Cyber-Bullying: 21st Century Media in Kids' Hands

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Be Optimistic

Internet Socialization

- Internet access plays an important role in everyday lives and use is daily.
- Through the internet, have endless opportunity to gain immediate access to information, friends, games, movies.
- Cyber socialization is computerized interaction with known or unknown individuals for the purpose of research, entertainment, establishment of friendships or relationships due to feelings of loneliness, and sexual gratification.
- 972.83 million internet users world wide.

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From early on…

- Children use internet to play games, to research information for school work, and communicate with others.
- In adolescence, internet use becomes commonplace.
- Email, instant messaging, face book, twitter, and message boards become more important while entertainment activities constant.
- Adolescents primarily log on to the internet to socialize.

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In Adolescence

- Online activities have permeated adolescent culture.
- 98% of adolescents are internet users.
- 40% have three or more computers in home.
- 66% of youth go online every day for school work, communicate friends, share digital creations, etc…
- Allows them to engage in some important developmental tasks that also occurs through face-to-face contact.

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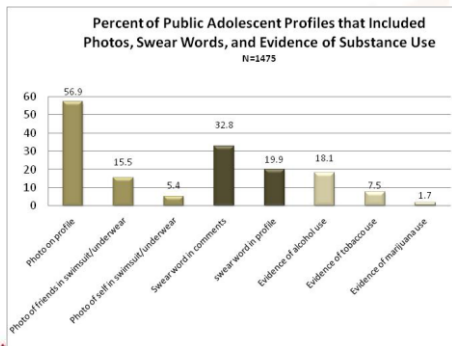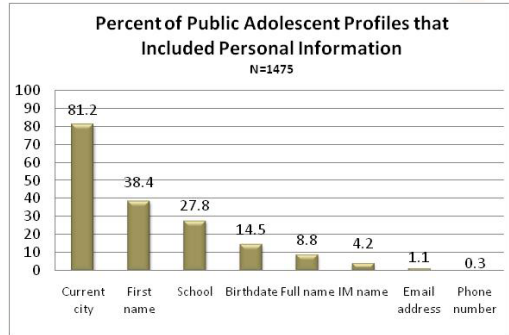

Social Benefits of the Technology

- Communication and expression of self in a less threatening context than face-to-face settings.
- Some use to initiate romantic contact, maintain relationships, and discuss difficult topics (e.g., terminating relationships).
- Maintain and increase intimacy within existing friendships.
- Expands social networks.
- Can lead to more easily form cliques, due to larger available pool of friends.
- Anonymity allows adolescents to experiment with various identities.

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It is all about what they are doing

- Boys who communicate with others report higher levels of social support.
- Decrease in social interaction associated with gaming related to poorer social adjustment.
- Playing computer games is solitary activity and linked with increases in anti-social behavior.
- When gamers communicate with others, it is within the context of the game, which removes personal aspect.
- Solitary activities limit the number of face-to-face and online interactions.

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Percent of Public Adolescent Profiles that Included Personal Information
N=1475

Category	Percent
Current city	81.2
First name	38.4
School	27.8
Birthdate	14.5
Full name	8.8
IM name	4.2
Email address	1.1
Phone number	0.3

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Percent of Public Adolescent Profiles that Included Photos, Swear Words, and Evidence of Substance Use
N=1475

Category	Percent
Photo on profile	56.9
Photo of friends in swimsuit/underwear	15.5
Photo of self in swimsuit/underwear	5.4
Swear word in comments	32.8
swear word in profile	19.9
Evidence of alcohol use	18.1
Evidence of tobacco use	7.5
Evidence of marijuana use	1.7

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Electronic Bullying

I hate you

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Electronic Bullying

- Electronic bullying is willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices.

  – Harassing text messages
  – Harassing on social networking sites
  – Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras
  – Phone call bullying via mobile phone
  – Email bullying
  – Chat room bullying
  – Bullying through instant messaging (IM)
  – Bullying via websites.

