



Cyber Bullying

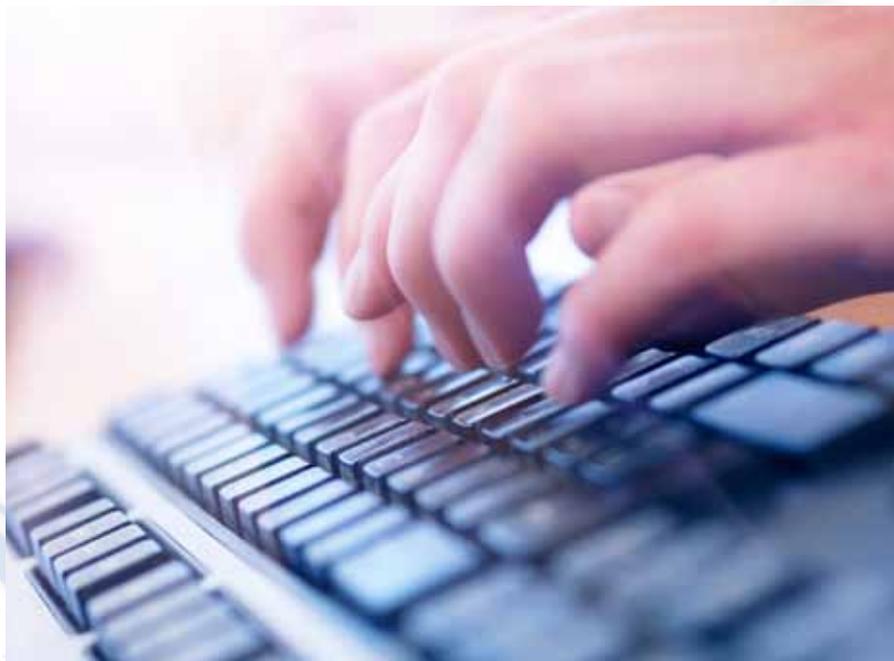
■ WHAT IS CYBER BULLYING?

Cyber bullying is a form of bullying carried out online in platforms such as email, chat rooms, discussion groups, social networking sites such as facebook or twitter, instant messaging or web pages. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as SMS and MMS.

Examples of cyber bullying behaviour:

- teasing
- slandering people
- spreading rumours online
- sending unwanted messages
- defamation or harassment
- posting private or unwanted photos

www.reachout.com.au



■ DID YOU KNOW?

An online safety survey conducted by NetAlert and ninemsn in February 2007 found that:

- 16% of young people said they had been bullied online, while 14% were bullied via their mobile phone.
- 56% of young people thought it was easy to be bullied online.

www.netalert.gov.au

Under certain circumstances (such as harassment and making threats) cyber bullying is a criminal activity and can lead to criminal charges. For more information visit the Australian Government website: www.theline.gov.au

ACTIVITY 1

READ THE LYRICS OR PERHAPS LISTEN TO THE SONG CAUGHT IN THE CROWD BY KATE MILLER-HEIDKE.

Get your friends/classmates together and film a video clip to fit the song. It can be based on a personal experience or it can be something completely imagined. Use part of or the whole song – it's up to you!

CAUGHT IN THE CROWD BY KATE MILLER-HEIDKE

There was a guy at my school when I was in high school

We'd ride side by side in the morning on our bicycles

*Never even spoken or faced each other
But on the last hill we'd race each other*

When we reached the racks we'd each go our own way

I wasn't in his classes, I didn't know his name

When we finally got to speak he just stared at his feet

And mumbled a sentence that ended with 'James'

Well he was quite a big guy, kinda shy and quiet

When the kids called him weird he didn't try to deny it

Every lunchtime he'd spend walking by himself

Round the boundary of the grounds 'til he heard the bell

Well one day I found him, joined him on his walk

We were silent for a while until we started to talk

*I told him my family were fighting in court
He said his step-dad and him always fought*

*We talked about music, he was into punk
Told me all the bands that I liked were junk
I said I'd never heard the songs the sex pistols sang*

I laughed back at him and then the bell rang

It was after school in the afternoon

The corridors were crowded as we came out of the rooms

Three guys I knew pushed him into the cement

Threw away his bag and said he had no friends

He yelled that he did and he looked around

Tried getting up but they pushed him on down

That's when he saw me, called out my name

And I turned my back, and just walked away

*I was young and caught in the crowd
I didn't know then what I know now*

*I was dumb, and I was proud
And I'm sorry*

If I could go back, do it again

I'd be someone you could call friend

Please please believe that I'm sorry

Please please believe that I'm sorry!

www.katemillerheidke.com



■ CASE STUDIES

LAUREN

When Lauren had a falling out with her friend Susan, Susan used Lauren's private instant messenger account to send nasty messages to her classmates at school. Suddenly, Lauren's friends were ignoring her. Vicious rumours about Lauren began to circulate through SMS, online notice boards and web pages. Working with her school, Lauren's family stopped the bullying, but the damage had already been done and Lauren lost a lot of friends at school.

