

CAUTION

Internet Safety/Cyberbullying
Education, Prevention, and Resources

The Internet

- The Internet is a fabulous resource for education, entertainment, and more.
- But the Internet is not regulated or controlled by any one entity.
- So parents and schools have a responsibility to educate children about its safe and appropriate use.

Cyberbullying

- It's ok to tell a trusted adult
- You cannot keep it to yourself
- It is imperative that parents and students report unsafe incidents to law enforcement so that offenders can be apprehended and prosecuted

Objectives for Parents

- Be Social Media Savvy
- Understand what your children are doing online
- Talk to your children about potential dangers online
- Help your children start their digital footprint on a positive note

Objectives for Students

- Recognize that anything you put online could follow you for the rest of your life
- Understand potential dangers you could find online
- Use the internet and social media responsibly
- Make good online decisions
- Start your Digital Citizenship off on a positive note

Broken Friendships



Everybody Knows Your Name



Social Media

Social Media and You

- Social media sites have exploded in the past few years
- People are more connected than ever before
- Teens use social media to stay connected outside of school and share things with their friends

Social Media Sites

- Facebook
 - Allows users to share pictures, messages, videos, etc. with their friends
 - Declining in popularity
- Twitter
 - 140-character limited “tweets”
- Instagram
 - Twitter for pictures
- Snapchat
 - Photo sharing application
 - Photos disappear after a certain time
- Kik
 - Messaging app for mobile phones
 - Requires password, unlike phones

Dangers of Social Media

- Anonymity empowers bullies
 - Some social media like Facebook requires you to accept connections from people, but they might not be who you think they are
- Anything you put on social media will never go away
 - **Including Snapchat photos – they can be screen-shotted**
 - This also preserves evidence of bullying
- Social media can offer bullies a private way to torment someone
- Bullying via social media is easier to hide than in-person bullying

Responsible Social Media Use

- Explore social media sites with children before allowing them to access them
- Privacy settings
- Make sure children know they can tell you if they are being bullied on social media
 - DO NOT KEEP IT TO YOURSELF

Cyberbullying

What Is Cyberbullying?

- Spreading rumors and gossip
- Posting pictures without consent



- Stealing passwords to assume someone's identity
- Harassing or threatening with offensive language

What is Cyberbullying?

- Cyberbullying is just what it sounds like - bullying through Internet applications and technologies such as instant messaging (IM), social networking sites, and cell phones
- Often not just one bully and one victim – can involve many people ganging up on one victim
- It can start easily—with a rumor, a photo, or a forwarded message—and just as easily spiral out of control

Why do they do it?

- Reasons cyberbullies said they engaged in cyberbullying:
 - o To show off to friends (11%)
 - o To be mean (14%)
 - o Something else (16%)
 - o To embarrass them (21%)
 - o For fun or entertainment (28%)
 - o They deserved it (58%)
 - o To get back at someone (58%)
- 81% of youth agree that bullying online is easier to get away with than bullying in person.
- 80% think it is easier to hide online bullying from parents than in-person bullying.

Technology Aids Cyberbullies

While cyber bullying is often done by children who have increasing access to these technologies, it is by no means confined to children.

Technology allows these bullies to be anonymous and never have to physically confront their victims. Technology also allows bullies to torment their victims through various means.

This makes it difficult to trace the source, and encourages bullies to behave more aggressively than a traditional “physical world” bully because there are less social limitations online.

Bystanders

- Standing by and doing nothing empowers bullies
 - Victims feel isolated and like they cannot reach out for help
- Bystanders empower cyber bullies *even more*
 - “Innocently” sharing pictures or posts can be bullying itself
- Bystanders need to:
 - Tell an adult
 - Speak out against the bully
 - Get others to help stop the bullying
 - Not share things online that could be hurtful

Once You Post It...