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How Cyber bullying Works

Warning Wars   **Internet Polls**

IM   Websites

"Telling on" others by pressing the warn or abuse button to get them kicked off IM

Offensive polls designed to "rate" other

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How Cyber bullying Works

Flaming

Chat Room   Blogs   Texting   Email   IM
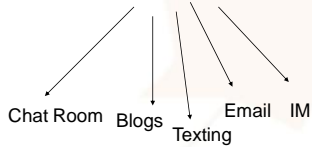
Hateful messages (including lies and gossip) sent directly to victim or spread to other kids

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How Cyber bullying Works

Website Bashing

Websites - You can even Create your own Social network now   Comments
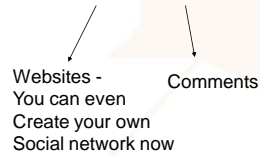
Putting up a mean/cruel website about someone and letting people comment.

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How Cyber bullying Works

Impersonation

Chat Room   Websites   Blogs   Email   IM
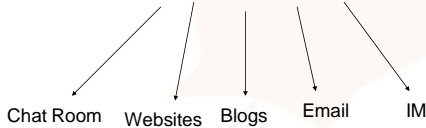
Pretending to be someone else online

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How Cyber bullying Works

Outing

Blog   Websites   Email   Cell phone
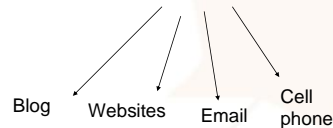
Revealing someone's secrets to humiliate someone or ruin her reputation

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How Cyber bullying Works

Criminal Threat

Chat Room   Websites   Blogs
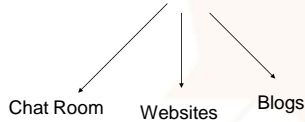
Serious language to warn you or threaten you bodily harm.

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Three Types of Risk

1) Risks of contact (who)

2) Risks of content (the impact)

3) Risks of conduct (what do)

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US Prevalence Rates of Cyber Bullying Over Time
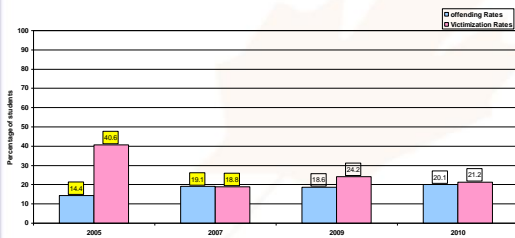
Percentage of students

□ Offending Rates
□ Victimization Rates

14.4 | 40.6 | 19.1 | 18.8 | 18.8 | 24.2 | 20.1 | 21.2
2005 | 2007 | 2009 | 2010

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What has happened in the last 30 days online?

43% of students reported that:
• Received an e-mail that made them upset
• Received IM that made them upset
• Had something posted on MySpace that made them upset
• Been made fun of in chat room
• Had something posted on a Web site that made them upset
• Had something posted online they didn't want others to see
• Been afraid to go on the computer

AND THEY DID NOT DEFINE THIS AS BEING BULLIED

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What victimized youth say happens online
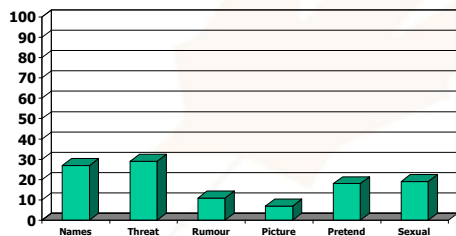
100–0 scale
Names | Threat | Rumour | Picture | Pretend | Sexual

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Effects of Cyber-Bullying

"Ryan Patrick Halligan was bullied for months online. Classmates sent the 13-year-old boy instant messages calling him gay. He was threatened, taunted and insulted incessantly by youth who cyber bullied".

Ryan killed himself.

"He just went into a deep spiral in eighth grade. He couldn't shake this rumor," said Ryan's father.

· Teens report that in 77% of the cases the youth who cyber bullies is someone they know.
· Unique effects over and above "real world bullying."

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The consequences of Being Victimized by Cyber-bullying

• Physical
  – Headaches, sleeping difficulties, abdominal pain
• Emotional
  – Anger, frustration, sadness, fear
• Psychological
  – Self-esteem, suicidal ideation
• Social
  – Rejection, peer conflict, lack of social competence
• Behavioral
  – Conduct problems, bullying, delinquency, violence
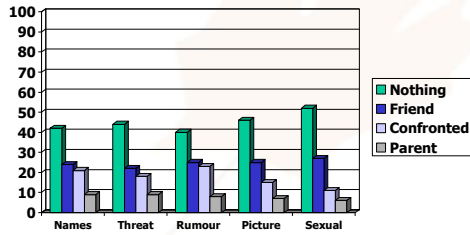 – Substance use, academic struggles, overall difficulties

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Adults may be out of the loop

• 50% of youth who are victimized don't tell adults.
• 35% report that they tell adults if they knew about someone else.
• Females are more likely than males to tell adults.
• 64% of students believe that adults in schools try to stop when they are informed.
• Students are more likely to report to parents than teachers.
• Students are unlikely to report it is against the school policy to have cell phones.
• Students are reluctant to tell because they fear that adults will take their computer/phone away.
• Kids view the Internet as a lifeline to their peer group.

