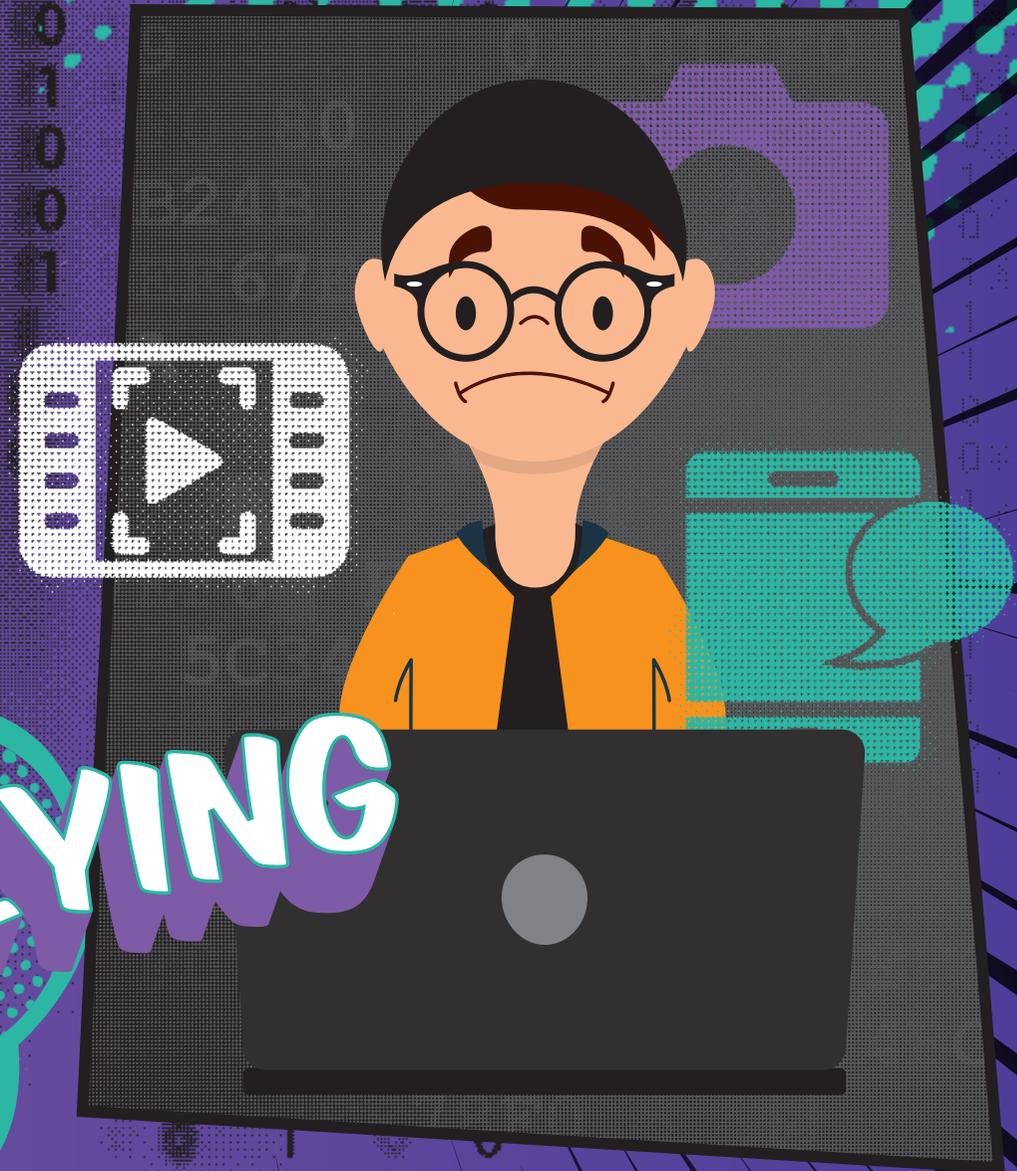


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WHAT IS CYBERBULLYING



Social media, online gaming and other online forums can be a great place to connect with other students after school and on weekends.

However, sometimes people can say and do things online that are distressing, humiliating or frightening.

When cyberbullying/online bullying happens to you, it can help to know what to do and how to cope.



SO WHAT IS CYBERBULLYING?

