experience that can leave you feeling depressed, anxious, vulnerable and isolated. The best way to deal with these feelings is to develop a circle of support. Contact friends and family members and be open about what you are experiencing. Allow them to speak into your life and help you with your situation. It is also a good idea to talk with a counselor. A counselor can help you sort through your feelings and deal with your situation in a positive manner.

Stay in touch with family.

One of the many challenges of college is that you are removed from your family for the first time. While this can be exciting, don't forget that your family members can often help you deal with difficult situations.

Contact the police.

If the cyberbullying you are experiencing involves threats of death, threats of physical violence, indications of stalking and even suggestions that you commit suicide, you should contact the police immediately. You also should report harassment based on race, religion or disability. The police will address these incidents.

Take the high road.

No matter what a cyberbully says or does, try to remain calm and rational. If you get upset, post negative things or say something you later regret, this could hurt you in the long run. The cyberbully is hoping to get a reaction out of you. Don't allow this to happen. Remember, you cannot control the cyberbully, but you can control your emotions. Demonstrate that you are a bigger person than the cyberbully.