



# Take a Stand Against Cyberbullying

Don't let the 24-hour Web be a threat to a child's safety.

## Help protect children by using the following 10 important tips:

**Be an advocate.** Kids need to know that adults can and will provide positive, active and predictable support. And they should never, under any circumstance, bully someone. Make consequences clear.

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**Talk about it.** Ask kids what they're doing online and encourage them to report bullying to you or another trusted adult. Promise to take action and explain what you will do. Reassure them that computer, phone or other privileges won't be curtailed.

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**Keep the family computer in a central location.** If kids play video games, keep Internet-connected game consoles in a family room. However, teenagers have so many ways to access the Internet that putting the computer in a central spot isn't always effective. With older kids, it's especially important to have frank discussions.

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**Look for signs of online bullying.** For example, take note if kids get upset when they're online or they show a reluctance to go to school.

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**Encourage your children to make friends.** Urge friends to look out for one another. Cyberbullies are less likely to target those they perceive as being well-supported. If a victim has friends who rally around him or her, the bullying usually stops.

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**Don't respond.** Tell kids not to respond to the cyberbully or retaliate; bullies are looking for a reaction. Tell kids not to answer phone calls or reply to (or even read) text messages or comments.

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**Act immediately.** Don't wait to see if the abuse will stop. A child needs to know that you can and will help. If you feel a child is in physical danger, contact local authorities.

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**Accountability.** Every effort should be made to find cyberbullies and hold them accountable. If the bully is a fellow student, consider reporting the incident to the school. Report incidents to the online service — social networking site, IM service or cellphone provider — where the bullying is happening. Many have moderators and places to report abuse (e.g., [abuse@microsoft.com](mailto:abuse@microsoft.com)).

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**Block the bully.** Most Web services offer the ability to block anyone whose behavior is inappropriate or threatening in any way. Check with the service to find out how. You can also turn on the safety features available in most Microsoft programs and services, such as those in Windows 7, Windows Vista, Xbox LIVE and the Zune digital media player.

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**Save the evidence.** Save text messages, emails and other evidence of cyberbullying in case the authorities need it. There are laws against cyberbullying.

\* Source: <http://www.microsoft.com/security/family-safety/cyberbullying.aspx>

For more information, visit [www.microsoft.com/news](http://www.microsoft.com/news) or [www.microsoft.com/security](http://www.microsoft.com/security)

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