



MY SPACE: TIPS FOR TEENS & CYBERBULLING

- **Don't say you're older than you are.** MySpace members must be 13 years of age or older. We take extra precautions to protect our younger members and we are not able to do so if you do not identify yourself as such. MySpace will delete users whom we find to be younger than 13, or those misrepresenting their age to access content or areas they should not.
- **MySpace is a public space.** Members shouldn't post anything they wouldn't want the world to know (e.g., phone number, address, IM screen name, or specific whereabouts). Don't post anything that would make it easy for a stranger to find you, such as your local hang out. It's always fun to post pictures but remember that what you might consider a harmless picture of you and your friends in your uniforms at a school football game, is actually a map telling a stranger exactly where you go to school.
- **Don't post anything that could embarrass you later or expose you to danger.** Please remember that MySpace is public and many people have access to what you post, including potential employers, colleges, your teachers and peers at school that you might not even know. You shouldn't post photos or info you wouldn't want adults to see or people to know about you.
- **Protect your privacy.** Set your profile to private which lets only your friends view your profile. Users under the age of 16 are automatically assigned a private profile. Only accept friend invitations from people you know and trust.
- **People aren't always who they say they are.** Be careful about adding strangers to your friends list. It's fun to connect with new MySpace friends from all over the world, but avoid meeting people in person whom you do not fully know. Remember that you don't really know who is on the other end of an Internet connection.
- **Harassment, hate speech and inappropriate content should be reported.** If you encounter inappropriate behavior, inform your parents or a trusted adult and report it to MySpace or the authorities.
- **Don't get hooked by a phishing scam.** Phishing is a method used by fraudsters to try to get your personal information, such as your username and password, by pretending to be a site you trust. If you suddenly start receiving abnormal bulletins or messages from a friend, they might have been phished. Check with them before opening any files or clicking on any links. If you think you, or a friend, are a victim of phishing, change your password immediately.
- **Avoid in-person meetings.** Don't get together in person with someone you "meet" online unless you are certain of their actual identity. Talk it over with an adult first. Although it's still not risk-free, arrange any meetings in a public place and bring along friends, your parents, or a trusted adult.
- **Think before you post.** What's uploaded to the net can be downloaded by anyone and passed around or posted online pretty much forever. You shouldn't post photos or info you wouldn't want adults to see or people to know about you.



MY SPACE: CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying411.com has provided the following tips to educate yourself and your friends about cyberbullying and how to address it in the real world.

In general, cyberbullying is bullying or harassment that happens online. Much of it is similar to what you might have experienced offline in schools, homes, or the community, but has the additional aspect of the Internet.

Cyberbullying can take the form of a message on email or IM or a social networking site from someone who is threatening to hurt you or beat you up.

It could be a profile made by someone pretending to be you. Or, someone hacking into your profile and writing comments pretending they're from you.

Cyberbullying occurs in many different places online, including instant messaging, social networking sites, email, and chat rooms. The most common place bullying occurs online is over instant messenger, but it also can occur via other new technologies.

If you are being cyberbullied or threatened online in any way, there are things you can do to stop it:

- **Ignore the person.** Sometimes the easiest thing to do is to ignore the person and go on about your business.
- **Block or delete the person.** If it is happening on Instant Messaging or some other place online that requires a 'buddy list,' you can block certain users based upon their username, or delete them if they are in your buddy list. You can also block emails that are coming from specific email addresses.
- **Log-off** if the harassment is bothering you.
- **Change your information.** If someone has phished your profile, change your password. If someone repeatedly sends you messages (like, 'add me to your buddy list' over and over), consider changing your username or email address.
- If there is a profile that was created about you without you knowing, **contact MySpace and click on "Imposter Profile"** to have the profile or language taken down.
- If you are upset about what is being said, **talk to someone you trust.** Don't feel like you're alone.

When to talk to adults. Many times, teens are able to take care of the cyberbullying on their own. But sometimes it gets out of hand, and it's helpful to talk to an adult about what is going on. If you feel scared or overwhelmed, maybe even trapped, it's definitely time to talk to an adult.

If you don't feel comfortable speaking with a parent, seek out other adults or authorities like a teacher, coach, school counselor, a youth group leader, or other adult family member such as an aunt or uncle.

