

# Cyber bullying



Cyber bullying is when people are nasty or threaten someone online or through a mobile phone.

## What is Cyber bullying?

Cyber bullying is when a person, or a group of people, uses the internet, mobile phones or other digital technologies to threaten, tease or abuse someone. It's against the law to bully someone in this way and if someone is being mean or threatening you, something can be done to stop them.

There are lots of ways cyber bullies can target someone, some of which may be:

- **Email**  
Sending abusive emails to someone, or to a group of people, who may then join in the bullying. Sending inappropriate videos and other content or computer viruses by email.
- **Instant messaging and chatrooms**  
Using instant messaging and chatrooms to send threatening or abusive messages to someone and asking others to join in. Using another person's account to send abusive messages to others, without their permission.
- **Social networking sites**  
Creating fake profiles for people or leaving abusive messages on existing profiles for others to see. [Find out more about how to stay safe on social networking sites.](#)
- **Mobile phone**  
Sending abusive text, video or photo messages as well as sharing videos of physical attacks on individuals (happy slapping or blue jacking etc). [Find out more about how to stay safe when using mobile phones.](#)
- **Abusing personal information**  
Posting photos, personal information or fake comments and blogs on websites where they can be seen by anyone without your permission.

## I'm being bullied online, how can I make it stop?

Although cyber bullying can't physically hurt you it can still make you feel bad and is a form of [emotional abuse](#). No one has the right you make you feel like this. It might seem that there is no way to make it stop, but there are things that you can do to prevent it from happening or make it stop.

- Talk to someone you trust like a parent or teacher. They can help you to sort it out. Or you can call us to speak to someone who can help you.
- Don't reply to any messages you receive, as this may encourage the bullies.
- Keep a copy of the abusive emails, texts or messages that you receive and when they were sent to you.
- Never give out any personal details on the internet such as your real name, address, age or phone number. Even telling someone which school you go to can help them find out information about you.
- Change your online nicknames or user ID to something different.
- Block email addresses and/ or complain to host website.

## **My friend is being mean to someone online and wants me to join in, what do I do?**

Cyber bullies, like other types of bullies, may try and make you get involved if they are bullying someone. Sometimes they may not realise that what they are doing is bullying, they might just see it as having fun. You don't have to do anything that you don't feel comfortable with. Tell your friends that you do not want to be involved in what they are doing.

If you feel like you can't talk to someone or are scared about what they might say or do to you, talk to someone you trust. You can call us for help.

## **What can I do if someone is bullying me through my mobile?**

It's now quite easy for mobile phone companies to trace the identity of anyone who is sending nasty or abusive text messages. If you are being bullied and receiving nasty or threatening language on your mobile tell an adult, like a parent or teacher, who can help you put a stop to this. If it doesn't stop you need to tell the police.

All UK mobile companies are used to dealing with nuisance calls and have people you can call who can help you deal with this.

- Don't reply to any nasty messages you receive.
- Keep the messages that you have been sent so you can show someone.
- Don't answer any calls that are from a withheld number, or from a number you don't know.
- Change your mobile number and only give your new number out to close friends.
- If the problem is serious, tell the Police or you can call us and we can help.

Mobile phone operators can't bar a particular number from contacting another phone, but you can do this on some handsets. Check your phone user guide to see if yours can. They can only take action about the bully's account, such as blocking it, if the police are involved.

[Find out more about mobile phone safety.](#)

[Find out more about staying safe online.](#)

[Read about other types of bullying.](#)

### **Extra links**

Bullying UK is the nation's leading anti-bullying charity. Their website provides advice and support about all types of bullying including cyber bullying. Visit their [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk).

thinkuknow has the latest information on the sites you like to visit, mobiles and new technology. Find out what's good, what's not and what you can do about it. Visit [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk).

chatdanger is a website about the potential dangers on interactive services online like chat, IM, online games, email and on mobiles. It includes advice about how to use them safely. Visit [www.chatdanger.com](http://www.chatdanger.com).