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I WAS CYBERBULLIED

DVD Version

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Teacher's Resource Book

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MAIN MENU

➤ **Play**

➤ **Chapter Selection**

From here you can access many different paths of the DVD, beginning with the introduction and ending with the credits.

1. Introduction
2. Lauren's Story
3. Dealing with Cyberbullying
4. Blaze's Story
5. The Three Steps
6. Esteban's Story
7. Review and Conclusion

➤ **Teacher's Resource Book**

A printable file of the accompanying Teacher's Resource Book is available on the DVD. Load the DVD onto a computer that has a DVD-disk drive and Adobe Acrobat Reader.

For PC users: From the "Start" menu, click on "My Computer," then right click on your DVD disk drive and select "Explore." Double click on the PDF document to open the Teacher's Resource Book.

For Mac users: In "Finder," click on the DVD under "Devices." Then click on the PDF document to open the Teacher's Resource Book.

INTRODUCTION

According to a 2010 survey by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, 93 percent of American youth ages 12 to 17 are using the Internet and 50 percent have cell phones. For most young people today, emailing, IM-ing, text messaging, chatting and blogging are a central part of their social lives. There are increasing reports, however, that some youth are misusing Internet and cell phone technology to bully and harass others.

The term “cyberbullying” was created to describe behaviors in which the Internet or other digital technologies (such as cell phones, text messages, etc.) are used to intentionally torment, threaten, harass, humiliate, embarrass or otherwise target an individual. One organization, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, reports that more than 53 percent of young people have been the targets of cyberbullying. In another survey, almost 80 percent of Internet-using adolescents indicate that they are aware of online cyberbullying and more than 33 percent report that they have seen their own friends bully others online. A recent McAfee survey, *The Secret Online Lives of Teens*, reveals that while teens are expert web surfers, they still routinely engage in dangerous and potentially reputation-damaging behaviors online. One statistic from the study reveals that more than half (52 percent) of the young people surveyed know someone who has been cyberbullied.

The impact of bullying on youth has been well documented—studies have shown that difficulty making friends, loneliness, low self-esteem, depression, poor academic achievement, truancy and even suicide are all associated with being bullied. Victims of cyberbullying may be subject to even more risk factors due to the invasive nature of modern technology—for example, cyberbullying messages can be circulated worldwide in an instant, they are usually irrevocable, anonymous and impossible for victims to avoid or refute.

Teens who cyberbully do not always realize the hurt and harm that they cause. According to a study by the Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 44 percent of teens harassed online are victimized by teens they know in the real world, frequently from school. The bullies often mistakenly assume their activities are untraceable. If victimized teens document the harassment (by saving messages and email), their offenders can be tracked down. They may face suspension at school, and if the harassment crosses over to a criminal level involving threats of bodily harm, the police can become involved.

Public awareness of cyberbullying has increased in recent years, largely as a result of several tragic cases of bullycide—such as the 2006 suicide of Missouri teen Megan Meier and the 2010 suicide of Massachusetts teen Phoebe Prince. While these cases represent the most extreme (and rare) result of cyberbullying, they also underline how prevalent online harassment among teens has become.

In addition to causing concern among parents, school administrators and others, cyberbullying has become the focus of many lawmakers. There is a lively discussion among policymakers determined to ban and punish cyberbullies while still respecting an individual’s freedom of speech.

INTRODUCTION CONTINUED

Across the country, cyberbullying legislation is being reviewed. As of mid-2010, 44 states had passed bullying laws (30 of which make reference to “electronic harassment”) and 12 states were in the process of updating their laws to include specific legal or academic sanctions against cyberbullying. Joel Haber, Ph.D., author of *Bullyproof Your Child for Life: Protect your Child from Teasing, Taunting and Bullying for Good* and founder of the RespectU program, explains, “The laws that exist today were not made to address electronic issues like cyberbullying and sexting. Right now, the laws have not yet caught up to the problem.”

Additionally, many school districts are adopting—or strengthening—their policies related to students who cyberbully, both on and off campus. Schools are encouraged by the federal and state governments to incorporate prevention and education strategies into their safe school plans. Clearly, the issue of cyberbullying is being approached by many facets of society.

It is important for teens—who are so Internet savvy in some ways and yet naïve in others—to understand the implications of their behavior online. After watching the video *I Was Cyberbullied* and working on the activities in this Teacher’s Resource Book, your students will be able to appreciate the serious consequences that can arise from cyberbullying and determine what they can do to make their school and community a safer place for all.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After watching the video *I Was Cyberbullied* and participating in the activities included in this Teacher's Resource Book, your students will be able to:

- understand the terms “cyberbullying” and “bullycide”
- recognize that there is more than one type of cyberbully
- stop and think before they send an email or post something online that might be perceived as harassment
- analyze the personal, social and legal consequences that cyberbullying can have on the life of the bully and the victim
- explore ways they can prevent cyberbullying in their school
- understand how peer pressure may put them at risk for being an inadvertent cyberbully without being aware of it
- recognize that Internet communication can sometimes lead to misunderstandings that could have been avoided by a direct conversation
- reflect on the serious emotional effects cyberbullying can have on its victims
- have the tools to request help if they, or someone they know, is a victim of cyberbullying
- explain the three steps (Stop, Block and Tell an Adult) that students can use to defuse a cyberbullying incident
- review their own state's laws against bullying and cyberbullying
- understand that anything they do, say or post online is accessible forever and can be traced by authorities via “cyberfootprints”

PROGRAM SUMMARY

I Was Cyberbullied opens with images of text on a computer screen and the sound of taunting teen voices. The terms “bullying” and “cyberbullying” are defined and compared. Traditionally, bullying referred to someone who used brute strength to exert power over others. Cyberbullying occurs when teens use cell phones or the Internet to harass or threaten others.

Dr. Joel Haber, a clinical psychologist and cyberbullying expert, is introduced. He states that cyberbullying can be more harmful than physical bullying. “Once something is out there, it’s done. You can’t take it back.” Two teen hosts tell viewers that the video will examine cyberbullying and explain how they can avoid becoming victims of cyberbullying.

The hosts offer a series of facts about cyberbullying, stating that four in ten teens have been victims of this growing phenomenon. Girls are twice as likely to be victims of cyberbullying, as well as twice as likely to be cyberbullies themselves. The hosts also describe the various methods cyberbullies use to harass their targets. These include impersonating others online, hacking into online accounts, forwarding personal information, texting inappropriate material and more.

The hosts explain several steps that will help viewers from being victimized by cyberbullies. It is crucial to be aware of the information you post online, avoid sharing private information such as your passwords and Google yourself from time to time. “Use your common sense,” the female host advises. “Only put things on the Internet that you would be happy for anyone to see because you never know where your information will end up.”

The first profile of a real teen who was cyberbullied proves how important it is to be discreet online. The video introduces Lauren, a tenth-grade girl who used a social networking site to share music with her friends. One day while online, another user with the same name as one of her good friends started chatting with her. The “friend” started asking Lauren some strange questions about her classmates, such as who she thought was cute, who was ugly, who she liked, who she disliked, etc. Lauren realized something wasn’t normal. She called her friend. As it turns out, the person chatting with her online was an imposter.

The next day at school, print-outs of her web chat were posted everywhere. “Everyone knew now, not just the stranger on the computer, but everyone in school,” Lauren remembers. She describes feeling violated and wanting to isolate herself from everything. She reached out to her mother to help her get through it. “You never know who you’re really talking to and that’s the scary part about it... anyone can be anyone,” Lauren says.