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How do students respond to cyber-bullying?

Chart with y-axis 0–100, categories: Names, Threat, Rumour, Picture, Sexual. Legend: Nothing, Friend, Confronted, Parent.
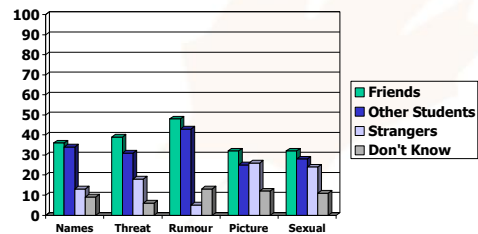
The effect of electronic bullying others

- 32% of youth who bully others electronically report frequent substance use, compared to 10% of youth not involved.
- More likely to exhibit rule-breaking behaviors, delinquency, and aggression.
- Associated with:
  - involvement with traditional bullying
  - delinquent peers
  - propensity to respond to stimuli with anger
  - poor emotional connections

Behaviors that Enhance Risk of Electronic Bullying

- High levels of conflict with parents, depression and bullying.
- Certain activities (e.g., chat rooms) are associated with receiving sexual solicitations.
- Girls are more vulnerable to Internet sex crimes.
- Boys that identify as gay or questioning are also at greater risk.
- What makes certain online activities risky is whether the youth is at risk to emotional manipulation or whether the youth engages in a pattern of risky behavior.

Who is doing the cyber-bullying?

Chart with y-axis 0–100, categories: Names, Threat, Rumour, Picture, Sexual. Legend: Friends, Other Students, Strangers, Don't Know.

How are peers involved?

Chart with y-axis 0–50, categories: Joined, Watched, Stopped, Objected, Report, Befriend, Left.
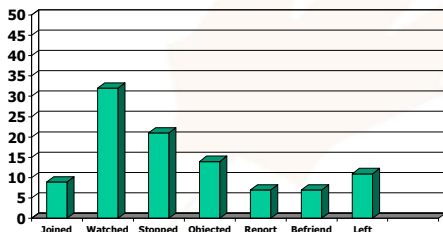
Why do students engage in Electronic bullying?

- Sense that can be done anonymously.
- Lack of detection and away from adult supervision.
- No tangible feedback.
- Wide audience with devastating speed.
- Power.
- Access to technology.
- Connected 24/7 and often occurs in the safety and security of the home.
- Social stigma if report.
- Multiple on-line personas
- Encouraged by role-playing games
- Can aggress against authority: Happens to teachers (84%).

What Can be Done to Address Electronic Forms of Bullying?

Prevention and Intervention

- Prevention strategies should begin <u>before</u> it peaks in middle school.
- Reduction of harm approach.
- Adults need to make it clear that online and cell phone privileges will not be revoked if electronic bullying is reported.

What School Can Do: Involve the Safe School Committee

- Membership:
  - Safe School Committee
  - Education Technology professionals
  - Students
  - Parents
  - Local law enforcement
  - Mental Health Professionals.
- Policy, Communication, Education, Activities

What School can Do: Assessment

- Understanding nature, extent, and perspectives on the problem informs prevention and intervention.
- Provides baseline data to evaluate activities.
- Cyber bullying questions involve:
  - Prevalence of different types
  - How
  - Peer involvement
  - Impact
  - What to do
  - Barriers to reporting

What Schools can do: Policy

- All policies and practices related to Internet use, use of personal digital devices while on campus, and bullying and violence for reporting, assessment, and intervention should be reviewed.
- Be creative in sharing it
  - Create a face book page
  - Communicate via twitter
  - Start a blog
  - Have a web page

What Schools can do: Practise

1. Educate students about all forms of bullying.
2. Specify clear rules and engage students in communicating them.
3. Use peers to educate on positive online behavior.
4. Create a online code of conduct.
5. Implement blocking or filtering programs.
6. Cultivate a positive school climate.
7. Designate a cyber bullying expert at your school.

