Steps to Respect®
A Bullying Prevention Program

Cyber Bullying Prevention
Module Overview

Cyber Bullying Prevention Module Contents

Conceptual Overview: Cyber Bullying

As you know from the *Steps to Respect* program, the first step in dealing with bullying is being able to recognize it.

Remember, bullying is different from other forms of conflict and fighting. Bullying involves:
• Doing something mean
• On purpose
• Repeatedly

It is one-sided, with the person who is being bullied unable to either prevent it from happening or to make it stop.

It often involves three parties: the person or people doing the bullying, the target, and the bystanders, who can either be part of the problem or part of the solution.

Cyber bullying is bullying. It has all the characteristics of traditional, real-life bullying. However, it is also very different from traditional bullying. It is different because:
• It is done using all different kinds of technological tools: email, instant messaging (IM-ing), blogs, social networking sites, YouTube, cell phones, text messaging (texting), and so forth.
• It can help make the one who bullies anonymous, invisible, hidden.
• It can make it very hard for targets to find a safe, protected place to get away from the bullying since they often have 24-hour access to technology.
• There is the potential for many more bystanders than with traditional bullying.
• It is both immediate and long lasting. It can happen with the click of a button and potentially never go away.
• It can spread farther and faster than even the person doing the bullying is aware.
• It can be very subtle and harder for both students and adults to recognize. This also makes it harder to refuse.

We know that students report cyber bullying less often than traditional, real-life bullying. This happens for several reasons. Students believe that they are at an age when they should be able to solve their own problems. They worry that adults won't be able to stop the bullying, or perhaps they might even make it worse. Sometimes they think adults won't "get it;" that they don't understand the kinds of things that happen in cyber space. They are afraid adults will think the best way to protect them from the bullying is to take away or restrict access to the technology.

Additional Rs
The *Steps to Respect* program teaches students the three Rs: recognize, refuse, and report. As we discuss cyber bullying with students, we will also introduce an additional R to the three Rs: **record**.

Record: One reaction to negative messages and images is to simply delete them. Although it may seem that getting rid of unwelcome, unpleasant messages is a good thing, there are times when it is more important to have an example of cyber bullying to show as evidence. The **record** message speaks to this and to the need to document cyber bullying. This can be done in a variety of ways, including saving and printing messages and images, taking screen shots, copying URLs, etc. Adults are also introduced to an R that is just for them: **receive.**

Receive: The "receive" message is directed toward the adults—teachers, parents and others—to whom young people come for help. Young people are reluctant to show adults what they see on their screens, whether it is bullying language, threats, pictures, or other messages that make them uncomfortable. If and when they do show an adult these images and messages, the adults often react by to taking away technology access and privileges. This further complicates the life of the young person. The **receive** message urges the adults to stay calm, listen and look patiently, and support the young person who is being targeted.

Teachers, parents, and other adults are strongly encouraged to read, learn, and discuss their students' personal uses of and experiences with technology. Suggested readings and resources are provided.

Cyber Bullying Prevention Module Objectives

Students will be able to:
• Recognize various forms of cyber bullying
• Apply different methods for refusing to participate in cyber bullying
• Be a bystander who is part of the solution to cyber bullying
• Predict possible outcomes of online behaviors
• Record and report cyber bullying when they see it
• Understand that what is posted online is both public and permanent
• Create personal and family safety guidelines

Preparing to Teach the Cyber Bullying Prevention Module

1. Designate a teaching time.
2. Preview each lesson and estimate how long you will need to teach it. Lessons will take more or less time depending on the responses and discussions you have with your students.
3. Read the Conceptual Overview.
4. Read any suggested background materials.
5. Access online resources and materials.
6. Copy the Handouts. Suggestions for using handout materials are presented throughout the lessons. Use your discretion as to how you can best implement any of the handouts.
7. Copy the Family Handouts and the Home Links, or plan to send them home electronically. *Family Handouts should go home before each lesson*. For some lessons, there are also additional materials to be sent home with the letters. For Lesson 5, there is also an offer to parents and caregivers to preview the class materials before the lesson.
8. Read over the glossary of terms, and add to it as students ask questions or use different terms.

Sequence of Lessons

There are a series of five lessons about cyber bullying and related issues. The first lesson begins simply with a working definition of cyber bullying. Each succeeding lesson builds on the information and practice of the previous lesson(s) and adds more depth of understanding.