To this day, she still doesn’t know the identity of the cyberbully. The way she uses the Internet now is different. “Everything I say now, I make sure that if someone had to see it, it would be okay. Because if you write it, it’s always there.” Dr. Haber explains that this is a perfect example of why personal conversations should occur face-to-face and not online.

PROGRAM SUMMARY CONTINUED

“The best way to prevent cyberbullying?” Dr. Haber asks. “Don’t become a cyberbully yourself.” The hosts explain that some people may cyberbully without being aware of it. They present viewers with a quiz to illustrate how simple online actions can be considered cyberbullying. Impersonating someone else online, forwarding a private email without the writer’s permission or voting on an online bashing poll are all examples of cyberbullying. “You may not realize how much your words could hurt someone else.” The hosts advise viewers to block communication with cyberbullies and refuse to forward any offensive emails, texts or photos to others.

Next, the male host emphasizes the importance of never responding to a cyberbully. “By responding, you are giving the cyberbully exactly what he or she wants,” he says. The next real-life profile introduces Blaze, a high school freshman who learned that responding to a cyberbully can quickly escalate a situation. She created a Facebook® profile as a way to make friends at her new school. It backfired when she began getting cruel and threatening messages from a “friend.” She began to fear going to school and meeting new people. She kept asking the cyberbully why she was harassing her, but this just led to more hurtful messages.

“When people go after you like that, they do it because they want something out of you. They want that anger, that sadness—and I gave it to them. Me responding allowed it to escalate,” she reflects. Blaze ended up calling an old friend who advised her to go to school with her head held high and to be herself. Once she started ignoring the taunts, Blaze felt better. Dr. Haber notes that many victims think that if they try to befriend their bully, the bullying will stop, but he reminds viewers that “you can only control your own behavior and not the behavior of the cyberbully.”

The hosts point out three steps that teens should follow if they become victims of cyberbullying: Stop, Block and Tell. **Stop**—do not react immediately, but take time to think about whether you want to respond at all. “Ignoring a cyberbully is not an act of weakness. In fact, it takes a level of maturity to stand above it and understand that all the bully is after is your response.” Step two is to **Block** the cyberbully’s email address or screen name. Step three is to **Tell** an adult if necessary. “When other steps didn’t work, or if you’ve been threatened with harm,” tell an adult.

However, the decision to tell an adult can be difficult. A case study with high schooler Esteban demonstrates how telling an adult can make a huge difference. Unlike the other two case studies, Esteban knew who his bullies were because he was bullied both directly in school and via the Internet at home. They made fun of his appearance and told him that he should just kill himself since no one would notice it if he did. “It was like a constant nightmare for me. There’s really only so much a person can take.” Esteban was bullied constantly, but he was too embarrassed to tell anyone. He was concerned that his mother would overreact or that his computer privileges would be taken away.

PROGRAM SUMMARY CONTINUED

"Looking back, not telling someone was probably the worst mistake I made," Esteban shares. His pain became obvious and eventually his basketball coach asked him what was going on. Esteban told him everything. Afterward, it felt like a weight being lifted off his shoulders. His coach handled the situation in a discreet manner and the bullying stopped. "If the bullying continued, I could have ended up doing something I definitely would have regretted," Esteban remarks.

Dr. Haber tells viewers about recent incidents linking cyberbullying and suicide. Cyberbullies often don't understand the extent to which their words or actions can really hurt their victims emotionally and physically. They may not also realize that everything they do online can be traced back to them. Dr. Haber says, "Cyberbullies don't think they can be found, but all electronic communications can be traced. If you're a cyberbully, you can be found."

The video ends with the hosts recapping the program's main points about cyberbullying. They remind viewers to post information with caution, keep private information private, avoid being a cyberbully by never emailing or texting when angry and remember the Stop, Block and Tell method if they are victims of cyberbullying. They conclude by saying, "Follow these simple rules and do your part to stop cyberbullying."

Pre/Post Test Answer Key

1. c
2. b
3. c
4. a
5. a
6. d
7. b
8. a
9. d
10. d

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions will help you start a conversation with your students about cyberbullying—topics that relate to their own experiences while allowing you to gauge their general knowledge of the issue. Feel free to alter these questions to better suit your own classroom.

1. How many of you have your own social networking page (Facebook®, MySpace®, Twitter®, etc.)?
2. Have you heard the term “cyberbullying”? How would you define it?
3. What forms does cyberbullying take among your peers? (Some forms include flaming, harassment, denigration, exclusion, impersonation, outing and trickery; see the *Forms of Cyberbullying* fact sheet for definitions.)
4. Have you ever seen messages, pictures or comments on a social networking page or website that targeted a classmate (or someone you know personally) in a negative way? What, if anything, did you do?
5. Have you ever posted something online that you intended to be a joke but later found out it was taken out of context—hurting someone that you didn’t intend to hurt?
6. Have you ever emailed or texted something private to a friend and later found out that your words were shared without your permission? What did you do about it?
7. How many of you own cell phones with texting capabilities? Built-in camera?
8. Have you ever sent a friend a photo and later found out that it was forwarded to others without your permission? What did you do about it?
9. Have you ever received a text message or email that was originally addressed to someone else? What did you do about it? Ignore it? Forward it to other people? Tell the person who originally wrote it that it was being passed around?
10. When do you think it’s okay to forward a message from one person to a group of your friends? When do you think it’s inappropriate?
11. Is there an acceptable line when it comes to online jokes and pranks, or do you think they are always inappropriate?
12. How would you describe the role that other people (beside the cyberbully) can play when it comes to online harassment? Is there such a thing as an innocent bystander?

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STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Name: _____

1. What is cyberbullying?
 - a) The act of using physical force to hurt another person.
 - b) Bullying that includes stealing a person's cell phone, laptop or texting device.
 - c) Using a cell phone or the Internet to harass, embarrass or threaten someone by posting messages or sending compromising pictures online.
 - d) Any cruel activity that takes place in cyberspace.

2. Which is more harmful to the victim: cyberbullying or traditional bullying?
 - a) Traditional bullying is more harmful because it can include physical violence.
 - b) Cyberbullying is more harmful because the victim can't escape; it can occur 24 hours a day.
 - c) Cyberbullying and traditional bullying are equally harmful.
 - d) Neither cyberbullying nor traditional bullying is harmful.

3. According to a recent survey, how many teens have experienced online harassment?
 - a) 2 in 10 teens
 - b) 3 in 10 teens
 - c) 4 in 10 teens
 - d) 5 in 10 teens

4. Which of the following is not a common method of cyberbullying?
 - a) posting a negative review of a movie
 - b) participating in an offensive Internet poll that asks you to judge a classmate
 - c) locking someone out of their own account
 - d) posting compromising pictures of someone online

5. Which of these statements is true?
 - a) Girls are twice as likely to be cyberbullies as boys.
 - b) Boys are twice as likely to be cyberbullies as girls.
 - c) Boys and girls are equally likely to be cyberbullies.
 - d) None of these statements are true.

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

6. Where does cyberbullying most commonly occur?
 - a) in chat rooms and on social networking sites
 - b) via text message and instant messaging
 - c) via email
 - d) all of the above

7. What can you do to prevent becoming a victim of cyberbullying?
 - a) Give your password only to your very best friends.
 - b) Google your name occasionally and monitor what is posted about you online.
 - c) Post private information about yourself only on your own social networking site.
 - d) Respond strongly and forcefully to anyone who cyberbullies you.

8. Asking an adult for help when you are being victimized by a cyberbully:
 - a) may be necessary to make the harassment stop.
 - b) is a sign of personal weakness.
 - c) is required only if your life has been threatened.
 - d) is not effective since adults don't care about what happens online.

