



# WHAT CAN I DO IF I'M BEING BULLIED ONLINE?



The best way to deal with cyberbullying is by reporting it or talking about it.

## What is cyberbullying?

Online bullying – or cyberbullying – is using technology like shared texts, emails, online posts, images, messages or videos to embarrass, threaten or harm someone. It can range from spreading rumours to encouraging violence. Unlike physical bullies, cyberbullies often choose to hide their identity. They can also bully from a distance and reach lots of people with just a few taps on a keypad, which can be very stressful for their targets.

**Like all bullying, it's not OK. No one has to put up with it and it can be stopped.**

## What can I do if I'm being cyberbullied at school?

It's important to remember that – despite using technology – cyberbullying still depends on real people to spread and respond to it, so people are the key to shutting it down. If you're being cyberbullied, there are some practical things you (or your caregivers) can do to stop it:

- Tell someone what is happening and that you are upset by it – don't suffer alone.
- Check out your school's policy on cyberbullying and see what they can do.
- If you'd rather not talk to friends, family or school you can always contact Netsafe , Kidsline, 0800 What's Up, or Youthline for confidential support and advice on what to do or how to cope.
- Change your phone number, block or unfriend bullies, and alter your online profile or privacy details so they're more secure; most providers offer help with settings.
- Collect evidence of the bullying: keep messages, take screen shots or photos, record dates and urls, or print emails.
- Consider taking a short break from some or all social media; you have the right to be online, but sometimes a rest can help calm both emotional and media storms.
- Report what's happened to your internet or mobile provider – they may be able take down or block certain numbers and sites that break their code of conduct.
- If what's happening is really serious or scary, consider telling the Police.



## What can I do to protect myself online?

- Choose carefully with whom you share your mobile and online details and any messages or posts: one US study found 17% of all so-called “private” emails/texts were shared – often with more than one person.
- Set your privacy settings to protect what can be shared on social networks like Facebook, Instagram or Snapchat; organisations like Netsafe and Sticks ‘n Stones also have great advice on how to do this and how to report things like bullying.
- Never give anyone else your passwords/logins.
- Don’t retaliate or respond to internet bullies and trolls (someone who uses their posts to upset people) – they might use it against you or as an excuse to continue; they’ll lose interest if they aren’t getting a response.
- Never join in cyberbullying – what goes around often comes around.



## USEFUL LINKS

Facebook <https://www.netsafe.org.nz/adjusting-your-privacy-settings-on-facebook/>  
Kidsline [http://www.kidsline.org.nz/Home\\_312.aspx](http://www.kidsline.org.nz/Home_312.aspx)  
Netsafe <https://www.netsafe.org.nz/aboutnetsafe/>  
Office of the eSafety Commissioner <https://www.esafety.gov.au/complaints-and-reporting/cyberbullying-complaints/social-media-services-safety-centres>  
Snapchat <https://support.snapchat.com/en-US/a/privacy-settings>  
Sticks ‘n Stones <http://www.sticksnstones.co.nz>  
Twitter <https://support.twitter.com/articles/20169886>  
What’s Up? <http://www.whatsup.co.nz>  
Youthline <https://www.youthline.co.nz>



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