www.netalert.gov.au

JESSICA

"When I received an abusive text message from a girl at school I felt completely shocked. I became very reclusive and depressed because I was trying to understand what had prompted it. It was also very scary because I thought I was going to be physically hurt. I knew the girl who sent the message had done things to harm others before and I thought she might hurt me as well. One of the things I found so upsetting was that after I had been bullied, home was no longer a refuge. You can be at home or at the shops, anywhere really, and be getting threatening messages".

www.smh.com.au

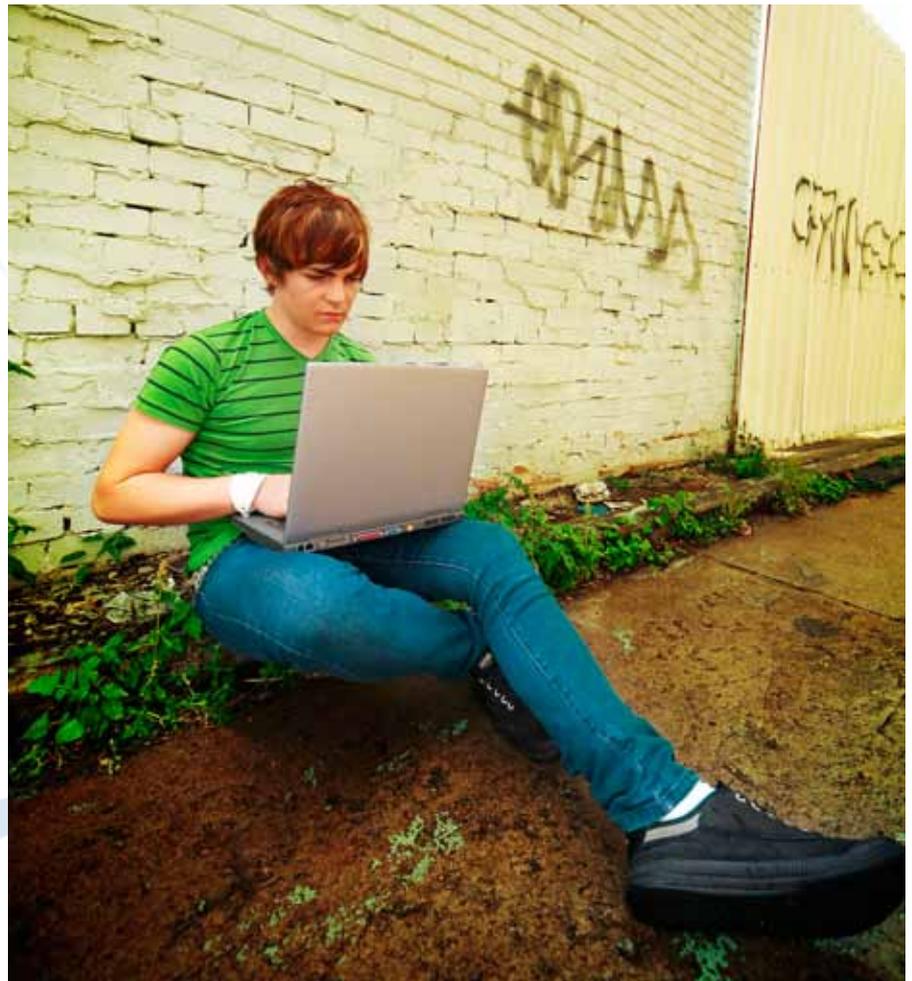
■ HOW TO HELP

- Organise a local forum of young people (possibly from several schools/areas) to discuss and debate issues affecting young people.
- Host a 'Battle of the Bands' competition where each band has to present a song about bullying. This helps raise awareness of the issue.
- Be wary of your actions online. Once you post a photo or a message online, it is easy for the written word to become skewed or taken out of context so that your words hurt others.
- Lastly, take a personal stance against cyber bullying. If you or someone you know is being bullied, teased and abused or harassed online, speak out against it and report it to your parents, a teacher, school counsellor or someone you trust.

■ EFFECTS OF CYBER BULLYING

Most often, cyber bullying is just another tool for the person who bullies face-to-face. However, it is becoming more common for those who are being bullied in the playground to retaliate online. Young people are particularly vulnerable to cyber bullying as they often spend a large amount of their time online, researching and using social networks.

Bullying can damage lives. The long term effects of ongoing bullying can damage a person's health and wellbeing long into adult life. It damages self-esteem, increases anxiety and can cause serious depression. Young people who experience cyber bullying may become withdrawn, isolated and feel less able to fit into their community.



For more information

Bullying. No Way! www.bullyingnoway.com.au

Reach Out www.reachout.com.au

National Centre Against Bullying www.ncab.org.au

Inside Outed www.insideouted.com.au

Beyond Blue www.beyondblue.org.au

NetAlert www.netalert.gov.au

Cyberbullying Stories

www.cyberbullyingstories.org.au