Lesson 1: Introduction to Cyber Bullying—This lesson introduces and defines "cyber bullying" within the context of traditional bullying. Students compare and contrast cyber bullying with traditional bullying. They recall their own experiences with cyber bullying or experiences others have had that they have heard about. This lesson gives you the opportunity to assess your students' familiarity with and use of technology so you can gear the remainder of the lessons toward their experiential and developmental level.

Lesson 2: The Three Rs and Cyber Bullying—Almost all of your students will be familiar with email. Younger students still tend to use email to connect with their friends more than other forms of social networking, although this is changing. This lesson uses an email cyber bullying situation as a vehicle to begin to lead the students through applying the first two of the three Rs to cyber bullying situations.

Lesson 3: Loss of Control and Predicting Consequences—This lesson introduces two new considerations for young people when using their technology. One is a loss of control after something is sent or posted on the Internet. The other is the need to very carefully consider and predict possible consequences when sending or posting a message.

Lesson 4: Social Networking—This fourth lesson begins a more direct conversation about digital citizenship, the power and freedom that the Internet provides, and the potential for the long-term impact of cyber bullying.

Lesson 5: Too Much Information: Bodies and Cyber Bullying—Paralleling *Steps to Respect* Level 3, Lesson 5, this lesson reinforces the concepts taught in the previous four lessons. Through the common term "TMI," it teaches students that sexual bullying can also take place online and what they can do if they experience it or see it happening.

Acknowledgment

The *Steps to Respect* Cyber Bullying Prevention Module was written by Mike Donlin on behalf of Committee for Children. Mike is the owner of MCD Consulting, which provides training and related services to schools, districts, parents, and others interested in helping to ensure children's online safety. He was a teacher and program administrator for Seattle Public Schools from 1980 to 2010, during which time he led the district's online safety and cyber bullying prevention efforts. His work in online safety has earned several awards, including the 2008 Spirit of Online Safety Award from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. He was recently named one of *Seattle Magazine's* "Most Influential People." Mike holds a BA in Secondary Education from the University of Scranton and an MA in Linguistics from the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Additional Resources

More information about the *Steps to Respect* program can be found at http://www.preventbullying.org. The following are additional links and resources for educators, families, and students. This is by no means an exhaustive list. It is merely a list of suggestions.

- **Committee for Children** http://www.cfchildren.org
- **Cyber Bullying Research Center** http://cyberbullying.us
- **NetSmartz** http://www.netsmartz.org
- **ConnectSafely** http://www.connectsafely.org
- **ConnectSafely—Spanish** http://www.connectsafely.org/Espa%C3%B1ol
  (resources for Spanish-speaking families)
- **Incredible Internet** http://www.incredibleInternet.com
- **Net-Cetera FCC** http://www.onguardonline.gov/topics/net-cetera.aspx
- **SafeKids** http://www.safekids.com
- **Willard, Nancy: Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use** http://csriu.org
- **Wired Safety** http://www.wiredsafety.org

Glossary

411: Information. The scoop, the lowdown, the background.

24/7: Twenty-four-seven; twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week; all the time.

ally: A friend; somebody who is on your side and willing to support you.

anonymity/anonymous: Keeping one's identity hidden from others. Online bullies can stay anonymous with user names that hide their real names.

avatar: A computer user's picture of himself or herself; an alter-ego used online. Avatar pictures often represent the user's screen name or gamer tag.

blocking: To make settings on a device or in an online service that stop specific people or categories of people from contacting you and viewing or posting to your site.

blog: An online personal journal or diary.

bullying: Repeated, unwanted, hurtful, negative behavior against someone. Bullying involves a lack of empathy and an imbalance of power where the person bullying is either stronger or thinks he or she has more power than the target.

bystander: Someone who observes bullying. By their inaction or nonsupport of the target, a passive bystander increases the target's feeling of isolation and encourages the person doing the bullying, who may take their inaction as a sign of approval.

captcha: Slang for "capture," a funny-looking word or phrase which you may be asked to copy when signing up for, logging on to, or otherwise accessing a site. A "captcha" is used to make sure that you are a real person and not another computer trying to access a site.

cell phone (or mobile phone or smart phone): A handheld phone, some of which can connect to the Internet so they can be used to visit Web sites, send e-mail or text messages, and take and send photos. (Examples: iPhones, Blackberries, Droids.)

chat: A real-time, interactive, online conversation that takes place in a chat room.

code of conduct: A set of rules governing how people should behave in a certain setting, such as on a social networking site. (See: terms of agreement)

cyber-: A prefix that is commonly used to mean "electronic" or "online." It is sometimes used as a synonym for "virtual."

