You and Your Child

What Parents Can Do About Cyberbullying

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What Kids Need to Know:

- Never give out personal information online, whether in instant message profiles, chat rooms, blogs, or personal websites.
- Never tell anyone but your parents your password, even friends.
- If someone sends a mean or threatening message, don't respond. Save it or print it out and show it to an adult.
- Never open emails from someone you don't know or from someone you know is a bully.
- Don't put anything online that you wouldn't want your classmates to see, even in email.
- Don't send messages when you're angry. Before clicking "send," ask yourself how you would feel if received the message.
- Help kids who are bullied online by not joining in and showing bullying messages to an adult.
- Always be as polite online as you are in person.

Since most cyberbullying takes place at home, it's important that parents know about cyberbullying and that they get involved in preventing it. Just like parents help their kids avoid inappropriate websites, they can protect them from cyberbullying.

What Parents Can Do

- Keep your home computer is a busy area of your house.
- Set up email and chat accounts with your children. Make sure that you know their screen names and passwords and that they don't include any personal information in their online profiles.
- Regularly go over their instant messenger "buddy list" with them. Ask who each person is and how your children know him or her.
- Print a list of commonly used acronyms in instant messenger and chat rooms from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and post it by your computer.
- Discuss cyberbullying with your children and ask if they have ever experienced it or seen it happen to someone.
- Tell your children that you won't blame them if they are cyberbullied. Emphasize that you won't take away their computer privileges - this is the main reason kids don't tell adults when they are cyberbullied.

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