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GREEN ISLAND

Heatly News

Into the world of Cyberbullying...

These days, it seems as though everyone has some type of social networking page– Facebook, MySpace, Twitter. Although they are marketed to be a non-threatening, friendly atmosphere, for many tweens and teens, they are anything but. A new term, "cyberbullying" has been coined to refer to the "use of technology to harass, embarrass, threaten or target another person"[1]. This type of bullying can occur through text messaging or computer use. There have been many instances of cyberbullying across the nation, producing significant negative effects on our students.

Why do kids do this? According to Kids Health.org, cyberbullying is an easier form of bullying to commit, as there is no personal contact. Typically, a cyberbully is not able to talk out their feelings, although they may not realize how much their words can hurt the other person[1].

"There is no escape from cyberbullying", Kids Health.org says. Technology surrounds us 24/7, making it nearly impossible to get away from insults. If you suspect your child is being cyberbullied, give them the following suggestions from Kids Health.org to avoid more hurt feelings:

~ We usually teach our children to walk away from a face-to-face interaction, of bullying. Your child can simply turn off their phone or computer to "walk away" from the conflict[1].

~ Block the bully on the social networking site or list the cell phone number as "Do Not Pick Up" to limit the interaction between the bully and your child[1].

~ Report cyberbullying to the website or phone provider. The person will be blocked from creating a username[1].

~Don't respond to the messages left. As tempting as this might be, you're giving in to what the bully wants– your attention[1].

If your child is the cyberbully, let him/her know of the grave consequences that can result from this. Let them know that there is a better way to resolve negative feelings[1].

[1]Kids Health.org (2009)

Keeping Safe on the Web

For younger children, the internet seems to be an impersonal world, without consequences. However, it is important to teach children that a computer screen does nothing to protect them from the dangers that lurk online.

The following are tips offered from Kids Health.org to ensure internet safety:

~Never give out your full name, address or phone number.

~Do not post pictures that provide your location (i.e. a school soccer jersey, a restaurant specific to your area).

~ Keep internet use supervised and set a time limit. Always ask what your children are looking at online– you have a right to know!

Contact Our Office:

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More Help!

If you or your child have issues with cyberbullying and you would like additional help or support, please do not hesitate to contact our office. Cyberbullying is very common among students and we want to ensure the safety and well-being of your child!