Online Predators

Online Predators

- Predators can access the same websites as your children
- Predators are



Male or female

Any age

Any profession

Experts at “grooming”
methods

Online Enticement and “Grooming”

- To entice your children, predators
 - Offer attention and affection
 - Send money and gifts
 - Persuade them to keep the relationship secret
 - Talk about inappropriate and sexual topics
 - Send sexually explicit images
 - Ask to meet in person
 - Are patient when developing a relationship

Grooming”



Picture
SEX

Julie's Journey



Revealing Too Much

- Personal information that can reveal your identity and location
 - Name** **Age** **Birthday** **Address**
 - Phone Number** **Schedule** **School**
- Photos and videos should never be posted online if they show
 - Backgrounds that reveal identifying information
 - Sexually provocative poses
 - Too much skin
 - Inappropriate or illegal activity

Webcams

- **Geotagging:** This data usually consists of latitude and longitude coordinates, altitude, bearing, distance, accuracy data, and place names.
- Skype
- Google Chat
- Chat Roulette
- Instagram

When using these applications, your location can be easily determined through geotagging technology.

You Are Not Anonymous

- Never post identifying information online
- Oftentimes people think that whatever they do online is private and no one can find them
 - This is NOT TRUE
- You can easily be tracked through:
 - IP Address
 - Pictures
 - Personal information
 - [Backgrounds](#)

What is Sexting

- Sexting is the exchange of sexually suggestive messages or images between minors via cell phone
 - For example, a girl might take a nude picture of herself and send it to her boyfriend
- This could lead to **possession or distribution of child pornography** and/or **harassment**
- Netsmartz.org

The Laws

Misuse of Telephone Facility

Md. Criminal law Code Ann. § 3-804

Prohibited. -- A person may not use telephone facilities or equipment to make:

- an anonymous call that is reasonably expected to annoy, abuse, torment, harass, or embarrass another;
- repeated calls with the intent to annoy, abuse, torment, harass, or embarrass another; or
- a comment, request, suggestion, or proposal that is obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, or indecent.

Misuse of Electronic Email

Md. Criminal law Code Ann. § 3-804

"Electronic mail" defined. -- In this section, "electronic mail" means the transmission of information or a communication by the use of a computer or other electronic means that is sent to a person identified by a unique address and that is received by the person.

Prohibited. -- A person may not use electronic mail with the intent to harass:

- one or more persons; or
- by sending lewd, lascivious, or obscene material.

Willful Disturbance

Annotated Code of Maryland, Education, Section 26-101

Conduct by an individual who:

1. Willfully disturbs or otherwise willfully prevents the orderly conduct of activities, administration, or classes at a school.
2. Molests or threatens with bodily harm any student, employee, or other individual lawfully on school property, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored event off school property.
3. Threatens with bodily harm any employee at home by any means, including in-person, by telephone, or by electronic means if the threat arises out of the scope of the employee's employment.

Disorderly Conduct

Md. Criminal law Code Ann. §6-409

A. The following conduct is prohibited:

- (1) Loud or unseemly noises, profane cursing, swearing, or use of obscene language;
- (2) Obscene or profane clothing, banners, or other written materials;
- (3) Lewd or indecent exposure; or
- (4) Any other conduct which unreasonably disturbs normal activity at an Authority facility.

B. An individual may not:

- (1) Disturb the peace of others;
- (2) Through organized or unorganized activity, engage in, instigate, or encourage a contention or fight; or
- (3) In any way endanger the life, person, property, health, or safety of others, by words, actions, or attempts, made directly or by aiding or abetting others to do so.

Harassment

Md. Criminal law Code Ann. § 3-803

- Prohibited. -- A person may not follow another in or about a public place or maliciously engage in a course of conduct that alarms or seriously annoys the other:
 - with the intent to harass, alarm, or annoy the other;
 - after receiving a reasonable warning or request to stop by or on behalf of the other; and
 - without a legal purpose.

Identity Fraud

Md. Criminal law Code Ann. §8-301

A person may not knowingly, willfully, and with fraudulent intent possess, obtain, or help another to possess or obtain any personal identifying information of an individual, without the consent of the individual, in order to use, sell, or transfer the information to get a benefit, credit, good, service, or other thing of value in the name of the individual.

