

BE STRONG ONLINE

Information Sheet
For Students

IS  **CC**
Childline


vodafone

Part of the *Be Strong Online* Programme

Cyberbullying is any bullying behaviour that takes place 'virtually' via many different devices and platforms.

Unlike other forms of bullying, cyberbullying can happen at any time of day or night – whenever and wherever you or your friends have access to the internet.

Cyberbullying can take a number of forms including inappropriate texts or blog posts, sending offensive images over the internet and excluding people from group chats, – but it's important to remember that it is still bullying and should be addressed in the same way as any other form of bullying.

Be Strong Online with our Top Tips



1. **Remember that you're not alone** – If you're being cyberbullied remember - that others have felt this way. Cyberbullying can make you feel isolated, hurt and angry – these are completely understandable feelings. Everyone has the right to feel safe and happy. You also have the right to get support.



2. **Choose your online friends carefully** – Remember that anyone you accept as a friend will be able to see what you have made available on that profile. They may be able to share or screengrab your photos or information and post them elsewhere



3. **Make a strong password** for all of your accounts, change them regularly and never share these with anyone. Make sure your password includes a combination of upper and lowercase letters, numbers, and symbols. This will mean people can't access your account, steal any of your info, or post harmful comments or pictures in your name.



4. **Check your privacy settings** – choose the information you share with people, for example you can set your profile or data to private or only allow certain people to contact you and view particular information. Make sure you never share your address, phone number or email address with anyone online



5. **Google your name** to check what private info about you is available online. If somebody types your name into a search engine, what can they find? You may need to check your privacy settings.



6. **Keep the evidence** and save any cyberbullying texts or conversations you receive



7. **Don't respond immediately** if you receive hurtful messages online. Instead...



8. **Tell a trusted adult right away** such as a parent, your favourite teacher, a grandparent, aunt or uncle or another trusted adult. If you are being cyberbullied there should be adults in your life who can support you to sort out the problem.



9. **Block the person bullying you** – there is always a way to stop the bully contacting you – check out the privacy or safety settings of the service you are using to find out how



10. **Report it** - Any cyber bullying you suffer should be reported. Whether it is nasty comments, a text message, online chats or group bullying, it is still bullying and is not ok. Block the person and use the 'report abuse' buttons- all social networks have these.



11. **Stay positive** – Please remember that bullying is



If you are being bullied & feel you need to talk to someone about it you can talk to Childline. Our Bullying support service is available to young people by texting the word 'bully' to 50101. This service is available every day from 10 am to 4 am. You can also contact Childline by phone on 1800 666 666. Alternatively, you can chat to us live on the one to one facility on our website www.childline.ie. Also check out www.ispcc.ie

School- if you are being cyberbullied by students from your school, it is important to let someone know. You have the right to get support. We suggest having a chat with your favourite teacher, anti-bullying co coordinator or principal and ask them for support on the issue. Your school has a responsibility to make sure you are safe at all times.

Service provider- e.g your mobile phone network or the social network site. Most service providers in Ireland have special teams whose job it is to investigate complaints of harassment and abuse so make sure you let them know about what is happening on their service. So check out their websites or give them a ring to find out more.

Gardaí- if you feel that the cyberbullying is particularly serious you should contact your local Gardaí. To find out where your nearest station is go to www.garda.ie/stations/default.aspx

Some other useful websites:

Tacklebullying.ie is a national website to counter bullying and cyberbullying for young people, parents and teachers.

Webwise.ie provides children with educational advice and info about potential dangers on the internet and empowers users to minimise or avoid these risks.

Hotline.ie is an anonymous reporting service to Internet Users who accidentally uncover illegal content on the internet.

Watchyourspace.ie gives advice on how to stay safe on social networking sites. It gives advice on how to stay in control of your profile online and what to do if things go wrong.

Top tips for being an upstander to bullying

<p style="text-align: center;">Bystander</p> <p>A bystander is someone who knows about or sees bullying happening to someone else, and does nothing to prevent or stop it</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Upstander</p> <p>An upstander is someone who recognises when something is wrong and acts to make it right. When an upstander sees or hears about someone being bullied, they speak up, and do their best to help, protect and support the person.</p>
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- When we see bullying happening, we often want to step in. Please only do so if you feel safe. A good idea is to talk to a trusted adult e.g. your favourite teacher or year head about what you have seen (whether this has been online or offline).
- Let the person being bullied know you understand what they are going through. This could just be by asking if they are ok and letting them know you are there to talk.
- Befriend the person being bullied. If they look lonely, ask them to come and sit or play with you. Students are less likely to be targeted if they are with a group or with someone else.
- Don't join in with the bullying. Even if you are standing by, watching or laughing you are still encouraging and giving the bully an audience. Remember that if a bully doesn't have an audience they are less likely to bully. Encourage your friends and those watching to withdraw their attention.
- Respect each other's differences. Don't judge someone because they may look different or have different interests.
- Think about how you would feel if you were being bullied and how you would like to be treated.
- Understand the bully as they often need support too – there are often reasons why people bully in the first place. One reason maybe that they don't feel good about themselves. They may have low self-esteem and trying to control someone else may make them feel powerful. They sometimes need help to understand how their behaviours may be making the victim feel. By chatting to a teacher about any incidents of bullying you could be helping the bully change his or her behaviour.

