

DO IT FOR *Dolly* DAY '26



Recognising & Responding to Cyberbullying

A Guide for Parents & Carers

Bullying can happen anywhere – in person, at work or school, or online through social media, messaging apps, gaming platforms, or group chats.

Because online spaces are always active, cyberbullying can feel constant and overwhelming for young people.

Remember:

What might seem small can build up over time and impact your kid's mental health. Checking in regularly helps them feel safe, supported and not alone.

What Online Bullying Can Look Like

Cyberbullying can include:

- ✓ Sending hurtful or threatening messages
- ✓ Spreading rumours online
- ✓ Sharing embarrassing photos or videos
- ✓ Excluding someone from online groups or chats
- ✓ Creating fake accounts to target someone
- ✓ Posting cruel comments on social media



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What to do if Cyberbullying Happens?

1 Praise them for coming to you

This is a big step for many kids because they might feel frightened to tell a parent or adult about cyberbullying. Let them know that you'll help them.

2 Stay calm and listen

Let them explain what has happened and how they're feeling.

You could ask:
"Are you ok? Has something happened that's bothering you? Do you want to talk?"

Don't threaten to take their phone or device away because of what someone else has done.

CONTINUE TO READ MORE ON NEXT PAGE 

Top Tip!

Try having a conversation whilst in the car, less eye contact and a casual & calm setting can make it easier for them to open up.

Signs Your Child May be Experiencing Online Bullying

You may notice:

- ✓ Anxiety or distress after using their phone or computer
- ✓ Avoiding social media or suddenly deleting accounts
- ✓ Having a big reaction when they check their phone (like being jumpy when texts arrive)
- ✓ Becoming secretive about their online activity
- ✓ Withdrawal from friends or activities
- ✓ Changes in mood or confidence

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3 Save the evidence

Don't respond to the abuse, responding with abuse or a threat may get your kid into trouble as well.

Instead, take screenshots of messages, comments, or posts in case they are needed later.

Top Tip!

Try and save the evidence on your phone not your child's. Some apps can track when a screenshot has been taken, which might cause more harm.

5 Talk to the school if needed

If the bullying involves classmates, the school may be able to help address the issue. You can use our Anti-Bullying Toolkit for Families which has resources that you can use to talk to the school about bullying.

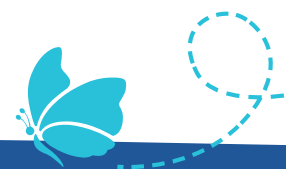


4 Block and report

Most platforms allow users to block accounts and report harmful behaviour. You can also report it to the [eSafety Commissioner](#).

6 Focus on support

Make use of parental controls and restrictions on your child's device. Remind the young person that they are not alone and that help is available.



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What do I do if it continues?

In most cases, cyberbullying between students is usually resolved at school so make sure the school is aware and investigating it.

If it's not successful, you could consider making a report to the local police.

There's three main reasons a police report might be necessary:

- 1 Despite the best efforts of the school and parents, the bullying still doesn't stop.
- 2 When fake accounts/ blocked numbers are involved and you don't know who is behind the bullying.
- 3 When threats have been made to your kid's personal safety.

What if My Child is the Bully?

It can be a shock to be told your kid has been bullying another student online. It's important to cooperate with the school, don't play it down or ignore it.

You can then help your kid understand that their behaviour online is both unacceptable and possibly criminal as well.

Steps you can take:

- ✓ Discuss why it's not acceptable to be mean both online and offline
- ✓ Let them see there are consequences for poor behaviour
- ✓ Talk about how they could rectify the situation and move forward, like apologising to the victim and removing posts
- ✓ If the behaviour continues or they can't see the harms they're causing ask for help from the school's wellbeing staff, GP, counsellor or adolescent psychologist to support your kid and yourself

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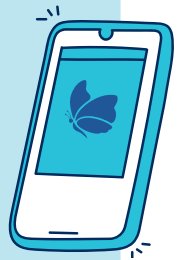
Need Support?

If bullying is affecting your kids or someone you know, Dolly's Dream can help.

Our Bullying Support Line, **13 DOLLY** offers free counselling, meaning you can talk with a qualified counsellor to get support and advice when you need it. Available over the phone or webchat.

Kids and Young People

- Open 24/7
- No referral needed
- Delivered in partnership with Kids Helpline



Parents & Carers

- Open 6am – Midnight
- No referral needed
- Delivered in Partnership with Parentline

Bullying Support Line: 13 DOLLY (13 36 55)

You can also explore the Dolly's Dream Bullying Support Hub for practical guidance and support.

13 DOLLY 

Bullying Support Line

CONFIDENTIAL CALL: 13 36 55