A person may not knowingly and willfully assume the identity of another:

Stalking

Md. Criminal law Code Ann. § 3-802

"Stalking" defined. -- In this section, "stalking" means a malicious course of conduct that includes approaching or pursuing another where the person intends to place or knows or reasonably should have known the conduct would place another in reasonable fear:

- (i) of serious bodily injury;
- (ii) of an assault in any degree;
- (iii) of rape or sexual offense as defined by §§ 3-303 through 3-308 of this article or attempted rape or sexual offense in any degree
- (iv) of false imprisonment; or
- (v) of death; or

that a third person likely will suffer any of the acts listed in item (1) of this subsection.

Misuse of Interactive Computer Service (Grace's Law)

Md. Criminal Law Code Ann. 3-805

- Prohibits a person from using an “interactive computer service” to maliciously engage in a course of conduct that inflicts serious emotional distress on a minor or
- places a minor in reasonable fear of death or serious bodily injury with the intent to...

Misuse of Interactive Computer Service (Grace's Law) cont.

- 1) To kill, injure, harass or cause serious emotional distress to the minor or
- 2) To place the minor in reasonable fear of death or serious bodily injury.

An interactive computer service means an information service, system or access software provider that provides or enables computer access by multiple users to a computer server, including a system that provides access to the Internet and cellular phones. (1 year and/or \$500 fine)

Statistics

- 42% of children have been cyber bullied and 35% have been threatened online.
- 1 in 6 parents know their child has been bullied via social networking sites.

Dealing With Cyberbullying

The Emotional Consequences of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can have a negative or even destructive emotional effect on victims, ranging from hurt feelings to intense anger.

It can also result in significant depression and in the most severe cases has even resulted in suicide.

Unfortunately, children rarely report occurrences to an adult.

Warning Signs that Your Child is the Victim of Cyberbullying

- Avoiding the computer, cell phone, and other devices.
- Appearing stressed when receiving e-mail, instant messages or text messages.
- Withdrawing from family and friends, or acting reluctant to attend school and other activities.
- Avoiding conversations about computer and other device use.
- Increased sadness, anger, frustration, reduced tolerance and worry.
- Declining grades.
- Eating and/or sleeping changes

Warning Signs that Your Child May Be Cyberbullying Others

- Prior involvement in bullying, or the target of bullying..
- Avoiding conversations about computer and cell phone activities.
- Switching screens or closing programs when you, or others, are nearby.
- Laughing excessively while using the computer or cell phone.
- Using multiple online accounts or an account that is not his or her own.
- Excessive use of a computer and/or cell phone.
- Agitation if access to a computer or cell phone is restricted or denied.

Dealing with Cyber Bullying for Parents

- **Discourage** your child from responding to the cyber bullying.
- **Preserve evidence.** This is crucial for identifying the bully and making a case.
- Try to **identify** the cyber bully.
- Inappropriate language and harassment may violate the “Terms and Conditions” of e-mail services, Internet Service Providers, websites, and cell phone companies. **Contact providers and filing complaints.**

- **Attempt to block** the cyberbully from contacting you via Internet/phone settings.
- **Contact your school.** Even if the cyber bullying is occurring off campus, if it is related to school in any way make school administrators aware of the problem.
- Consider **contacting the cyber bully's parents**, if known. They may be very responsive, effectively putting a stop to it.
- **Consider contacting an attorney** in cases of serious cyber bullying. Civil law may provide for a remedy, if other efforts fail.
- **Contact the police to pursue criminal remedies** if cyber bullying involves acts such as: threats of violence; extortion; obscene or harassing phone calls or text messages; harassment, stalking, or hate crimes; or child pornography.

For Teens

- **Don't add fuel to the fire**
- **Make sure it's really a cyber bully**
- **Don't keep this to yourself**
- **Say "Stop!"**

For Teens

- **Save every contact from the cyber bully.** This is evidence that you are being harassed.
- **Check your rep online.** If someone is writing about you online, you should try to find out what they are saying.
- **Still being harassed? Take your case to the authorities.**
- **If you receive a credible threat, contact the police.**

