Cyberbullying

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is bullying that occurs virtually using digital devices such as phones, tablets, or computers. The most common places where cyberbullying takes place are social media, text messaging, direct or instant messaging, email, online forums, and gaming communities.

Because content shared online leaves a permanent, public record for many to see, cyberbullying raises special concerns because it is **persistent** due to the continuous and immediate nature of the Internet, **permanent**, often leaving behind an online reputation that can have an on impact future opportunities, and **hard to notice** because parents and teachers often do not see the bullying as it is occurring.

Warning Signs Include:

- Significantly increasing or decreasing in device usage
- Secrecy around seeing or discussing information on a device
- Becoming withdrawn or depressed
- Losing interest in previously enjoyed activities or social relationships

How Parents Can Provide Support

Talk to your child about appropriate online content and behavior! This helps parents to build trust with their children, establish rules around safety, and continue open and honest conversations when questions do arise.

To minimize the risk of cyberbullying or harm, parents can:

- Set clear expectations for online behavior
- Clearly define what is appropriate and inappropriate content to view and share with others
- Establish rules on the amount of time your child has access to the Internet
- Educate about the harmful effects of cyberbullying, including potential legal situations
- Model positive online behavior with your own devices

Tips for Teachers

- If you suspect a student is the victim of cyberbullying, ask to speak to them privately about it. Then, notify their parent and serve as a facilitator between the student, the school, and the parent, if necessary.
- Educate yourself on student's digital behaviors and how it relates to cyberbullying, as well as your own digital awareness.
- Encourage peer involvement in prevention strategy initiatives.
- Model, reinforce, and reward positive behaviors towards others, both online and in-person.

TCHATT
Texas Child Health Access
Through Telemedicine

The University of Texas at Austin
Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences
Dell Medical School