



Cyberbullying, whether it's done online or over a cell phone, can affect kids of any age. Find age-appropriate guidelines, videos, and articles to help with tough conversations -- whether *your kid is a bully* or is *being bullied*. We answer *all your cyberbullying questions*, offering age-appropriate advice, school resources, and more from parents and experts.

Popular Questions for Little Kids (7-9 yrs)

When does "kids being kids" Turn into cyberbullying

Kids like to go online and use cell phones to email, chat, watch videos, send messages, play games, and do homework. But sometimes the language they use with each other can get mean or rude. It's important for kids to appreciate that their words can cause unintentional harm, whether used online or in person.

And that's really the difference between "kids being kids" and cyberbullying: *intention*. Sometimes meanness is accidental, but, when people use digital tools such as the Internet or text messages to deliberately upset someone else over and over, *that's cyberbullying*.

No matter what, if someone says or does something that makes your kid feel bad, he or she should tell a trusted adult. If your kid hurts a friend, he or she should apologize

Is there any way to make sure my kid won't become a Cyberbully?

You can do everything right -- supervise, discuss online responsibility, introduce media that's age-appropriate -- and your kid still might be tempted to bully others online or in person. *Eight and 9-year-olds like to experiment*, and they don't necessarily understand the consequences of their actions. Many young kids also don't realize the difference between joking and bullying, so that's another reason why it's important to stay aware of their online activities and monitor where they play and how they interact with others online. Also, it's a good idea to pay attention to kids' social and emotional lives in general, since online and offline behavior are inextricably linked.

Plenty of kids act responsibly, and many at this age feel a sense of duty to keep their favorite online environments safe. But a kid who bullies is typically in some kind of crisis, and he or she uses the Internet to act out. There are signs of crisis you can watch out for, such as being withdrawn, fixating on digital devices, and having a constantly buzzing cell phone, as well as dramatic changes in behavior. You can enlist your kid's friends' parents to keep an eye on your kid, too.

What should I say to my young child about cyberbullying?

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Explain that the same *rules of respectful behavior* apply online and offline, including being *kind and respectful to others*.

If they think they're being bullied, your kids should follow the rules of STOP:

- STOP using the computer.
- TELL an adult you trust what happened.
- Get the OK from an adult before going back online or returning to the website where the bullying happened.
- PLAY with other kids who don't take part in cyberbullying.

Lastly, your kid may want to tell the bully how his or her actions made him or her feel, after getting advice from an adult.

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