

Description

Students develop an understanding of cyberbullying and the implications of sharing information online.

Learning focus

Students discuss the implications of cyberbullying and identify possible strategies to prevent cyberbullying from occurring.

Key understandings

- Everybody is an individual and deserves respect.
- Reliable and trustworthy health information sources (such as websites and brochures) are available to provide help and information about chatting online safer.
- Making informed choices can make us safer.
- We can help our friends make appropriate online choices.
- People who have been involved in a cyberbullying incident need support from friends, family and school.
- It is important to tell a trusted adult (teachers, parents and police) to help stop cyberbullying.

Materials

- A3 paper [one per group]
- Internet access
- Teaching Resource: *Positive bystander tips* [one per student]

Before you get started

- Ensure a [group agreement](#) is established before beginning this lesson. For classes that have already established ground rules, quickly reviewing them can promote a successful lesson.
- Communicating sexually online or with a mobile phone is increasingly accessible and socially acceptable for young people today. It is important that the positive aspects of online communication (such as influencing social development, maintaining long distant relationships with family and friends, forming relationships with like-minded people, documenting events and raising awareness of important issues) are highlighted as strongly as the potential issues. The most important key message for young people is that they know how to be responsible with technology use it safely. Refer to the Guides: [Social Media- Cyberbullying](#) and [Cyberstalking](#) for further information.
- It is possible that a student has been involved in a traumatic experience relating to cyberbullying. It is important that teachers are familiar with the Essential Information: [Dealing with disclosures](#) and have a risk management strategy in place.

Learning activities

Whole Class

Students develop an understanding of what cyberbullying means by sharing ideas and completing an online and verbal quiz.

1. Divide students into groups of four. Provide each group with a blank piece of A3 paper and make a [placemat](#) with the word 'cyberbullying' in the centre. Have students conduct a placemat activity to create a definition on the term cyberbullying.

Ask:

- *What is cyberbullying?* (the repeated actions by an individual or group intended to embarrass, humiliate or intimidate a target using online technology such as the internet or a mobile phone). Whiteboard this definition.
- *What forms can cyberbullying take?* (can include a wide range of unacceptable behaviours including:
 - abusive texts and emails
 - hurtful messages, images or videos
 - imitating others online
 - excluding others online
 - nasty online gossip and chat)
- *Cyberbullying typically involves three different people, can you identify who they might be?* (**perpetrator** - the person bullying online; **target** - the person being bullied; and **bystander** - someone who witnesses the cyberbullying behaviour)
- *What are the differences between cyberbullying and other forms of bullying?* (cyberbullying has possibly a much bigger audience, no closure and no escape from the person bullying, and the other people involved may not realise the impact and contribution they make. It can occur any time of the day or night and intrudes into spaces that were previously considered safe. The person bullying can remain anonymous and this can cause the person who is being bullied to distrust many people. Electronic content is hard to control, and the worry of content resurfacing can make it difficult for those who are bullied to move on. Also, a single incident can comprise multiple attacks, where one image is viewed numerous times.)
- *Why do you think people bully others?* (because they don't understand the harm they are doing; they are reproducing behaviour that has been carried out on them; or to be popular with other people)
- *How do you think you would feel if you were being cyberbullied?*

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- *What is a bystander?* (a person who is present at an event without participating in it. For example, somebody who sees another person send a bullying text message to someone else.)
- *What might a positive bystander do?* (take safe action to help the target)
- *What might a negative bystander do?* (choose to do nothing, or actually become involved in cyberbullying, e.g. forward hurtful texts and posts sent by someone else)
- *Why do you think someone might choose to be a negative bystander in a cyberbullying situation?* (might fear being the next target or losing a friendship; wanting to stay out of 'drama'; not feeling confident to confront the bully; not knowing what to do)
- *If you are aware of someone being cyberbullied and do nothing, who are you supporting?* (the perpetrator - person doing the bullying)

2. Conduct a [thumbs up thumbs down](#) voting activity with the following statements.

Is this an example of cyberbullying?

- (1) *Posting an offensive photo of someone online to embarrass that person.*
- (2) *Creating a poll to embarrass someone.*
- (3) *Spreading rumours about someone online.*
- (4) *Creating a fake profile of someone that contains content that is hurtful to that person.*
- (5) *Making threats to publish material that a person does not want to be made public.*
- (6) *Not accepting a friend request.*
- (7) *Sending abusive text messages.*
- (8) *Digitally altering a photograph of someone to humiliate them.*

Only (6) is **not** an example of cyberbullying.

Independent or Small Group

Students view a cyberbullying video to understand the potential consequences of sharing information online and to identify the role of the bystander.

1. View the [Tagged](#) video on the esafety.gov.au website [18:19min].
2. In small groups, students respond to the following focus questions in preparation for a whole class discussion and reflection:
 - *Why do you think Kate posted photos of Chloe on her blog?*
 - *Was it fair for Jack to retaliate by posting the photos of Kate?*
 - *Why do you think Em chose not to stand up for Kate?*
 - *In what way was Em's behaviour helpful?*

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- *In what way was Em's behaviour unhelpful?*
- *What are the main messages from this video?*
- *If you were a friend of one of the characters in Tagged, how could you encourage them to make more appropriate choices? (choose at least two characters)*
- *What do you think might motivate someone to help a person who is being unfairly targeted online? (e.g. a desire to treat people fairly; empathy for the pain and stress this behaviour may cause)*
- *What strategies could you think of that might stop cyberbullying if you noticed it occurring?*

Reflection

1. Stress that helping friends and fellow students who are involved in cyberbullying early on, can save them a lot of pain down the track.
2. Give each student a copy of the Teaching Resource: *Positive bystander tips*. Students select something positive they could do, or the option that they would feel safest in doing, if they witnessed:
 - A friend receiving repeated abusive text messages from someone you know.
 - A partly naked photo of someone in your year group who has received a lot of rude and hurtful comments.
 - A friend repeatedly excluding someone in your friendship group from weekend gatherings and parties posted online.
3. Students record their answers in written form.

External related resources

[The Office of eSafety Commissioner](#) website offers:

- an online reporting for [image-based abuse](#), [cyberbullying](#), [offensive and illegal content](#)
- information sections for [parents](#)
- free [classroom resources](#)
- guidance for [policy writing](#) and implementation

Related assets (links to sections within GDHR site)

Teaching Note

[Establishing a group agreement](#)

[Dealing with disclosures](#)

Background Note

[Cyberstalking](#)

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Teaching resources

[Positive bystander tips](#)

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