Did you know...?

22% of children in Ireland have experience any form of bullying on-or offline.(Net Children Go Mobile 2014)



BE STRONG ONLINE

Information Sheet
For Parents

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Information for Parents

How can I tell if my child is being cyberbullied?

It can be hard for parents to know whether a child is being bullied, especially if they don't want to tell anyone. You can't always see the signs, and nothing indicates for certain that a child is being bullied. But things to look out for include:

- Becoming upset, withdrawn, or has a change in behaviour – especially after looking at their phone, computer or device
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Being afraid to go to school or skipping school
- Suddenly stops using their phone or computer

What is bullying?

Bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

There are more signs and symptoms to look out for on the ISPPCC website – check out the link at the bottom of this page.

What should I do if I think my child might be being cyberbullied?

1. Make sure they know they can talk to you and reassure them that you won't overreact or do anything that might make it worse.
2. Talk to your child about who are the trusted adults they can talk to if they ever need to. Talk to them about the listening services Childline offers. (www.childline.ie)
3. Help them relax and take time out. Give your child opportunities to build their confidence and resilience. Help them find activities or hobbies that make them feel good about themselves.
4. Talk to them about how they can stay safe online using technology. Sit down together and look at how they can block people or report posts. There are more tips to help keep your child safe online in the list below
5. Talk to your child's school or club. Arrange to meet with a teacher or club leader, talk to them about your concerns and ask what action they can take
6. Talk about bullying – explain what bullying is, and ask your child if this is happening to them (see the box 'What is bullying' for help). Keep calm and remember that it's normal for a child to feel embarrassed or worried if they're being bullied

What should I do if my child has told me they're being bullied?

1. If your child tells you they are being bullied, thank them for coming to talk to you. It takes a lot of courage to tell someone you are being bullied but it's the first step to sorting out the problem. Try not to get upset (it may be hard!) Remain calm and assure them that you will help them sort things out.
2. Listen to your child. Ask them to tell you in detail about what has been going on, what the bullying has involved and how it has made them feel.
3. Ask your child what steps they would like to take next. It's hard not to take over, but try to avoid this: talk through solutions through with your child. What would they feel comfortable with? Once you have agreed a plan of action please keep your child informed of the next steps you are going to take.
4. If the bullying is happening at school ask to see a teacher. This may involve having a phone conversation initially. You may be tempted to talk to the bully's parents but this can have negative repercussions for your child. A teacher may help to encourage others to keep an eye on your child at school during the day and could also help set up a system (with your child's approval and support) to report any instances of bullying. All schools are required to have an Anti-Bullying Policy which outlines how bullying is reported and dealt with in school.
5. Talk to your child about whom they can talk to and where they can go if they are being bullied during the day. There may be clubs at break times where they could go to feel safe and included.
6. Encourage them to not retaliate or react to the bullying, as this often fuels bullying behaviour. Get them to practise being assertive and having strong body language and facial expressions. Tell them to remove themselves from the situation as quickly as they can and to report any instances of bullying to an adult.
7. Monitor your child. Ask them how school has gone and check in regularly with a teacher to see how they are getting on during the day. If you don't get a detailed response ask questions. Stay positive.
8. Bullying can hugely reduce a child's confidence and self-esteem. When your child is at home try to highlight their strengths and do activities which they enjoy and which help relieve stress.
9. Keep a log/record of your child's bullying incidents so you have evidence should you need to take the matter higher up in the school.
10. Find support for yourself. It's understandable to be worried but try to remain positive..

11. Give the school chance to work with your child to try and reduce the bullying. If you feel the school is not doing enough to address the bullying, you may want to take the matter to the Board of Management.

What can I do to help keep my child safe online?