9. What should you do if you are being cyberbullied?
 - a) Stop and take time to think before you respond.
 - b) Block all communication with the bully.
 - c) Decide if you want to tell an adult.
 - d) all of the above

10. What is the best way to prevent cyberbullying?
 - a) Avoid using the Internet, cell phone or texting devices.
 - b) Create an anonymous online screen name so people don't know who you are.
 - c) Change your screen name every three months.
 - d) Don't become a cyberbully yourself.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 2A

ARE YOU A CYBERBULLY?

Did you know that people who are victimized by bullies are at a high risk of becoming bullies themselves? Take this self-assessment to find if you are part of the cyberbullying problem.

PART ONE:

Rate yourself on each of the questions below, using the following point scale.

- If you've never done the activity described... give yourself **0** points.
- If you have done the activity described once or twice... give yourself **1** point.
- If you have done the activity described three or four times... give yourself **2** points.
- If you have done the activity described five or more times... give yourself **3** points.

Have you ever...

1. used the Internet to vent your emotions when you were angry with someone?	
2. confronted someone more aggressively online than you would have done in a face-to-face encounter?	
3. gotten reported for something that you wrote or did to another person online?	
4. had an email or gaming account suspended for inappropriate language or behavior?	
5. participated when your friends ganged up on someone else on the Internet?	
6. forwarded a rumor or piece of gossip about someone via text message or email?	
7. said something in a chat room or via instant message that you later regretted?	
8. used the Internet as a way to get revenge on someone who angered you?	
9. been reprimanded (at school or by a parent) for something you did online to a peer?	
10. insulted or "flamed" someone in an interactive game room?	
11. signed into an email or social networking site using another person's screen name?	
12. sent an email or online greeting card to a person from someone else's account?	
13. pretended to be someone other than yourself while online or via instant message?	
14. teased or frightened someone with an email or instant message?	
15. forwarded an email or IM text to others without the permission of the person who wrote the message?	

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 2B

ARE YOU A CYBERBULLY?

16. changed your profile status as a way to embarrass or frighten someone?	
17. posted pictures or information about someone on a website without their consent?	
18. sent rude, scary or offensive things to someone, even if you were just joking?	
19. used curses or inappropriate language online?	
20. signed someone else up for an online account without the person's permission?	
21. created an IM or email account using a name that resembled someone else's?	
22. used someone else's password for any reason without permission?	
23. hacked into someone's computer or sent a virus or Trojan horse to others?	
24. posted rude things or lies about someone online?	
25. created or voted in an online bashing poll?	
YOUR TOTAL SCORE	

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

PART TWO:

After you have added up your score, read the scale below to find out what your score suggests.

0 - 3 points: Cyber Saint

Congratulations, you're a cyber saint! Your online behavior is exemplary. Keep up the good work.

4 - 10 points: Cyber Risky

Chances are you haven't done anything terrible online, but try not to repeat any behaviors that might upset or hurt someone else. Keep in mind that online, it can be hard to know whether your comments are seen as funny or hurtful. When in doubt, don't post anything that might upset or hurt another person's feelings or reputation.

11 - 18 points: Cyber Sinner

Your online behavior needs to be improved. You've intentionally done or said things to others that are emotionally harmful and wrong. Remember, some of your behavior in cyberspace may be punishable by law, too. Clean up your act before it's too late.

More than 19 points: Cyberbully

You are headed in a very bad direction. Your actions qualify you as a cyberbully. You need to change your online behavior immediately, before you cause serious trouble for yourself as well as for your victim(s).

Source: <http://www.stopcyberbullying.org/teens/are_you_a_cyberbully.html>

PART THREE:

If your score is 4 or above, use the back of this page to describe ways that you can improve your online behavior so that you are not part of the cyberbullying problem in your school or community.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 3A

DEAR DIARY

Online weblogs (or “blogs”) are great outlets for people who love to write and share their ideas with others around the world. However, blogs can also be abused as a way to anonymously make hurtful comments about others. Often, the victim isn’t aware of the blog’s existence and can’t take steps to stop the blogger from spreading vicious or hurtful rumors.

Consider this scenario:

Jane had been dating John for a few weeks until her parents decided that she was too young to date. She broke up with John. He became angry, especially when his friends started teasing him about being dumped. He decided to create a blog called “www.janeisaslut.com” and shared the address with many of their classmates.

PART ONE:

Read the entry that John posted, as well as the comments from others.

Warning to anyone out there thinking about getting to know Jane! She comes off as this sweet, innocent, “daddy’s girl” type, which I thought was cute at first. But after a couple of dates, she still wouldn’t do much more than kiss me, and I began to want more. Well, imagine my surprise when I confront her and she tells me that the reason she doesn’t wanna do anything is because **the dirty girl has an STD!!!** No bull. It turns out that before she moved here, she slept around and did all kinds of gross things. When she moved here, she put on this saintly act which fooled everyone—including me. After I warned her to get her nasty self away from me, she told everyone that **SHE** was the one who broke up with **ME!** And the best part is, she claims it’s because she is “too young to date.” What a great way to cover her slutty reputation. I hope this serves as a warning to anyone who falls into her trap. I made it out alive (and STD-free) but the next person might not be so lucky... If you care about your friends, forward this link along to them!

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

(5) Comments:

Ewwwwwww! I sit next to her in Biology! No wonder she was so good at the chapter on sexual reproduction. – Ben

I knew she was too perfect to be true. Perfect hair, perfect clothes, perfect grades... Now I know there's a nasty rash under all that "perfection," LOL! – Alison

No wonder she never takes a shower after gym class! – Gracie

Dude, THANK YOU for this. When you guys broke up, I was thinking about asking her out. Thanks for the heads-up. – Close Call

I was starting to really like her as a friend. She seemed really nice. But I don't want a slutty friend getting me in trouble or ruining MY reputation. Guess you never know... – Anonymous

PART TWO:

On a separate sheet of paper, write a "diary entry" that Jane might have written. It doesn't matter if you are male or female—put yourself in Jane's place and imagine what she should do next. Should she say something to John? Would it be better to ignore his website or confront him? And what about the people who commented—Jane probably knows who they are. Should she try to clear her name to them? To the whole school? What about the person who wrote the last post? This was someone who clearly wanted to get to know Jane. Should she tell her parents? What about school officials?

Name: _____

Many states have laws to protect students from being harassed or bullied by classmates, both in face-to-face situations and via cyberspace. To learn more about state laws, consult the *Legislative Action against Cyberbullying* fact sheet. In addition to state laws, most schools have an official policy to prevent and punish cyberbullying.

PART ONE:

As a class, research your school's policy on cyberbullying. It should be available online at your school's own website or at the school district website. Check under "Code of Conduct" or "Student Handbook" if you can't find it easily. Each student in the class should read the policy.

After all students have reviewed the policy, spend ten minutes discussing it with your classmates. As a group, decide whether you think the policy is adequate. Use these questions to lead your discussion:

- Is the policy easy to understand?
- Are the disciplinary measures clear?
- Does the policy focus on prevention as well as punishment?
- Does it focus on raising awareness about cyberbullying?
- Are there more rigorous punishments for those who are frequent cyberbullies?
- Does it reassure victims that their concerns will be promptly addressed if they report abuse?
- Does the policy encourage parents, PTA and community members to be active in preventing cyberbullying outside of school?
- Does it tell students where to direct their questions?

PART TWO:

Invite several school officials to come into your classroom to discuss the policy. You may choose to speak with teachers, guidance counselors, the principal, school nurse, security guards, social workers and anyone else who is involved with making your school a safe environment. You should prepare at least five questions to ask your interview subject. If you don't record your interview electronically, be sure to take careful notes and write down the speaker's remarks as accurately as possible.

