CYBERSTALKING/CYBERBULLYING SAFETY TIPS

Stalking can occur anywhere, in all age groups, and between coworkers, spouses, friends, classmates or strangers — every type of relationship has the potential for stalking situations. The following are some tips for reducing the potential for cyberstalking and cyberbullying.

KEEP PERSONAL INFORMATION PRIVATE

Personal photos, phone numbers, passwords, home addresses, birthdays, and other information is frequently used by cyberstalkers/bullies.

REFRAIN FROM RESPONDING

Refrain from responding to derogatory online communications and harassment, as the bully is likely looking to get a reaction to gain power. However, do not ignore the problem; keep a record of the communications in case they are needed as evidence.

SAVE THE EVIDENCE

Keep copies of all communications, including e-mails (with header information) and text messages. Also, take screen shots of comments and images and note the time and date of the harassment.

UTILIZE REPORTING OR ABUSE TOOLS

Familiarize yourself with the reporting tools on social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat) in order to have offensive content and accounts of cyberbullies removed. If the abuse includes threats of physical harm, inform parents and contact the police.

REFRAIN FROM RETALIATING

Refrain from retaliating by sending nasty or derogatory e-mails back to the cyberbully as this reinforces the bully's behaviour and maintains the cycle of bullying.

BLOCK OR BAN

You can block or ban the cyberbully by utilizing privacy tools on social media, or leave any chat room where cyberbullying is occurring. Aggressors sometimes get bored and stop the harassment when they receive no reaction.

SEEK HELP

Talk to a friend or trusted adult, such as a parent, school counsellor, teacher, principal, or school resource officer.

DO NOT BE A BYSTANDER

Forwarding harassing messages or doing nothing only empowers cyberbullies. Try to help victims by offering support and assisting them to report the abuse.

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