Other Online Risks

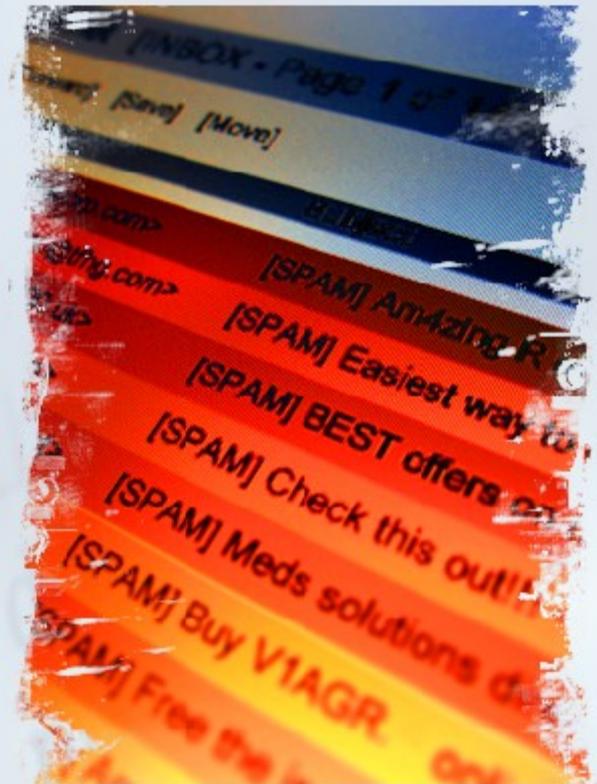
Exposure to Inappropriate Material

- Pornography
- Hateful, racist, and violent content
- Details of illegal activity
 - Where to get drugs
 - How to make drugs and explosives
 - Underage drinking
 - Lock-picking
 - Gambling websites



Spyware, Spam, and Scams

- Check the legitimacy of a website
- Only download from trustworthy sources
- Don't give information to soliciting sites and e-mails
- If an offer seems too good to be true, it usually is
- Don't fall for phishing scams





WHAT YOU CAN DO

Set Your Own Rules

- **Establish rules for Internet use**
 - What sites can your child visit?
 - Who can they talk to?
 - How much time can they spend online?
- **Keep the computer in a common room (not in secluded areas like a bedroom or basement)**



Safer Social Networking

- Make your own profile and explore the site
- Learn the site's safety features
- Have children use privacy settings
- Examine their list of friends and browse their friends' pages



Safeguard

- Consider safeguarding options
 - Filtering applications restrict access to inappropriate material
 - Monitoring software records
 - websites visited
 - chat conversations
 - other content



Communicate

- Discuss the importance of telling you or a trusted adult if anything ever makes your child feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused while online
- Communicate
- Prepare yourself beforehand
- Be open with your children and encourage them to confide in you



Too Much Technology?

- Set rules for cell phone and computer use
- At night, charge cell phones in a common area – not in children’s bedrooms
 - Common complaint from principals = “the students arrive exhausted”
- Talk to your child about academic, legal, and moral consequences of actions
- Encourage your child to tell you about inappropriate things
- Discuss cyberbullying, sexting, and internet safety with your child
- Ask your child questions about what they think is appropriate
- Tell your child to speak out if they are being harassed or bullied
 - Tell a trusted adult

Resources for Parents/Teens

- <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/cybersafety/>
- Cyberbullying Unplugged
- Parents' Guide to Smartphone Safety
- Tips to Prevent Sexting for Teens
- A Parent's Guide to Social Networking
- Go to [Netsmartz](#) – you can learn about all of these things
 - And how to protect your children

MCPS Cyber Civility Task Force

The MCPS Cyber Civility Task Force will develop strategies to raise awareness of the need for cyber civility in how our students and adults communicate online and guide the creation of tools for schools, teachers, parents, students, and community members that encourage conversations about cyber civility.

School Resources

- The Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form can be found on the Montgomery County Public Schools website:
<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/forms/pdf/230-35.pdf>
- Montgomery County Public Schools—
CyberSafety hotline - 301-279-3669/
cybersafety@mcpsmd.org

Other Resources

- www.netsmartz.org
- www.netsmartzkids.org
- www.netsmartz411.org
- www.isafe.org
- Casesearch.courts.state.md.us
- Cyber Tipline: 1-800-843-5678

Questions?