

Cyberbullying

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is defined as the use of electronic communication devices to bully a person, this can include e-mails, text messaging, chat rooms, social media platforms and interactive video games as well as many other ways.

Bullying behaviour that takes place online can happen in different forms, a few examples are:

- > Sending threatening or Intimidating messages
- > Posting nasty or harmful information or pictures about someone
- > Sharing private pictures or information intended to embarrass or humiliate
- Revenge pornography sharing of sexually explicit images or videos without the person's permission.
- > 'Trolling' sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks and chat rooms.

Other Forms are:

- Virtual mobbing or dog-piling: Encouraging other people to harass someone on social media
- > **Doxxing**: Publishing someone's personal information
- > **Baiting**: Accusing someone of being involved in sexual activity
- > Cyber-stalking: Repeated use of online messaging to frighten or harass
- > **Spamming**: Sending a large number of unwanted messages
- > Flaming: Abusing someone in a live chat forum.

Cyberbullying by numbers

- The National Crime Prevention Council stated in 2018 that 43% of young people (13 24) had experienced some form of online bullying
- It is estimated that 5.43 million young people in the UK have been victims of online bullying with 1.26 suffering extreme cyberbullying on a daily basis.
- > Only 38% of victims will talk to an adult about it
- 1 in 4 people (not just children) have experienced Cyberbullying according to a YouGov poll (2019)



Impact of Cyberbullying?

Data collected by antibullyingpro.com estimate:

- > Over 16,000 young people miss school due to online bullying each year
- > 83% of victims say bulling has effected confidence and self-esteem
- > 30% of victims have started self-harming due to bullying online
- > 10% of victims have attempted to commit suicide
- In 2017 Nobullying.com a stop bulling charity found that 24% of children who had been bullied online had suicidal thoughts.
- > Bullying.co.uk state over 200 school children commit suicide each year.

Cyberbullying can affect all people - Two recent and high profile case of Cyberbullying is that of Carolyn Flack. Also, that of, Jesy Nelson from the band Little Mix, both of whom were trolled on different social media platforms, suffered **Baiting, Virtual mobbing and Cyber-stalking**. This led to Carolyn Flack committing suicide.

What does the law say about cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is not defined under UK law. However, as confirmed by the social media and criminal offences communications committee, committing an act of online bullying can be classed and charged as the criminal offence of cyberbullying under existing laws. For example:

- Cyber-stalking or harassment Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Revenge pornography Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015
- Credible threats of violence Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Virtual mobbing Communications Act 2003
- Posted statement or video of a false nature that damages a person's reputation -Defamation Act 2013
- Racial or religious aggravation Crime and Disorder Act 1998

What are the government doing?

- In 2019 the Government produced the "online Harms White Paper" which appointed the Independent regulator Ofcom to enforce new stringent standards.
- Social media firms must abide by the mandatory duty of care rules to protect their users and will face heavy fines if they do not.
- > The UK is the first country in the world to bring in protections like this.
- There is also an ongoing debate about introducing specific legislation to tackle cyberbullying and cybercrime.

What to do if you or someone you know are/is being bullied?

- ➤ Keep records keep messages and photos that have been sent to you.
- Tell an adult parent / family member or teacher
- > Tell the police
- > Report it to bullying watch dogs and if on social media platforms to the platform directly



For any advice or if you want to talk to someone regarding any of the issues raised call the Bullying UK Helpline on 0808 800 2222 Or click on the link -<u>https://www.bullying.co.uk/cyberbullying/</u>