Cyberbullying involves messages, emails or comments that are intentionally mean. This might include sharing photos or videos to embarrass you, making mean jokes about you or your disability, leaving you out, or spreading rumours about you online.

Some people may even set up a fake profile of you, or bully you from a fake account, or they may send you repeated threats or messages.



HOW CAN CYBERBULLYING MAKE YOU FEEL?

Cyberbullying can really hurt. It can be particularly difficult if you have a disability, or if you don't have friends who stick up for you online.

You might feel really alone or helpless when being cyberbullied.

You might feel like there is something wrong with you. You might feel scared, or very sad and down and isolated.

This is a normal reaction to a difficult and wrong situation. Friendships can sometimes feel like the most important thing during the teenage years, and online forums are a big part of those friendships.



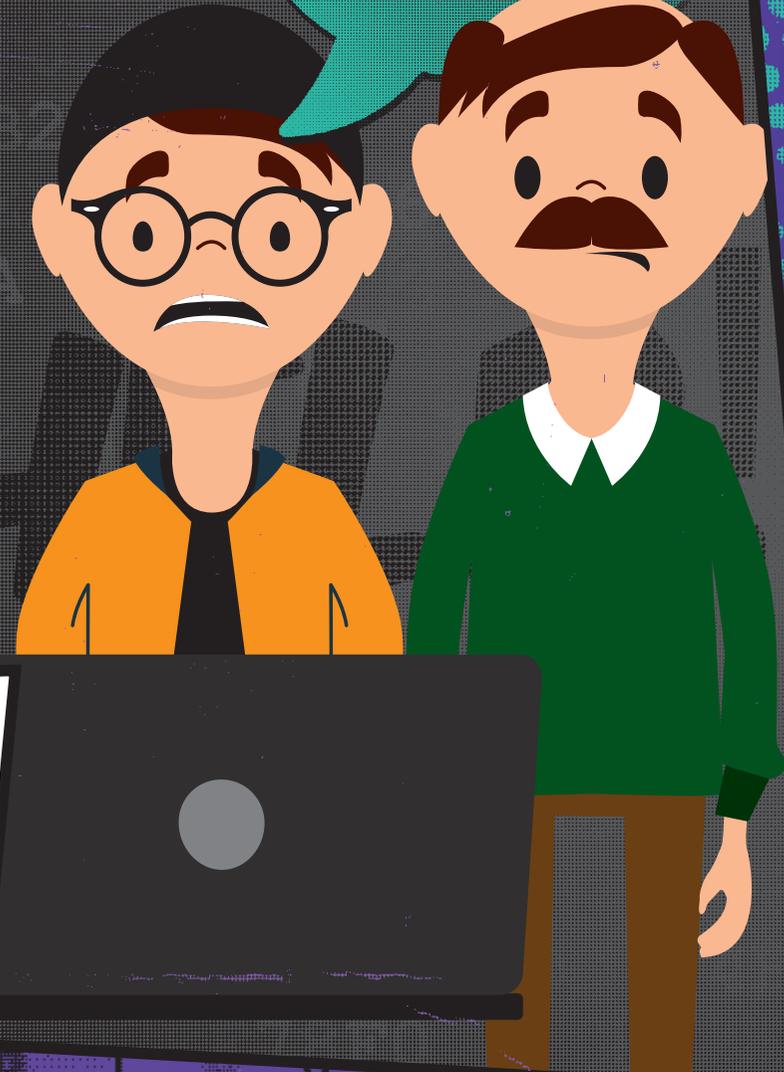
WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Sometimes it can feel you can't get away from the cyberbullying. No matter how alone you might feel, or how frightened or sad, there are always people out there who can help, and things you can do.

#1 - ASK FOR HELP

Ask for help. It can be really scary to ask for help when you're being cyberbullied. You might be scared that it will make things worse. But cyberbullying is never ok. It's ok to protect yourself from cyberbullying.

HELP!