cyber bullying: Bullying using technology. Online bullying, harassment, or intimidation; e-bullying, mobile bullying, digital bullying, Internet bullying, and cyberstalking are other terms for hurting others using online tools.

device: Any piece of equipment you use to access the Internet. Devices include personal computers, laptops, cell phones, iPods, gaming consoles, and personal digital assistants (PDA).

email (or e-mail): A software program for sending written messages and attached documents to others online. (Examples: hotmail.com, msn.com, gmail.com, verizon.com.) Email addresses are also used for personal identification verification.

empathy: Understanding of or being sensitive to another's feelings.

evidence: Something that provides proof. Evidence of cyber bullying might include a text message, email, or instant messaging transcript.

flaming: Sending messages with angry, insulting language, especially using all capital letters or bolded words.

game console: A device, such as Nintendo, Xbox, Playstation, or Wii, that allows you to play electronic games; some game consoles allow you to access the Internet to play interactive games online.

gamer tag: The screen name a gamer goes by when playing an online game.

harassment: Bullying that is often based on some specific characteristic such as race, gender, age, ethnicity, or sexual preference.

henchman: Someone who supports a person who is bullying, either by encouraging him or her to bully, or by actively engaging in the bullying activity.

instant messaging (or IM): Exchanging real-time messages with someone else who is online, using a program such as AIM from AOL.

Internet: The Internet, itself, is a worldwide collection of computer networks that are connected to form one big network; it allows users to find, manage, and share information. When you are connected to the Internet, you are said to be online.

ISP (Internet Service Provider): A company that provides Internet service to customers, such as AOL, Verizon, or Comcast. ISPs have codes of conduct and a method of reporting abuse. When abuse is reported, an ISP should take action against the person doing the abuse or bullying.

log in (or log on): To "open" a computer and access the Internet or other documents and information. A person's "log in" information usually includes a log-in name (screen name) and password.

massive multiplayer online games (MMOGs): Online interactive games that involve many (even thousands) of players. Also referred to as MMORGs and MMORPGs. Example: World of Warcraft.

outing: Telling a secret about a target, causing him or her pain or embarrassment.

password: A secret code word that identifies its user. A good password is "strong" and not easy to guess, and completely private.

personal information: Information about an individual that might include address, school, age, gender, phone number, email address, etc.

phish/phishing: The act of illegally trying to trick people into giving their private, personal information on the Internet. A person should never share his or her own or another person's log in, screen name, password, phone number, PIN, or any other personal information online.

photo-imaging software: Software, such as Photoshop, that can be used to change photos, for example placing the image of one person's head on a different body.

PIN: A personal identification number. Like a password, a PIN is a private number used for identification.

post/posting: Adding, sending to, or otherwise sharing information on a Web site.

prohibited: In this context, behavior or content that is defined as unacceptable in a Web site's terms of agreement or code of conduct.

report abuse: In this context, a reporting feature on a Web site used to tell the hosting company about behavior that violates their code of conduct.

screen name: The name or nickname a person uses when he or she is online.

screen shot: A picture of your computer's screen; a way to capture whatever is on the screen. A screen shot will only capture what a person can see on the screen, not an entire Web site or message, if the message is longer than one screen page.

search engine: A software program that lets you look for information on the Web. Google and Bing are examples of search engines.

self esteem: Feeling good about yourself.

social contract: The (sometimes unspoken, unwritten) rules people follow when they interact; they help show respect and allow people to work together. An agreed-on code of good behavior.

social networking site: Web sites like MySpace or Facebook whose focus is on building online communities of people with similar interests. Members connect online to share information in personal blog pages, through chat rooms, discussion boards, photos, or video.

(social) responsibility: An obligation to act appropriately toward others.

tag/tagging: Adding names or other comments to photos posted on social networking sites.

target: Someone who has been bullied.

terms of agreement (terms of use): The rules and understandings that a user promises to follow when creating a new online service account. Terms of agreement usually include such things as age restrictions, what can and cannot be posted, and ownership of whatever is posted. (See: code of conduct)

text message (text or TM): A short message between cell phones using a keypad to spell out the message. Shortened words and spellings are often used.

trusted adult: A teacher, parent, or other adult you can go to for help; someone who will listen and understand; someone who can help take action, such as protecting a target, reporting the abuse, or contacting the parents of the person doing the bullying.

virtual: Refers to objects, activities, and locations in the online world. A virtual community is a group that gathers on a particular Web site, for example.

Web (or World Wide Web): All the information, documents, pictures, and so forth, that fill Web sites and Web pages.