On the back of this sheet, prepare at least five questions to ask your school officials during your meeting.

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

The federal and state laws related to cyberbullying are in flux according to many experts, including Dr. Joel Haber, who spoke in the video. Dr. Haber explains that lately “there has been a lot of jockeying to determine the best way” to create legislation that will protect victims from anonymous cyberbullies, while still guaranteeing freedom of speech to all. “The laws that exist now were not made to address electronic issues like cyberbullying or sexting,” Dr. Haber states. “Privacy issues are still being discussed. In the meantime, the laws have not yet caught up to the problem.”

PART ONE: Read the article excerpt below to learn more about why cyberbullying is harder to legislate than classic face-to-face bullying.

Online Bullies Pull Schools Into the Fray

by Jan Hoffman

June 27, 2010—According to the Anti-Defamation League, although 44 states have bullying statutes, fewer than half offer guidance about whether schools may intervene in bullying involving “electronic communication,” which almost always occurs outside of school and most severely on weekends, when children have more free time to socialize online.

A few states say that school conduct codes must explicitly prohibit off-campus cyberbullying. Others imply it; still others explicitly exclude it. Some states say that local districts should develop cyberbullying prevention programs but the states did not address the question of discipline.

Judges are flummoxed, too, as they wrestle with new questions about protections on student speech and school searches. Can a student be suspended for posting a video on YouTube that cruelly demeans another student? Can a principal search a cell phone, much like a locker or a backpack?

It’s unclear. These issues have begun their slow climb through state and federal courts, but so far, rulings have been contradictory, and much is still to be determined.

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/28/style/28bully.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all>

PART TWO: As a class, prepare to debate the question of how far states (and schools) should go in criminalizing conduct such as harassment, cyberbullying and cyberpranks. Consult the *Legislative Action against Cyberbullying* fact sheet to learn more about the current federal laws as well as the laws that exist (or are being proposed) in your state.

Many persuasive articles have been written about this topic. For an article that offers a balanced perspective on the problem, consult “When schools can discipline off-campus behavior,” by Larry Magid. <<http://safely.yahoo.com/blogarticle?post=27>>

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 6

CYBERBULLYING BY PROXY

“Cyberbullying by proxy” refers to any incident where a person participates in someone else’s cyberbullying actions because of direct—or implied—peer pressure. Some teens find themselves caught up in bullying behaviors because they’re afraid that they might be teased or rejected if they don’t go along with the crowd.

Remember:

*If you go along with someone else’s cyberbullying plan,
the harmful consequences for the victim are
the same as if the bullying had been your own idea.*

PART ONE:

Read the *Types of Cyberbullies* fact sheet to learn more about cyberbullying personalities and tactics. As a class, discuss each personality type in order to fully understand how and why some people become cyberbullies.

PART TWO:

Imagine that you are friends with someone who fits the description of one of the cyberbullying personalities described in the fact sheet:

- The Vengeful Angel Cyberbully
- The Power Hungry Cyberbully
- The Revenge of the Nerds Cyberbully
- The Mean Girl Cyberbully
- The Inadvertent Cyberbully

Could that person coerce you into cyberbullying? You may not think so, but it might happen in a subtle way that you’re not prepared for. This is your opportunity to prepare in advance. Use the back of this page to invent a situation in which your friend tries to convince you to join him or her in cyberbullying a classmate. Describe what you would say to make it clear that you are not willing to participate.

PART THREE:

Gather as a class and share one of your scenarios. As a class, discuss why it would be hard to say no if you were put in each one of these situations. Do you think that both parties should be regarded as equally guilty or does it matter whose idea it initially was? Is participation less serious than planning?

Name: _____

Today, people often communicate without face-to-face interaction. Emailing, texting, blogging, instant messaging and posting comments on social network sites are all convenient ways to have a conversation, but they can also be dangerous if the words are misunderstood. Without physical cues like body language or tone of voice, remarks can sometimes be interpreted in ways that are not intended. When that happens, the person writing the text becomes an inadvertent cyberbully. For more information on inadvertent cyberbullies, consult the *Types of Cyberbullies* fact sheet.

PART ONE:

Read each of the following statements carefully. Think about the various meanings these comments could have depending on the speaker's tone of voice and facial expressions. Then consider how your reaction to these statements might change if the words were printed online, instead of spoken aloud. For each one, write a replacement statement that is clearer and less easily misinterpreted. The first one has been done for you.

1. "You look good! I'm so glad you didn't go with the short prom dress. Only someone with a perfect body could have pulled that one off."

Your prom dress was great. The style suited you perfectly!

2. "Why don't you try out for JV football instead of varsity? You have to be really in awesome shape to make varsity."

3. "I can't believe you're dating Leah! She usually goes for the studs. You know, all looks and no brains? It's really cool that she's finally dating someone normal!"

4. "I heard you're coming to Brad's party this weekend. That's weird. He usually invites the super popular crowd."

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

5. "My cousin and I went shopping at some fancy stores in the city this weekend. I thought about asking you to come along, but I know you can't afford that stuff, so I figured you wouldn't enjoy yourself."

6. "You're so lucky no one has asked you out yet. I'm juggling three relationships right now—it's so hard! Some days I wish the chicks would just leave me alone!"

7. "You thought that test was hard? It's not too late to drop out of AP classes and go back to regular classes if the workload is too much for you."

8. "Sorry I didn't invite you to hang out with us the other night. The club was really trendy and I didn't think it would be your style."

PART TWO:

Think about a time when you received a text message, email, IM or online comment that hurt you or made you angry. In the space below, write briefly about the incident—how it made you feel and how you reacted. Do you think that perhaps the meaning of the message was open to interpretation? Could the sender have meant something different than what you understood? Would you have felt the same about the comment if it had been spoken rather than written? In your essay, be sure to describe if the incident has made a difference in how you behave in your own online communications. Use the back of this page if you need more space.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 8

CYBERBULLYING AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Working in small groups (three to five students), create an anti-cyberbullying campaign to launch at your school. Your goal is to teach your peers that there are many ways they can prevent cyberbullying at your school. Use the information and statistics from the fact sheets and consult reputable Internet sources to back up your message.

Here are some ideas you might want to consider:

- **Create a Pledge Wall:** Design a wall-sized “contract” that could be hung in your school’s hallway or cafeteria. Write a pledge that clearly explains what cyberbullying is and why it’s not acceptable. Your peers can sign their names under the pledge. Get everyone involved!
- **Design a Public Service Announcement (PSA):** Write a two-minute commercial about cyberbullying: what it is, the various ways it can disguise itself and the harmful consequences for its victims. Let your peers know what they can do to make it stop and where they can go for help. Ask your principal for permission to read your PSA on the loudspeaker during homeroom.
- **Get Published:** Write an article for your school newspaper about cyberbullying. The article should be interesting and thought provoking. Include recent statistics and details about the laws being passed in your state. Include a cartoon that shows how people can stop cyberbullies. If your school doesn’t have a newspaper, create a newsletter instead and hand copies out in the hallways.
- **Organize a Poll:** Create a series of 10 Yes/No questions for your peers to answer about cyberbullying. (Examples: “Have you ever been a victim of cyberbullying?” “Do you think forwarding a private email is acceptable?”) Read the fact sheets to come up with question ideas. Distribute copies of your poll during lunch. Remind everyone that the poll is anonymous—they can simply circle their answers and slip the poll into a box in your classroom. With your group, tally up the answers and share the results on a poster or other visual aid that will help your peers understand what’s going on at your school. Add suggestions at the bottom of your poster for how kids can deal with cyberbullying.
- **Find a Guest Speaker:** Chances are good that there is an expert in your area who could speak to your school about cyberbullying. Your school’s guidance counselor may be able to help you find someone. Prepare a letter to the expert, asking him or her to speak to your class (or in a school-wide assembly) about cyberbullying. Once you have arranged a time, date and location, prepare a short speech that introduces the speaker to your audience.

