

Ways Parents Can Prevent Their Child From Cyberbullying

How to prevent cyberbullying in your child's life

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Kids are surrounded by technology. They have smartphones, iPods, tablets and laptops at their fingertips every day. So it is not surprising that [cyberbullying](#) is a growing problem among young people. After all, they spend an enormous amount of time online interacting with friends, posting to social media, watching YouTube videos, chatting on FaceTime and playing games.

And because parents usually aren't as familiar with all the apps and social networking sites that are available, monitoring their kids' activities can feel like an uphill battle.

But regardless of how much or how little you know about technology, there are things that every parent can do to prevent their child from cyberbullying others. Here four simple concepts that every parent implement.

1. Establish online rules.

Aside from stressing the basics of [online safety](#), like keeping passwords private, not giving out personal information, not clicking on links in emails and not "friending" strangers, consider [establishing rules regarding screen time](#) and smartphone usage.

For instance, [remind your kids about the pitfalls of smartphones](#) and the [perils of Instagram](#). And take steps to make sure they are [protecting their online reputation](#). It's also a good idea to become familiar with some of the [ways kids use technology to harass others](#). The more information you have, the easier it will be to establish online rules.

If your child does engage in cyberbullying, be sure to respond immediately and [discipline your child for bullying](#).

Some parents find that taking away the cell phone and computer are useful tools in disciplining cyberbullies. But whatever your method, be sure you are firm and consistent. Finding out [your child is a cyberbully](#) is nothing to ignore.

2. Monitor your child's online activity.

One of the best ways to keep track of your child's online activity is to get more involved in their online world.

For instance, keep your home computer in a busy area of your home and encourage kids to use their electronic devices where the rest of the family is hanging out.

Also, help your kids set up their online accounts and be sure you have passwords to every account they have. It's also a good idea to be "friends" with your child on their social networking sites.

At an early age, be sure your kids know that you will be reading text messages, e-mails and social media posts from time to time. This way, when your child gets older, they will be used to and even expect this from you. And if your child has a YouTube account, be sure they get your approval before posting anything online.

It's also a good idea to go through your kids' list of friends and followers. If you see a link to someone you are not sure your child should be connected to, talk to your child about it. Together, you should decide how best to handle the situation. For instance, you may decide that your child should unfriend someone or stop following the person.

In other cases, it may be better to restrict access in another way.

3. Talk to your kids every day about their lives.

Set aside time each day to talk to your kids and find out about their day. Ask open-ended questions about their schoolwork, lunchtime, bus-ride home and after school activities. And be sure to talk about their relationships. The goal is not only to connect with them but also to gauge how things are going for them.

For instance, if [your child's friend is a bully](#) or if she is part of [clique](#) then it is more likely your child will engage in that type of behavior too. You will want to talk with her about the [characteristics of a healthy friendship](#).

It's also important to talk with your kids about cyberbullying. Make sure they understand the importance of good [digital etiquette](#). And, have in depth about the [consequences of sexting](#), [sexual bullying](#), and other risky online behaviors. Even if you think your child would never participate in these activities, it is important to discuss them. All teens tend to struggle with [impulse control](#) and sometimes make choices totally out of character.

4. Instill healthy life skills.

Kids are less likely to cyberbully other kids if they have a healthy outlook on life and know how to cope with cliques, [peer pressure](#) and [mean girl behavior](#). In fact, many kids with a healthy [self-esteem](#) and healthy friendships never even consider hurting another person with words or actions online.

But if you notice your child is struggling in an area, don't waste time helping her build important skills like strong [social skills](#) and [assertiveness](#). And if your child has trouble being nice to others be sure to focus on social and emotional learning. [Becoming more empathetic](#) and [respectful](#) are skills that will benefit your child for the rest of her life.

These skills also may help her [know what to do when she witnesses bullying](#). In fact, research shows that kids who witness bullying can be as impacted by the bullying as the victim. They often feel guilty, powerless and helpless. As a result, [empower your kids to be healthy bystanders](#).