

**Cyberbullying** is bullying that takes place online – **Several Times On Purpose**. Unlike bullying offline, online bullying can follow the child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming platforms and mobile phone. Many platforms and apps indicate that users should be of a certain age before interacting with their services due to the level of maturity needed to cope with the emotional impact. As this interaction takes place outside of school we ask that all parents are vigilant in monitoring their child's online use where they have agreed to the application to join.



**It is important to think**

- Does my child know who they are talking to?
- Would they like what they are “saying” to be said to them?
- Could it be misinterpreted?
- Could it cause offence or upset?

The WWW Approach - do you know **WHO** your child is talking to online, **WHAT** they are doing online and **WHERE** they are going online?

In order to **STOP** online bullying children must **Start Telling Other People**.



There has been a lot of information in the press recently about the online abuse suffered by many famous sports men and women and the impact that it has had on their emotional wellbeing and mental health. During some high profile matches 3 in 10 anonymous abusive tweets are normally sent before a ball has been kicked. In one 90-minute match there was a 350% increase in abusive Tweets, in just 5 minutes, as teams failed to score. Across all the matches tracked, a 65% increase in religious abuse and a 45% increase in sexual orientation abuse was identified.

According to statistics 1 in 7 people believe those in the public eye should expect abuse, and we try to support and educate our children to know that this isn't acceptable.

**Sports men and women report “Our mental health, our wellbeing and the sports we love are being negatively impacted by online abuse.”**

*Sticks and stones may break my bones,  
But words can also hurt me.  
Sticks and stones break only skin,  
while words are ghosts that haunt me.  
Pain from words has left its scar  
on mind and heart that's tender,  
cuts and bruises now have healed,  
it's words that I remember.*

There is an old saying **“Sticks and stones may break my bones but names will never hurt me.”** We all know that this isn't true as hurtful online comments can have a major impact for many years to come.



“Diminishing someone else's flame does not make yours any better or brighter” and we all have a part to play in supporting our children to develop healthy online interactions, especially with those that they know. Failing to do this negatively impacts on their friendships, which ultimately impacts upon their learning and emotional well-being.



Despite how we educate and support our children it is inevitable that friendships will break down due to online messaging. If this negative interaction continues for a period, over time, it is important for adults to not only support the children emotionally but also take practical steps to support them.

- If you have agreed to the online usage it is important to not stop them from using the internet or their mobile phone. It probably won't help keep them safe, it may feel like they're being punished and could stop them from telling you what's happening.
- Make sure your child knows how to block anyone who posts hateful or abusive things about them on each app or online service they use. You can usually find details of how to do this in the help or online safety area, under Settings.
- Report anyone who is bullying your child to the platform that's carried the offending comments, audio, image or video.



### ZIP IT

Keep your personal stuff private and think about what you say and do online.



### BLOCK IT

Block people who send nasty messages and don't open unknown links and attachments.



### FLAG IT

Flag up with someone you trust if anything upsets you or if someone asks to meet you offline.

You can find details of more apps and games children and young people use, and how to contact them, on the Net Aware site.

Thinkuknow has advice on online safety for young people that's suitable for different age groups. The website shows children how to contact social media sites if they believe someone has posted something upsetting about them.

Block'em is a free app for Android users that blocks unwanted calls and text messages from specified numbers.