Name: _____

As you heard in the video, "Kids usually know cyberbullying when they see it." Read the following scenarios and decide whether they are cyberbullying incidents (intentional or otherwise) or if they are simply the result of miscommunication.

PART ONE:

Read each scenario and answer the questions that follow.

1. Ben, a popular football player, decided to cut class on a day when there was a substitute teacher. He would have gotten away with it, if not for a classmate, Sequan, who told the teacher that Ben skipped out. As a result, Ben got a week's detention and he was not allowed to play in a big football game that weekend. Ben was really upset because he had always been nothing but nice to Sequan (though they were not friends.) A few days later, Ben's teammate, Jonah, showed him a web page he had put online. It showed a cartoon of Sequan ratting out Ben to his teacher. The cartoon definitely made Sequan look like a snitch and a loser. Jonah said he was planning to forward it to a few other kids.

Do you think Jonah is a cyberbully? If you were Ben, what would you do?

2. Jeliza, Tasha and Kelly all went to a concert Friday night and had a great time. Jeliza took many pictures with her cell phone camera. The next day, she uploaded them to her Facebook® page and tagged Tasha and Kelly so that the pictures showed up on their Facebook® pages as well. On Monday, Tasha was furious that Jeliza had shared pictures in which she thought she looked ugly. When Jeliza said she was being crazy, Tasha pointed out that in all the pictures Kelly looked great and that Tasha looked ugly next to her.

Do you think Jeliza is a cyberbully? If you were Jeliza, what would you do?

PART TWO:

Create your own scenario on the back of this page. Share it with classmates to see whether they think it is a cyberbullying incident or not.

Name: _____

Some teens don't realize that it's against the law to make threats to hurt someone. But the fact is that law enforcement officials become involved whenever threats of physical harm are made via the Internet. The sender may assume that he or she is invisible online, but law enforcement officials are able to track down the "cyberfootprint" of the sender. Teens have been suspended from school and even prosecuted in court for making cyberthreats. It's important to understand that making a threat to physically hurt someone else over the Internet is not a joke. There can be serious consequences.

PART ONE:

Read the following messages and decide if you think the senders could be arrested for making physical threats against the recipients. Write an explanation for your conclusions on the back of this page.

1. "u better not come to school 2morrow unless u bring back my Lady LaLa CD!"
2. "if i were u, i would rather drink poison than look in the mirror."
3. "stay away from Jody or u will b sorry u were ever born."
4. "no1 likes u anymore cuz u stink."
5. "watch ur back, people say u r a snitch."
6. "what a waste of life u r! u feeble minded moron!"
7. "i know where u live...don't go 2 sleep 2nite or u won't ever wake up."
8. "ur a big fat stinkin pig & u deserve whats comin."
9. "im gonna make sure no one is gonna talk 2 u ever again."
10. "what u did is so evil, u don't deserve to breathe."

PART TWO:

As a class, compare your answers. Did everyone agree? If not, what does that suggest about how emails can be misinterpreted? Discuss whether you think it's appropriate for the police to investigate complaints about online threats among teens, or if it should be handled differently.

Name: _____

"If the bullying had continued, I could have ended up doing something that I definitely would have regretted."

– Esteban, from *I Was Cyberbullied*

There have been several recent incidents involving young teens committing suicide as a result of being relentlessly cyberbullied by their peers. These cases have garnered a great deal of public attention and debate, and have resulted in a new term—"bullycide."

PART ONE:

Investigate a specific case of bullycide in the news and write a summary of the case. You may select one of the cases described in the *Words Can Kill* fact sheet or find a different case on your own, using reputable news sources. In a one-page paper, describe the case in detail and answer these questions:

- Did the parents of the victim in your essay know that their son or daughter was being harassed? Did they take actions? Describe.
- Was the school aware of the bullying? Did they take actions? Describe.
- Had the victim tried unsuccessfully to reach out for help before committing suicide?
- What are the laws against bullying in the state where the bullycide occurred?
- Did the laws change afterward? If the law did not change, are there plans to change the law?
- Was anyone convicted? If so, explain what sentence was handed down by the court.

Your essay should also include a paragraph in which you describe what you have learned about cyberbullying and whether you believe the laws that protect individuals are adequate, or if they should be strengthened. Consult the *Legislative Action against Cyberbullying* fact sheet for more information on current laws.

PART TWO:

Give a brief oral presentation about your case to your classmates. The presentation can be informal—just share the facts that you researched with your peers.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 12

YOUR FAMILY'S CELL PHONE CONTRACT

The cell phone contract below was developed by experts on cyberbullying. Read the contract and share it with your parents or legal guardian. Together, discuss whether these rules are appropriate for your family. Use the back of this page if you or your parents wish to revise any portion of the contract or add additional rules. When everyone is satisfied with the contract, sign it below. Keep a copy where you and your family will be able to refer to it whenever necessary.

Child's Expectations

1. I acknowledge that using a cell phone is a privilege and I will not take it for granted.
2. I will not give out my cell phone number to anyone unless I first clear it with my parents.
3. I will always answer calls from my parents. If I miss a call from them, I will call back immediately.
4. I will not bring my cell phone to school if it is prohibited. If allowed to bring it to school, I will keep it in my backpack or locker. It will remain turned off between the first and last bell.
5. I will not use my cell phone for any purpose after _____am/pm on a school night or after _____am/pm on other nights, unless approved by my parents.
6. I will not send hurtful, harassing or threatening text messages.
7. I will not say anything on the cell phone that I wouldn't say in person with my parents listening.
8. I will pay for any charges above and beyond the usual monthly fee.
9. I will not download anything from the Internet or call toll numbers without first asking my parents.

10. I will not enable or disable any setting on my phone without permission.
11. I will not take a picture or video of anyone without that person's permission.
12. I will not send or post pictures or videos online without that person's permission.
13. I will not send or post any pictures or videos to anyone without first showing them to my parents.
14. I will not be disruptive in my cell phone use. If my parents ask me to end a call or stop text messaging, I will.

Parent's Expectations

1. I will respect the privacy of my child when my child is talking on a cell phone.
2. I will not unnecessarily invade my child's privacy by reading text messages or call logs without telling my child first. If I have a concern, I will express it to my child, and we will look through this material together.
3. I will pay the standard monthly fee for the cell phone contract.
4. I will be reasonable with consequences for violations of this contract. Consequences will start at loss of cell phone privileges for 24 hours and progress according to the seriousness of the violation.

Child's signature: _____

Date _____

Parent's signature: _____

Date _____

Source: Hinduja, S. and Patchin, J. (2009). Cyberbullying Research Center. Retrieved August 1, 2010, from <http://www.cyberbullying.us/cyberbullying_cell_phone_contract.pdf>

Name: _____

YOUR FAMILY'S INTERNET USE CONTRACT

The Internet use contract below was developed by experts on cyberbullying. Read the contract and share it with your parents or legal guardian. Together, discuss whether these rules are appropriate for your family. Use the back of this page if you or your parents wish to revise any portion of the contract or add additional rules. When everyone is satisfied with the contract, sign it below. Keep a copy posted near your computer.

