Use this information to provide guidance to parents on what their role can be to promote safety with their kids.

Tips for Helping Parents Prevent Cyberbullying

Given the extensive exposure kids have online, are there ways to prevent and protect them from online cyberbullying and abuse?

There are a number of steps that can be taken to prevent and protect kids from cyberbullying.

1. Talk to your children about respecting others and explain that cyberbullying hurts. Explain that the rules for interacting with people in real life also apply for interacting online or through cell phones. Ask kids if the things they say online would still be okay if said offline. Would they think twice about asking the same questions, showing the same pictures? If they start a rumor about someone/ something, chances are something will be started about them. Is that okay? Teach them to consider these feelings as a barometer when engaging in more online activity.

2. Explain to your children the consequences if they misuse the technology (e.g., damaging their reputation, getting in trouble at school or with the police). Photos can be tampered with and defaced. Help kids understand the meaning of "forever," because postings on the Internet are forever.

3. Demonstrate appropriate Internet use! Your children learn from your behavior and imitate it. Don't harass or joke about others while online, especially around your children. Decide rules for your own family time: Don't text at the dinner table or let your kids use their cell phones during that time either.

4. Become involved in your children's cyberspace. Sit at the computer and let them teach you how they use the Internet and what they are doing. The goal is to be able to monitor their online activities without them feeling watched. If your children feel intimidated, they may go to extremes to hide their online activity. Ask them if they have ever been harassed or ridiculed and encourage them to tell you if this happens.

5. Restrict cell phone use and access. You can work with your carrier to restrict use to certain times of day and to restrict the number of texts. You can also restrict the ability to send or receive pictures and access to the Internet.

6. Set time limits on Internet use. Limit the number of hours per day and the times during the day when your children are allowed to surf. More often than not, cyberbullying occurs late at night.

7. Use an "Internet Use Contract" and a "Mobile Phone Use Contract" to create clear and understandable rules about what is acceptable and what is not. Make sure you and your children sign the contract and agree to the terms. Place the contracts in a visible place, such as near the computer. Do this when you first bring in technology, so the rules are set from the beginning. If you haven't already given them a contract, and kids abuse their privilege to use technology appropriately, contracts can still be instituted.

8. Place the computer in a family room or somewhere visible — or work out a plan with them that lets them know that technology is a privilege that comes with responsibility. You, as the parent, must have access to their technology. Explain to kids that while you won't need to check on them unless given a reason, they need to uphold appropriate behavior online or there will be consequences, such as loss of the technology and increased supervision.

9. Encourage your child to notice cyberbullying incidents and to report any incidents they come across. Make them feel safe so they report to you.

10. Use filtering and blocking software. Many software programs are now available that allow a range of possible solutions at low cost.

11. Teach kids how to protect themselves. Kids can make good choices if counseled on how to do so. They don't have to respond online; they can disengage; they can secure their content with appropriate privacy settings; and they can save harassing messages to share with teachers, counselors, parents, etc. Teach your children that they can talk to adults and get help. They don't have to be alone.

off-season. Families may need help resolving online exclusion and meanness issues, so camp involvement can also show your commitment to an immediate and consensual resolution to such problems — and, in turn, provide an opportunity to be in touch with parents in a meaningful way 365 days a year.

5. Beyond Discipline
Restitution and/or apologies are needed if a camp member is victimized by bullying online. Your camp must send a message that consequences are forthcoming if cyberbullying or hurtful behavior does not cease. Consequences can include: "probation" during camp or "suspension" from camp.

6. Serious Cyberbullying
If your campers or staff members are involved in serious situations such as threats, stalking, and the transmission of sexting pictures that have potential criminal implications, call law enforcement immediately. You don't want these issues to escalate and lead to consequences that leave you at risk. Document your efforts to get help from others, if you feel the situation is threatening.

7. Designate a "Camp Internet Safety Patrol"
Have a single person or group of staff involved in monitoring the technology arena of camp. This provides an opportunity for you to take a leadership role in camp Internet safety. Find savvy tech personnel who can be trusted to manage this role in a way that makes it clear to other staff, campers, and parents that cyberbullying will not be tolerated.

8. Documentation
Documentation of all correspondence and your efforts to manage a problematic situation is your best protection from a future problem. Retain all records of Internet use between campers. This prevents denials by creating objective evidence of situations that arise.

9. Role Model Appropriate Behavior
Make examples of those staff members who maintain positive, respectful interactions offline and online all year long.

10. Parent Partnerships
Working with parents is needed to help defuse cyberbullying situations that do not desist on their own. Encourage quick reporting, and encourage parental