What School Can Do:
Professional Development

- All staff need education about responsible Internet use.
- Teachers need specific training on cyber bullying and how to motivate safe and responsible behavior.
- Need high level of expertise for "first responders" (administrators, counsellors, school resource officers, librarians, and computer lab coordinators).
- Training on:
  - Problem
  - Detection
  - Investigation
  - Intervention

What Can School do:
Parent and community Outreach

- Information to parents through newsletters and parent workshops and web resources.
- Information to community mental health professionals, faith-based organizations, youth organizations, the public library, and the media.
- Support school in promoting safe and respectful climate.

What Adults Can Do to Create
Positive Internet Experiences

- Learn about the Internet and what youth are using it for.
- With youth input, create an online agreement.
  - Guidelines on proper online conduct, safeguarding personal information, what areas and activities are off-limits, and what to do if they encounter a situation that makes them feel uncomfortable or scared.
- Accompany youth online.
- Create your own list of great sites and use an educational exchange.

What Schools Can Do:
Student Education Prevention Topics

- Promoting ethical online behavior
- Empathy and common sense online behavior.
- Netiquette and Cyber kindness.
- Cyber use and civic participation
- Open dialogue regarding Internet conduct.
- Cyber Bullying.
- Cyber bullying and the law.
- Empowerment of youth to independently prevent and respond to cyber bullying, including knowing when and how to access adult assistance.
- Protecting yourself online
- Be private - keep passwords, pictures and secrets to yourself.

Sample Prevention Activities for Students

1. Research cyber bullying.
2. Interview experts.
3. Create educational posters, pamphlets, websites, PSA.
4. Conduct a parent workshop about face book.
5. Conduct an awareness campaign.
6. Educate younger students on what it is and what it feels like.
7. Google yourself.

Ensure the positive benefits

- **Assume that EVERYONE has access to profile** even if you have restricted to "friends only."
  - Don't discuss things you wouldn't want them to know about.
  - Set profile to "private" to control access to your information.
- **USE DISCRETION when putting pictures on profile.**
  - How will your parents or a potential employer react?
  - When someone takes your picture it may end up online.
- **Assume people WILL use the information on your profile to cause you harm.**
  - Don't put anything online you wouldn't want your worst enemy to know.
  - Don't add people as "friends" unless you know them in real life.
- **Assume there are predators out there trying to FIND YOU** based on the information you provide on your profile.
- **You may be held responsible for inappropriate content on your profile** that is in violation of the Terms of Service of the Internet Service Provider or web site(s).

If Electronic Bullying Occurs

1. Walk away - terminate the friendship link, block the person from communicating, or leave an unfriendly group.
2. Take five - don't reply in anger.
3. Don't reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages.
4. Stop, block and tell - don't reply, block the sender, tell someone.
5. Get help from an adult - abuse report on the site or telling a trusted adult.
6. Report to the school or the Internet provider, or in extreme cases the police.
7. Keep a record. Print the e-mails, or the chat room history, or save the phone message.
8. Monitor and find out what happened and if it has stopped.

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Students Helping Students Online

- Stand up not by
- Peers can say stop - if safe.
- Peers can help by providing emotional support.
- Peers need to know how and when to tell an adult – is serious, threats of violence, or self violence.

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Schools Response to Cyber bullying

1. Investigate incidents.
2. Remove the material.
3. Contact the first responder team
4. Inform parents.
5. Get support for all youth
6. Involve police if required
7. Monitor and follow up.

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What Schools Can Do: Student Intervention

Remind Students:
- Don't make threats online. If you post a threat online, adults may not be able to tell whether the threat is real.
- There are criminal laws against making threats.
  - Even if you are just joking, you could be suspended, expelled, or even arrested.
- Report threats or distressing material.
  - It could be very real.

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Take home messages

- Depends on youth to report, often adults do not know.
- Students' knowledge of technology.
- May rely on external partners to address.
- The internet is here to stay.
- It creates positive experiences for students if used appropriately, monitored, and effectively.
- Can be helpful for marginalized groups.
- Use technology to educate in positive manners and be educated in technology.
- It is all about relationships!!!!!

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More resources at www.prevnet.ca

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