Child's Expectations

I understand that using the family computer is a privilege that is subject to these rules:

1. I will respect the privacy of others using this computer. I will not open, move or delete any files that are not in my own personal directory.
2. I understand that my parents may access and look at my files at any time.
3. I will not download or install programs without first asking permission.
4. I will never give out private information while online. At no time will I ever give out my last name, phone number, address, or school name—even if I know the person with whom I am communicating.
5. I understand that I can use the computer for approved purposes only.
6. I will never write or post anything online that I would not want my parents to see. I will not use profanity or offensive language. If I receive offensive messages or images, I will report them to my parents immediately.
7. I will never agree to meet an online friend in person without first asking permission.
8. If I ever feel uncomfortable about an experience online, I will immediately tell an adult. I understand that my parents

will help me and will not punish me as long as these rules are followed.

Parent's Expectations

I understand that it is my responsibility to protect my family and to help them receive the best of what the Internet has to offer. I agree to the following:

1. I will listen calmly. If my child comes to me with a problem related to his or her online experiences, I promise not to get angry but to do my best to help my child resolve the situation.
2. I will set reasonable rules and expectations for Internet usage. I will establish reasonable consequences for lapses in judgment on the part of my child.
3. I will treat my child with dignity. I will respect the friendships that he or she may make online as I would his or her offline friends.
4. I will not unnecessarily invade my child's privacy. I promise not to go further than I need to in order to ensure my child's safety. I will not read diaries or journals, nor will I inspect emails or computer files unless there is a serious concern.
5. I will not take drastic measures. I understand that the Internet is an important tool that is essential to my child's success in school, and I promise not to ban it entirely.

We understand the above rules and agree to use the computer accordingly.

Child's signature: _____

Date _____

Parent's signature: _____

Date _____

SOURCE: Hinduja, S. and Patchin, J. (2009). Cyberbullying Research Center. Retrieved August 1, 2010, from <http://www.cyberbullying.us/cyberbullying_internet_use_contract.pdf>

FACT SHEETS

Name: _____

Cyberbullying refers to any incident in which a person is tormented, embarrassed, harassed or threatened by another person through technology—whether by Internet, instant message, text message, digital photo, interactive gaming forum or other interactive technologies.

Kids usually know cyberbullying when they see it. Cyberbullies use the Internet or cell phones to send hurtful messages or post information to damage people’s reputation and friendships. Cyberbullying is usually not a one-time communication, unless it involves a death threat or a threat of serious bodily harm.

In some cases, cyberbullying may be against the law. A cyberbully can be charged with harassment, juvenile delinquency (if a minor is involved) or identity theft if the cyberbully hacked into someone else’s web account.

Methods of Cyberbullying:

- Sending hateful or threatening online instant messages to peers.
- Tricking people into revealing personal information.
- Posting embarrassing photos or personal emails without the consent of the person who sent them.
- Pretending to be someone else online to trick others. This could involve hacking into an account or creating a user name that is similar to the victim’s real user name. While assuming the victim’s identity, the cyberbully may spread lies and rumors about others.
- Stealing a person’s online password and filling his or her profile with sexist, racist or otherwise inappropriate content or photos.
- Creating a hate blog or website that is aimed at insulting a specific individual.
- Starting a “Warning War” in which the cyberbully continuously reports a peer for bad behavior (that never took place) to the Internet provider until the victim’s account is revoked.
- Creating an Internet poll and forwarding it to the victim’s peers. An example would be a “Who’s the fattest kid in the 8th grade?” poll that allows teens to negatively rate their friends.
- Verbally abusing a peer during interactive online gaming, making threats or using lewd language
- Sending spyware or computer viruses to victims.
- Emailing pornography, spam and other types of unsolicited junk mail that could get the victim in trouble.

Name: _____

According to the 2007 Executive Research Summary, “Teens and Cyberbullying,” produced by the National Crime Prevention Council, when teens were asked why they think that their peers participate in cyberbullying, an overwhelming majority—**81 percent**—said that cyberbullies think that it’s funny.

Other teens believe that youth who cyberbully:

- don’t think it’s a big deal
- don’t think about the consequences their action might have on others
- are encouraged by friends
- think “everybody is doing it”
- think they won’t get caught

According to studies published in the book, Bullying Beyond the Schoolyard: Preventing and Responding to Cyberbullying by Sameer Hinduja and Justin W. Patchin, youth admitted to online bullying of their peers for the following reasons:

- 22% said they were motivated by revenge
- 18.7% said the victim deserved it
- 10.6% said they did it for fun
- 3.9% hated the victim
- 3.5% said they were pressured by peers
- 2.8% retaliated against a bully
- 2.5% said they were venting anger
- 5.7% gave other reasons

Name: _____

The list below reflects the most common forms of cyberbullying, although new forms arise often.

Cyberstalking:

Repeatedly sending intimidating messages that include threats of harm; engaging in other online activities that make a person afraid for his or her safety.

Denigration:

“Dissing” or disparaging someone online; sending or posting cruel gossip or rumors about a person to damage his or her reputation or friendships.

Exclusion:

Intentionally excluding someone from an online group, like a “buddy list” or a group gaming forum.

Flaming:

Online fights using electronic messages with angry and vulgar language.

Hacking:

Breaking into someone’s account without authorization and obtaining information about a person from computer files.

Harassment:

Repeatedly sending offensive, rude and insulting messages, texts, photos, phone calls, emails or other electronic communications.

Impersonation:

Breaking into someone’s account, posing as that person and sending messages to make the person look bad, get that person in trouble or danger or damage that person’s reputation or friendships.

Outing:

Sharing someone’s secrets or embarrassing information online.

Trickery:

Tricking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing information, which is then shared online.

Trolling:

Intentionally posting provocative messages about sensitive subjects to create conflict, upset people and bait them into “flaming” or fighting.

Source: Willard, Nancy. An Educator’s Guide to Cyberbullying and Cyberthreats. Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use, <<http://www.cyberbully.org/cyberbully/docs/cbcteducator.pdf>> (accessed August 2010). All definitions from Willard and used with permission, except for “trolling” definition, which was created by ADL.

Experts have found that cyberbullies can be placed into different categories based on the motivations for their behavior. Some cyberbullies view their actions as justified; some harass their online peers out of anger, frustration or the desire for revenge. Others do it out of boredom, or because they think they'll seem cool to their friends. Still other people cyberbully without intending to. Read on to learn more about the most common types of cyberbullies:

“Vengeful Angel” Cyberbullies

Characteristics:

- These cyberbullies do not consider themselves to be bullies.
- They view their actions as honorable—they believe that they are protecting themselves or their friends from other cyberbullies.
- They see their actions as a way to teach a lesson to others.
- They typically act alone without involving others.

What They Need to Realize:

- If they or someone they care about is being bullied, they should report it to an adult and let authorities handle the problem.
- Bullying in response to someone's harassment simply leads to more bullying.
- Their actions are just as bad as the actions of those they are trying to punish.

“Power Hungry” or “Revenge of the Nerds” Cyberbullies

Characteristics:

- They use cyberbullying as a means to exert power or authority over others.
- They are usually victims of offline bullying themselves, and they feel safety behind the anonymity of the Internet.
- They are typically very technologically savvy. They might be the most dangerous type of cyberbully since they frequently know how to hack into accounts or spam without getting caught.
- Power Hungry cyberbullies need an audience. They feed off other people's reactions and like to brag about their actions. If they don't get a reaction, they will continue to cyberbully until they get the attention they seek.
- Revenge of the Nerds cyberbullies typically target their victims for more personal reasons and keep their bullying a secret from their friends. They also are more likely to use “cyberbullying by proxy” as a method to harass their victims.

What They Need to Realize:

- Even those who are technologically savvy can still get caught. Internet activities always leave a cyberfootprint that can be traced by authorities.
- Cyberbullying will not solve or stop problems of real-life bullying.
- Their actions are as serious as the face-to-face bullying they endure in real life and can be just as hurtful.

