Children and young people can fall victim to cyber bullying, but they can also become the bully, or be drawn into cyber bullying without even realising it,

Even though cyber bullying, cannot physically hurt anyone, the effects can be devastating. Due to its 24/7 nature, escaping from it can be hard and victims can be left feeling very isolated, lonely, distressed, scared and vulnerable.

Did you know?

30% of 9 – 19 year olds who go online at least once a week report having received unwanted comments via e-mail, chat, IM (instant messenger) or text message. Of these 30% are sexual comments.

Only 7% of parents/carers think their child has received such comments

50% of children say that they have given out personal information but only 5% of parents/carers recognize that this may be the case

Sexting Advice for Parents

What is Sexting?

Sexting is the term for sending intimate or sexually explicit

photos via a mobile phone and it's becoming increasingly common among teenagers in the UK.

Pictures could range from boys/girls posing in their underwear to boys/girls exposing their bodies or carrying out a sexual act.

Often they are sent between boyfriend and girlfriend but sometimes they are used for a

more sinister means, such as to cyberbully or groom a young person

Although sexting is generally related to mobile phones, the **growth** of social networks such as Facebook, Snapchat, My-Space and other means young people have many places where they can post and share images online.
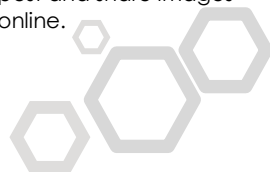
The percentage of teenagers who have sent or posted nude or semi-nude pictures or video of themselves:
- 20% of teenagers overall
- 22% of teen girls
- 18% of teen boys
- 11% of young teen girls aged 13 – 16

Sexting is far more common than parents realise. The percentage of teenagers sending or posting sexually suggestive messages:
- 40% of all teenagers
- 37% of teen girls
- 40% of teen boys

A survey by the Beat bullying website – www.beatbullying.org – in 2009 found:
- 38% of 11 – 18 year olds had received a sexually explicit or distressing image via text or email
- More than half of those receiving a sexual image were sent it to their phone
- 70% knew the person who sent the message with 45% coming from a friend, and nearly a quarter from a boyfriend or girlfriend

IS IT ILLEGAL?

Yes – if you send or save the image.

Anyone under the age of 18, the law sees as a child. Therefore, if you have any indecent images or videos of somebody who is under 18 you would technically be in possession of an indecent image of a child – even if you are the same age. This is an offence under the Protection of Children Act 1978 and the Criminal Justice Act 1988

Useful Websites

"Zipit" app   www.Nspcc.org.uk

www.childline.org.uk   www.childnet-int.org

www.nspcc.org.uk/nakedonline   www.saferinternet.org.uk

www.kidsmart.org.uk   www.Thinkuknow.co.uk

www.CEOP.gov.uk

How to talk to your child about Sexting

Acknowledge that your child probably won't want to talk to you about 'sexting'.

It may feel awkward but, as a parent, it's important to explain to your child the risks of 'sexting', how to stay safe and that they can talk to you if something ever makes them feel scared or uncomfortable.

Think about the best way of starting the conversation.
You know your child best and your approach should be based on your child and your parenting style.

- When you give your child their first mobile phone, outline your expectations and explain the rules of having the phone

- Monitor how younger children can use their phone, e.g. set up controls so that only you can authorise the apps that your child downloads

- Ask your child what they feel is acceptable to send to people and then ask if they would be happy for you or their grandparents to see that photo

- If the answer is no; explain that the image or message is probably not appropriate to send

- Make sure your child is comfortable saying no, that they know their body is private and that being asked to 'sext' is inappropriate

- Explain the risks and dangers of sexting

The Child protection Team are:

Alison Hewitt
Celia Jackman

Jo Chappell
Jayne Jordan

What can Parents Do?

- Keep the computer in a busy area of your house so you can easily monitor its use, rather than allowing your child to use a laptop or tablet in his or her bedroom.

- Limit data access to your child's smart phone if he or she uses it to surf the web. Some wireless providers allow you to turn off text messaging services during certain hours.

- Set up filters on your child's computer. Tracking software can block inappropriate web content and helps you check up on your child's online activities.

- Insist on knowing your child's passwords and learn the common acronyms children use online and in text messages.

- Know who your child communicates with online. Go over your child's address book and instant messenger "buddy list" with them. Ask who each person is and how your child knows them.

- Encourage your child to tell you or another trusted adult if they receive threatening messages or are otherwise targeted by cyberbullies, while reassuring them that doing so will not result in their loss of computer or mobile phone privileges.
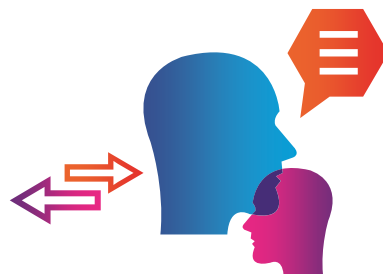
Problems Include

- Stolen identity

- Threats

- Blackmail

- Rumours and gossip

- Abusive comments

- Nasty and/or indecent pictures

Spot the signs of cyber bullying

Your child may be the victim of cyber bullying if he or she:

- becomes sad, angry or distressed during or after using the internet or phone
- appears anxious when receiving a text, IM or email
- withdraws from family, friends and activities they previously enjoyed
- suffers an unexplained drop in achievement
- refuses to go to school or to specific classes, or avoid group activities
- show changes in mood, behaviour, sleep, appetite, or shows signs of depression or anxiety

Keeping Your Child Safe

WHAT IS CYBER BULLYING?

Bullying is not something that only happens in the real world any more. In the past, bullying may have only occurred at school, in the playground or at a youth club. Now it can happen on mobile phones, over email, in chat rooms, on social networks and other websites. Cyber bullying is when one or more people repeatedly tease, harass, threaten or embarrass another person using technology such as mobile phones or the internet.

FOR PARENTS
AND STUDENTS