#2 - DON'T RESPOND

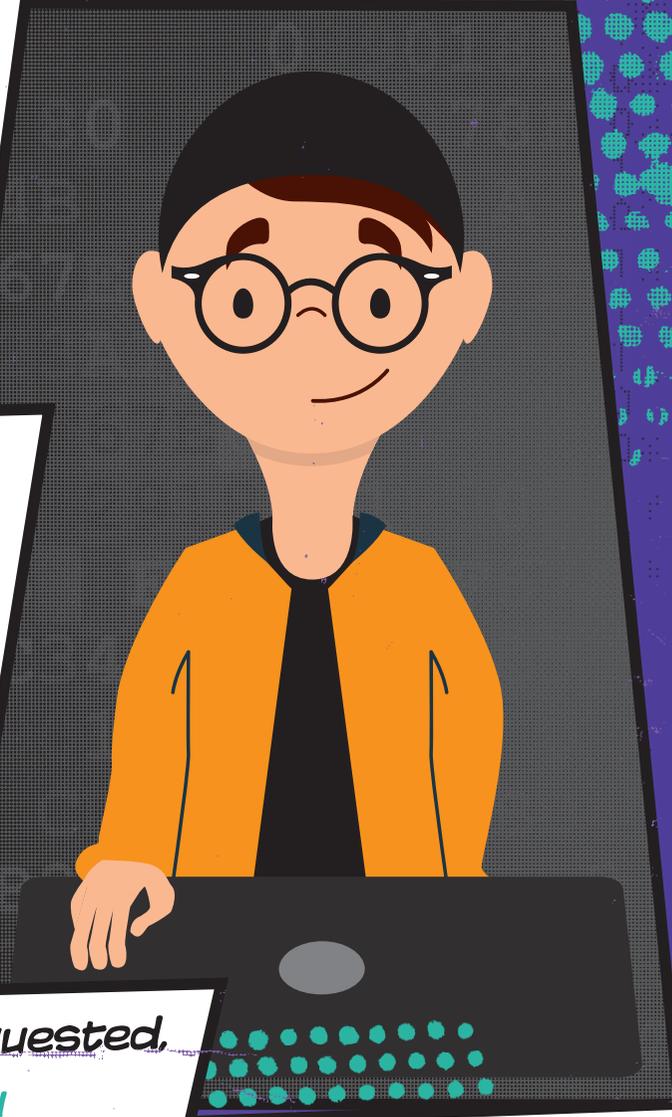
If the comments/posts aren't too distressing, and you think the person is just trying to get a reaction, try not responding to the post - just ignore it. If they don't get a reaction, they might just give up.

#3 - REPORT IT

If the content is distressing or repeated, you can block or report the person or the posts, or change your phone number. Check your privacy settings to ensure the person who has engaged in bullying cannot simply access your page/avatar again. Keep evidence of the posts - don't delete them without making sure you have proof in case you later want to take further action.

If the post is not removed by administrators when requested, you can report the cyberbullying to www.esafety.gov.au

If the cyberbullying continues and your safety is threatened, call the police (or ask an adult to call the police).

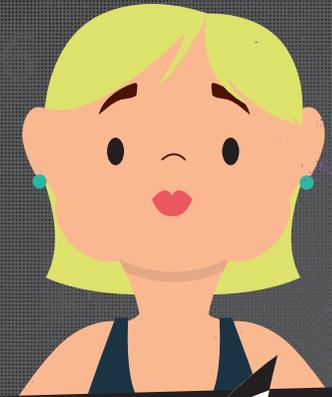


#4 - TALK TO SOMEONE

If you're feeling sad and alone, talk to someone you trust. There are also special helplines for teenagers with people who can chat to you about your experiences so you don't feel so alone. Or, maybe you can connect with others who also have a disability, and have faced the same things you are facing.



HEY



#5 - WALK AWAY

Sometimes you might need to turn your device off and walk away to do something else that you enjoy doing. Listen to soothing music that you like, have a bath with extra bubbles, go for a run, play with a pet...



REMEMBER

cyberbullying is never ok. If you are experiencing bullying, reach out.

About this story:

Cyberbullying can have significant effects on a teenager's wellbeing. Children with disabilities are more likely to be cyberbullied because they may look or act differently to other children.

This story is designed for teenagers without intellectual disability, and includes information to support them in defining what cyberbullying is, and evidence-based strategies for how to manage cyberbullying.

Common emotional reactions to cyberbullying are acknowledged and normalized, and practical responses to stop bullying from continuing are identified, including technical solutions and activating social supports.

For more stories and information on making education accessible for everyone
please visit: allplaylearn.org.au



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