

HOW TO RESPOND TO CYBER BULLYING

It's not always possible to avoid cyberbullying, even with an abundance of caution. Cyberbullying extends to all forms of online connection, sometimes on more than one platform at a time.

Here are the ways to react with the best outcomes



Ignore it

While it's not always possible—sometimes cyberbullying isn't just annoying or unpleasant—a no-response response may make the problem go away quickly. **Cyberbullies want attention.** When denied, they may go away and look for another target



Use privacy settings

It's easier to ignore cyberbullies when their targets can't see any future messages or posts. It's often possible on phones, social media feeds, apps, and email accounts. Others can see what they post, but **without the target's reaction**, they may not bother



Learn resilience

Just telling someone to toughen up isn't resilience or helpful advice. Resilience teaches how to carry on when faced with problems such as cyberbullying, but not necessarily doing this alone. Resilience includes **developing a support system**, such as a trusted parent or another adult, **to listen and offer counsel**



Save evidence of cyberbullying

Part of the appeal of cyberbullying is the belief that since it's all electronic, there's no paper trail to prove what the cyberbullies did. That's not entirely true, however. **Screengrabs, device histories, and even keeping track on paper can document online harassment.** Knowing there's proof could make a cyberbully back off



Report cyberbullying

Another use for that evidence is to notify the social media platforms and other apps and websites that the **cyberbully is violating their terms of service.** They might block the cyberbully from posting on or using the service entirely. Some jurisdictions have cyberbullying laws too



Consult the parents

If the parents of the cyberbullied **know about the harassment and the sites involved**, they may have other advice or strategies



Pause before posting.

Not every opinion needs to be shared or expressed in an insulting manner. While that's not the same as cyberbullying, it might attract the attention of a cyberbully or other belligerent. **Wait before clicking send** and consider if it needs to be sent as-is

Information from:

- Suicide Awareness Voices of Education ([save.org/about-suicide/preventing-suicide/](https://www.save.org/about-suicide/preventing-suicide/))
- Harvard School of Public Health magazine (hsph.harvard.edu/magazine/magazine_article/guns-suicide/)
- Cyberbullying Research Center (<https://cyberbullying.org/cyberbullying-warning-sign>).