

Catholic Mutual...CARES for Kids

The Silent Torment: Understanding the Impacts of Cyberbullying

When many think of bullying, they imagine a child getting picked on or teased at the playground. However, with the advances of technology, bullying tactics have changed. In the digital age, where screens mediate our interactions, a new form of bullying has emerged, leaving scars that are often unseen but deeply felt. This is cyberbullying and can occur anywhere with an Internet connection.

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is a type of bullying that occurs over digital devices and usually refers to bullying among teenagers or children. The bully, or bullies, can use the devices to share negative, harmful, or false content with others. This can occur in any online setting, where common instances are through text messaging, social media, video/computer games, or other online forums. This form of bullying most frequently occurs among children who already know each other, where the victim is often getting bullied both at school and online.

Effects of Cyberbullying

The effects of cyberbullying are multifaceted and can have long-lasting consequences on mental health. Victims often experience increased levels of anxiety, depression, and feelings of loneliness. Other warning signs that cyberbullying is occurring are the victim may become hesitant to use electronic devices or go online, become withdrawn, or avoid school. Unlike traditional bullying, cyberbullying can invade safe spaces, making it difficult for victims to find relief. The 24/7 nature of online communication means that the harassment can follow victims wherever they go, leading to a sense of helplessness and despair. This can lead to an increased risk of self-harm or suicidal behaviors.

Cyberbullying Prevention

Addressing the issue of cyberbullying requires all involved (children, parents, and educators) to take a role in preventing bullying. If your child is experiencing cyberbullying, they must try not to respond. Instead, they should block/delete the individual from their devices and report it through the platform it is occurring (i.e., Snapchat, Instagram, etc.), and inform a trusted adult. Parents and educators play a crucial role in teaching children about responsible online behavior and providing support to victim

Ultimately, combating cyberbullying requires a collective effort to create a culture of kindness and empathy online. By raising awareness about the impacts of cyberbullying and promoting positive online interactions, we can work towards a safer and more inclusive digital world for all.

References

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