The internet and social media are constantly evolving with new websites and apps for smartphones being launched daily. As new sites and apps develop, so does the number of young people using them. Talk openly with your child about what is available to them, what they use and why there are age restrictions in place with certain sites. To help

- Get to know the sites your child uses and then find out what they can do. This way you can understand the virtual world and talk about it more easily with your child
- Educate your child to never give out identifying information about any family member or themselves. This includes: names, addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, passwords or bank card numbers
- Encourage your child to tell you if anyone is pressing for personal information
- For more advice, see the links below

Conversation Starters

It can be tough to get a teenager to talk to you about something that is worrying them. Some teenagers may feel a little bit uncomfortable sitting down to have a face-to-face formal talk. Have a think about a time when you believe that that they might be a little more relaxed and open to having a chat e.g. maybe while out having a walk or doing an activity together they might be a little more comfortable. TV shows and movies can offer an opening to an issue you want to talk about. We have pulled together some ideas that might help getting a conversation started:

- 'What is lunchtime like at your school? Who do you sit/play/hang around with?'
- 'What's it like to ride the bus/train to school?'
- 'Is anyone ever left out of activities?'
- 'What do you think needs to happen at school to stop bullying?'
- 'What should parents do to help stop bullying in schools?'
- 'If you had a magic wand or one wish what would you change and why?'
- 'What are some good qualities about yourself?' (Talk about why it's good to feel good about yourself)
- 'What's your biggest goal or ambition this year?'
- 'Do you think your friends talk to their parents about how they are?'

More information

For details of the ISPCCs guidance to parents around online safety please refer to the ISPCC's 'Safe Click Code'. The ISPCC website also has a variety of downloadable advice leaflets including specific advice on Cyberbullying. www.ispcc.ie

The ISPCC provides a helpline for parents or members of the public who may be concerned about the welfare of a child and who need more information and support. The ISPCC Support line is available Monday- Friday 9am-5 pm. Call ISPCC Head office on 01 676 7060 for more information.

The ISPCCs Shield Campaign offers schools and clubs the resources to strengthen their Anti bullying policy and their overall approach to bullying. More information available on www.ispcc.ie/shield

Other Resources:

www4.dcu.ie/abc/index.shtml is the website for the National Anti-Bullying research and Resource centre. ABS leads the field of research, resource development and training in bullying in Ireland.

www.tacklebullying.ie is a national website to counter bullying and cyberbullying for young people, parents and teachers.

www.webwise.ie provides children with educational advice and info about potential dangers on the internet and empowers users to minimise or avoid these risks.

www.hotline.ie is an anonymous reporting service to Internet Users who accidentally uncover illegal content on the internet.

www.watchyourspace.ie gives advice on how to stay safe on social networking sites. It gives advice on how to stay in control of your profile online and what to do if things go wrong.

www.garda.ie/stations/default.aspx if you feel that the cyberbullying is particularly serious you should contact your local Garda Station.

More Information about the Be Strong Online Programme:

Diana Award Anti- Bullying Campaign:

The Be Strong Online programme is a new resource which is co-created by **The Diana Award Anti-Bullying Campaign**, Vodafone and edited by ISPCC. The Diana Award is a legacy to Princess Diana's belief that young people have the power to change the world for the better. For more info <http://diana-award.org.uk/>



ISPCC

The ISPCC is delighted to introduce the Be Strong Online Programme to Ireland. This is a new resource from Vodafone and ISPCC to help students explore the digital world. The programme will cover everything from gaming and selfies to privacy, apps and social networking. Our first module in this programme is 'Be Strong Online' which explores the issue of cyberbullying and is divided into three parts

- Information sheet for students
- Information sheet for Parents
- Be Strong Online Staff guide

We know from our frontline work with young people across the country, that in order to have an effective approach to Cyberbullying, increased awareness and enhanced skills amongst young people and parents is vital. We need to support all those within the school community including young people and parents and we need to empower them to be part of the solution. The ISPCC feels that these modules will be particularly useful to schools that have already completed the Shield My School Toolkit. The Toolkit can often identify a need for schools to support students and parents on the issue of Cyberbullying. We see the Shield programme and the Be Strong online Programme as two useful resources in helping ensure our children are safer when exploring the digital world.

For more details on our Shield Programme please go to www.ispcc.ie/shield and please do not hesitate to contact Sinead our National Anti-Bullying Coordinator on Sinead.Mckee@ispcc.ie or on 086 722 6788.

About ISPCC

The Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC) is Ireland's oldest and most well-known children's charity. The ISPCC has a long, proud history of service delivery and advocacy on behalf of children.

Our Vision

An Ireland where all children are safe, heard, and valued.

Our Mission 2016-2018

To make the protection of children everyone's priority

Our Work 2016-2018

We listen, we support, we protect.

Our Priorities 2016-2018

1. To empower more children to be safe by using the best technology
2. To deliver innovative services for children and families at risk through public and commercial partnerships
3. To equip individuals and organisations to prevent risks to children
4. To change the language and actions of government and society so that child cruelty is unacceptable
5. To build public awareness of risks for children and prevent abuse

For more details on please go to www.ispcc.ie and please do not hesitate to contact Sinead our National Anti-Bullying Coordinator on Sinead.McKee@ispcc.ie or on 086 722 6788.