This fact sheet is continued on the next page.

“Mean Girl” Cyberbullies*Characteristics:*

- This type of cyberbullying is very ego-based; the most immature of all types of cyberbullying.
- These types of cyberbullies are usually females who direct their harassment toward other females.
- It usually occurs as a group activity, for instance at a sleepover.
- These cyberbullies typically require an audience and like others to know that they are behind the harassment as a way to show power.
- Their actions are augmented when others admire their cyberbullying or egg them on. Without attention, it will usually stop.

What They Need to Realize:

- The power to torment others is not a sign of superiority, it is a sign of insecurity.
- What may amuse them for a few hours can have very long-lasting effects on their victims.
- Picking on the same person can get boring. They may be the ringleader one day and the victim the next day.

“Inadvertent” Cyberbullies*Characteristics:*

- These cyberbullies don't consider their actions to be a form of bullying—they typically lash out as a response to hateful or mean messages they have received and do so without thinking. They are not trying to hurt others intentionally. (This is what differentiates the Inadvertent Cyberbully from the Revenge of the Nerds Cyberbully.)
- They react without thinking, clicking “send” before they consider whether their response may be hurtful or overly dramatic.
- They tend to see their actions as “jokes.”
- They are generally surprised when they are accused of being cyberbullies since that was never their intention.

What They Need to Realize:

- Once you click “send,” your message is out there forever and can be interpreted in ways that range from mean to threatening.
- People have different opinions as to what constitutes “joking around.” What is funny to one person could be very offensive to another.
- Things written online, emailed or texted can be easily taken out of context. Facial expressions, gestures and the tone of voice are what help get your true intention across. You lose all of this in cyberspace.
- Even if cyberbullying was done unintentionally, the emotional and physical effects it has on others remains the same as if it were intentional.

Name: _____

Remember these tips to avoid being cyberbullied—and also to avoid becoming an inadvertent cyberbully to someone else:

- Never post your personal information on social networking sites. This includes your phone number, address, personal email address, your birthday, the name of your school, credit card information, etc.
- Never share your Internet passwords with anyone except your parents. Don't use an obvious password (like your dog's name or your middle name) that could easily be guessed by an acquaintance.
- Do not add people to your buddy list or "friends" list if you do not know them.
- If someone on your list starts acting strange or aggressive, block the person from your list immediately.
- Refuse to pass along cyberbullying messages that you receive. Cyberbullies will often forward hateful messages about their victim to many classmates and ask that each person pass it along to their own friends. If you get a message like this, do not pass it along. Sharing others' personal messages makes you an accomplice to the cyberbully.
- If you are playing online video games with your friends and the game messaging gets out of hand, tell your friends to stop.
- Speak with other students, as well as your teachers and school administrators, to develop clear rules against cyberbullying.
- Raise awareness of the cyberbullying problem in your community by holding an assembly and creating fliers to give to younger kids or parents.
- If you wouldn't say it in person, don't say it online.

CYBERBULLYING:

Don't write it.

Don't forward it.

Don't tolerate it.

Name: _____

If you ever find yourself being cyberbullied, remember the tips you learned in this video. As the hosts said, "Ignoring a cyberbully is not an act of weakness. It takes a level of maturity to stand above it and understand that all the bully is after is your response."

Instead of retaliating and making the problem worse—or becoming a cyberbully yourself—remember these three simple rules: Stop, Block and Tell.

Stop!

- Never respond immediately to a cyberbully.
- Take a breather, go for a walk, shut down your computer, turn off your phone, do whatever it takes to give yourself time to decide how—and if—you want to respond.
- If you choose to reply, write a calm, unemotional message.
- Read your message twice before sending. Then drop it.
- Remember, the cyberbully is looking for a response from you.
- Getting upset or lashing out will only give the bully what he or she is seeking.
- Don't try to befriend the cyberbully—it won't work, and it's likely to make the bully pursue you even more aggressively.
- DO NOT RETALIATE!

Block!

- Block the cyberbully.
- Remove the person's screen name or email address from your buddy list.
- Check the privacy settings on your email or social networking account to ensure that you do not receive further messages from people who are not on your friends list.
- Designate the cyberbully's emails to your "Spam" folder.

Tell!

- If you can't make the cyberbullying stop on your own, don't be afraid to reach out for help. Cyberbullying is serious and not something you should have to deal with alone.
- Tell a trusted adult or teacher and decide what actions you want to take with a clear head and a second opinion.
- If you decide to lodge a report, save all evidence of the cyberbullying. Print out emails, save text messages, etc.

bullycide:

A suicide caused as the result of stress, anxiety and/or depression from being constantly bullied (in person and in cyberspace) by one's peers.

Some Important Statistics:

- Youth who are bullied are more likely to become depressed and, as a result, have suicidal thoughts or attempt to commit suicide than young people who are not bullied by their peers.
- A recent poll asked 2,000 middle school students questions related to the link between cyberbullying and suicide. 20% of respondents said cyberbullying had made them seriously contemplate suicide.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention list suicide as the third leading cause of death in kids 15 to 24 years old the fourth leading cause of death for children between the ages of 10 and 14 .¹
- Victims of cyberbullying were twice as likely to have attempted suicide compared to youth who had not experienced cyberbullying.²
- After reviewing bullying studies from 13 countries, researchers at Yale School of Medicine found a connection between bullying, being bullied and suicide in children. Bullying victims were two to nine times more likely to report suicidal thoughts than other children were. The Yale researchers also pointed out that "the perpetrators who are the bullies also have an increased risk for suicidal behavior."

The Faces of Cyberbullycide

In recent years, there have been several high-profile cases of "bullycide" in which young people committed suicide in a desperate attempt to end the harassment by their peers. These victims were typically bullied both online and in direct encounters.

¹ <<http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/suicide/statistics/index.html>>

² <http://www.cyberbullying.us/cyberbullying_and_suicide_research_fact_sheet.pdf>

This fact sheet is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

Here are some of their stories.

Phoebe Prince, 15

On January 14, 2010, in Massachusetts, Phoebe Prince hung herself as a result of months of torment from her peers. The primary means of harassment was via text messages and Facebook®. Even after her death, students still continued to post cruel messages on her Facebook® memorial page. Nine students from her high school were charged with violating Prince's civil rights and criminal harassment, and two males were charged with statutory rape. Because the majority of the perpetrators were female, this tragedy is viewed as a classic case of "Mean Girl" behavior.



Megan Meier, 13

For months, Megan Meier and "Josh Evans" wrote to one another and developed an online friendship. On October 16, 2006, "Josh" sent her a hateful MySpace® message that led her to hang herself 15 minutes later. Upon investigation, the Meier family discovered that "Josh Evans" did not exist. In fact, the MySpace® profile had been created by Lori Drew, the mother of one of Megan's former friends. The mother had apparently made up the account and befriended Megan to see if Megan was saying anything negative about her daughter. Drew was initially convicted, and later acquitted, of violating the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act. The federal Megan Meier Cyberbullying Prevention Act was introduced to Congress in 2009. This act, if passed, would make it a crime to have any online communication done "with the intent to coerce, intimidate, harass or cause substantial emotional distress to a person."



Ryan Halligan, 13

On October 7, 2003, Ryan Halligan committed suicide, no longer able to cope with the bullying he faced at school and online. Ryan, who had regular access to a computer in the privacy of his bedroom, had been victimized by relentless cyberbullying. In one incident, a girl spent an entire summer online pretending she liked him as a joke. Boys in Ryan's school taunted him online, saying he was gay. A week before Ryan's death, he was urged by an online "friend" to commit suicide. His parents had no idea that all of this was occurring until they reviewed his saved chat records online.³



3 <<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/kidsonline/interviews/halligan.html>>

Name: _____

FACT SHEET 8A
LEGISLATIVE ACTION AGAINST CYBERBULLYING

Many states are working to include cyberbullying in their anti-bullying laws. As of August 2010, 44 states had passed anti-bullying laws (30 of which refer to “electronic harassment”) and 12 states were in the process of updating their laws to include legal or academic sanctions against cyberbullying. For more information on state laws, visit <<http://www.cyberbullying.us>>.

	Does a bullying law currently exist?	Is an updated version or a new law pending?	Does law include cyberbullying?	Does law include electronic harassment?	Is there a criminal sanction?	Is there a school sanction?	Is a school policy required?
AL	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES
AK	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
AZ	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
AR	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
CA	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
CO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES
CT	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
DE	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
DC	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
FL	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
GA	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
HI	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
ID	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
IL	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
IN	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES
IA	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
KS	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
KY	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
LA	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
ME	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
MD	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
MA	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
MI	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
MN	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
MS	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
MO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
MT	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
NE	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
NV	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES
NH	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES
NJ	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
NM	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
NY	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
NC	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
ND	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
OH	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
OK	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES
OR	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
PA	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
RI	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES
SC	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
SD	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
TN	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
TX	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
UT	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
VT	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
VA	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
WA	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
WV	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
WI	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES
WY	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
FEDERAL	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO

Source: Sameer Hinduja, Ph.D. and Justin W. Patchin, Ph.D., Cyberbullying Research Center, © 2010
<http://www.cyberbullying.us/Bullying_and_Cyberbullying_Laws_20100701.pdf>

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There are many reasons why cyberbullying is harder to legislate than classic face-to-face bullying. For instance:

- Freedom of speech must be guaranteed to all Internet users (within reasonable limits).
- It's not always possible to determine who actually composed the harassing message; a person's computer could be hacked into or used without his or her permission.
- There is ongoing debate around whether school administrators have a right to monitor or punish activities that occur off-campus, on weekends or holidays.

On a national level, the U.S. government is taking steps to pass HR 1966, also known as the Megan Meier Cyberbullying Prevention Act. This bill was introduced in the House of Representatives on April 2, 2009. The Congressional summary of the bill states:

Megan Meier Cyberbullying Prevention Act—

Amends the federal criminal code (Title 18) to impose criminal penalties on anyone who transmits in interstate or foreign commerce any communication intended to coerce, intimidate, harass or cause substantial emotional distress to another person, using electronic means to support severe, repeated and hostile behavior. Those found guilty shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than two years, or both.

The full text of the bill can be accessed at <<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/billtext.xpd?bill=h111-1966>>.

Here are some examples of states' anti-bullying laws:

California: Law AB 86 gives schools the authority to suspend or expel students for bullying via the Internet, in text messages or via other electronic means. The bill covers activities on school grounds, while going to or coming from school, during lunch period and during or while going to or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

Kentucky: Bill 91 requires that schools contact the police if a student is a victim of bullying on school premises, on school transportation or at a school-sponsored event. As of March 2009, Kentucky's stalking statute (Bill 315) was amended to include cyberstalking.

Nevada: As of July 1, 2010, the state of Nevada enacted an anti-cyberbullying act (Bill 163) relating to education to include a prohibition on bullying and cyberbullying and to create a policy for the ethical, safe and secure use of computers and other electronic devices.

Vermont: As a result of Ryan Halligan's death, in 2004 Vermont passed the Bully Prevention Law (Act 117) that requires schools in Vermont to establish bullying prevention procedures.

Name: _____

Anti-Defamation League

<<http://www.adl.org/education/cyberbullying>>

Provides information on school workshops and tips for responding to cyberbullying.

bNetS@vvy

<<http://bnetsavvy.com>>

A bimonthly e-newsletter, published by the NEA and National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, offering tools to help kids stay safer online.

Bully Police USA

<<http://www.bullypolice.org>>

Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use

<<http://www.csriu.org>>

Provides effective strategies to assist young people in developing the skills to behave in a safe, responsible and legal manner when using the Internet.

Cyberbullying.org

<<http://www.cyberbullying.org>>

Provides resources to combat online social cruelty among students.

Cyberbullying: National Crime Prevention Council

<<http://www.ncpc.org/cyberbullying>>

Provides information about stopping cyberbullying before it starts, as well as useful information for kids, teachers and parents.

Cyberbullying Research Center

<<http://www.cyberbullying.us>>

Dedicated to providing up-to-date information about the nature, extent, causes and consequences of cyberbullying among adolescents.

Cybersmart!

<<http://www.cybersmart.org>>

Provides online professional development and free curricular resources on cyber safety, Internet ethics, creativity and critical thinking.

i-SAFE

<<http://www.isafe.org>>

A non-profit foundation that incorporates classroom curriculum with community outreach to empower students, teachers, parents and law enforcement to make the Internet a safer place.

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NetSmartz

<http://www.netsmartz.org>>

Run by The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children; offers information and resources on Internet safety for educators, families, teens, younger children and law enforcement.

Partners Against Hate

<<http://www.partnersagainsthate.org>>

Provides a downloadable guide for educators and parents on teaching Internet safety skills.

RespectU Program

<<http://www.respectu.com>>

The Respect U School Program involves collaboration between the school, parents and students.

Safe Kids Online

<<http://www.safekids.com>>

Stop Bullying Now! Information, Prevention, Tips and Games

<<http://www.stopbullyingnow.org>>

Provides resources as part of the Take a Stand, Lend a Hand, Stop Bullying Now campaign, as well as information about what you can do to stop bullying.

Stop Cyberbullying

<<http://www.stopcyberbullying.org>>

Provides definitions, strategies and legal considerations relating to cyberbullying. Includes a quiz to rate your online behavior, information about why some people cyberbully and how to stop yourself from cyberbullying.

Wired Kids, Inc.

<<http://www.wiredkids.com>>

Provides information about what to do if you are cyberbullied. Works to protect Internet users from cybercrime and abuse and teaches responsible Internet use.

Hotlines:

Anti-Bullying Hotline

1-866-444-6996

National Hopeline

1-800-784-2433

National Suicide Prevention Hotline

1-800-273-TALK

Name: _____

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OTHER PROGRAMS

<i>Essential Health: A High School Print/Video Curriculum</i>	20 DVDs, 10 modules, 50 print lessons
<i>Curriculum in a Box: Mental Health</i>	7 DVDs, print lessons
<i>Bully Bystanders: You Can Make a Difference</i>	video and print
<i>Hazing and Harassment: Understanding It, Preventing It</i>	video and print
<i>Dangers of Sexting: What Teens Need to Know</i>	video and print
<i>Blow-Ups and Rages: Learning to Manage Your Anger</i>	video and print
<i>Hallmarks of Good Mental Health</i>	video and print
<i>Common Psychological Disorders of Adolescence</i>	video and print
<i>Coping with Disruptive Life Changes</i>	video and print
<i>Who Needs Therapy? Treating Psychological Disorders</i>	video and print
<i>Teen Romantic Relationships: As They See It</i>	video and print
<i>"Coming Out" in School: What Does It Mean?</i>	video and print
<i>Prescription Drugs Update</i>	video and print
<i>Understanding and Treating Binge Eating</i>	video and print
<i>Essential Physical Fitness: What Every Teen Needs to Know</i>	video and print
<i>The Five Essential Habits of Healthy Teens</i>	video and print
<i>Danger behind the Wheel: The Facts about Distracted Driving</i>	video and print
<i>Be Careful When U Txt: The Dangers of Texting and Sexting</i>	video and print

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