



# 21. ONLINE BEHAVIOR AND CYBERBULLYING

## RATIONALE

The purpose of this lesson is for students to reflect on their own technology experience and differentiate between mean digital behavior and cyberbullying. Tweens and teens spend a lot of time using technology, much of it positive, but it can move into cyberbullying and other online mean behavior. Students will have the opportunity to understand their own personal technology use, understand how technology negatively and positively impacts relationships and analyze scenarios that involve mean online behavior and cyberbullying.

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will reflect on their personal technology use.
- Students will explore teens' use of technology and how it impacts relationships.
- Students will continue to reflect on what bullying is and is not.
- Students will differentiate between cyberbullying and mean behavior and analyze scenarios.

## WHAT'S NEEDED

**Handouts and Resources:** *Teens, Technology and Friendships Report Summary* (Pew Research Center, Washington DC (August, 2015), [www.pewinternet.org/2015/08/06/teens-technology-and-friendships/](http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/08/06/teens-technology-and-friendships/)); *Scenario Worksheet* and *Navigating a Digital World: Tips for Youth* (one of each for each student); #JustStandUp video (2016, 2 mins., Hampton Creek, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=p9i2RQ5PxaA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p9i2RQ5PxaA))

**Other Material:** *My Technology Use* (optional)

**Advance Preparation:** Print the *Teens, Technology and Friendships Report Summary* and distribute to each student to read as a homework assignment the night before so students are prepared to discuss it. Remind them to bring the report summary with them to class.

### TIME

45 minutes

### COMMON CORE STANDARDS

Reading, Speaking and Listening, Language

### STRATEGIES AND SKILLS

large and small group discussion, turn and talk

### KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

cyberbullying, imply, social media

## PROCEDURES



### ALTERNATIVE

Use the *My Technology Use* handout as an alternative to the standing up strategy to have more privacy if you think that is needed.

1. Begin the lesson by doing a brief survey about students' technology use.  
 You will read each of the statements below and students will note which statements are true for them (during the past week) by standing up and if the statement is not true for them, they will remain seated.
2. Read each statement one at a time and have students stand up if the statement is true for them during the past week. Allow a few seconds for standing up and then have everyone sit back down.
  - I spent more than two hours at one time on a social networking site like Instagram, Twitter or Snapchat.
  - I spent more than an hour at one time texting with a friend.
  - I watched a video on YouTube.
  - I participated in a group texting chat.
  - I made a new friend through an online game.
  - I unfriended, unfollowed or blocked someone I used to be friends with.
  - I sent or received a picture of someone without their permission.
  - I took a screen shot of a private text conversation and sent it to someone.
  - I received or sent, or know someone who received or sent, a hurtful, mean or hate motivated text or text message.
  - I felt threatened or know someone else who has felt threatened, by something online.
  - I was supportive to someone who experienced cyberbullying.
3. After going through all the statements, have students turn and talk with a person sitting near them and share what they experienced as they stood up/sat down or what they recorded on their sheets.
4. Engage students in a class discussion by asking the questions below:
  - Were you surprised by how many times you or others stood up (or made a check mark)?
  - How do you feel about your use of technology?
  - What's positive about being so connected digitally?
  - What's difficult or challenging about being so connected digitally?
5. Explain to students they will now discuss the *Teens, Technology and Friendships* Report Summary they read for homework. Engage students in a class discussion by asking the following questions:
  - What did you learn that you didn't know before?
  - What was surprising in the report?
  - What did you already know about teens, technology and friendship?
  - What about this report can you relate to?



### NOTE 5

If students haven't read the report summary, give them 10–15 minutes to read the report silently.

- What is something in the report that does not resonate with your experience?
6. Explain to students that there are both positive and negative things about teens and technology use. Ask: *What are some positive things you have seen or experienced using technology?* Then ask: *What are some negative and/or mean things you have seen involving technology?*
  7. Ask students if they remember the definition of bullying from the previous lesson and apply that to cyberbullying. Define **cyberbullying** as the intentional and repeated mistreatment of others through the use of technology, such as computers, cell phones and other electronic devices.
  8. Ask students: *What are some of the differences between mean behavior and cyberbullying?*
  9. Show the 2-minute video *#JustStandUp*.
  10. Engage students in a discussion by asking the following questions:
    - What happens in the video?
    - How does cyberbullying impact the girl?
    - What behavior did you observe among the other young people?
    - What do you think motivated the person who engaged in ally behavior (the girl in the top left corner) to take action?
    - Do you think her actions were effective? Why or why not?
    - Can you relate to anyone in the video? If so, who and why?
    - What are your reactions to the video?
  11. After the discussion, explain that the video was produced as part of a hashtag campaign to raise awareness about the harmful effects of cyberbullying and to encourage young people to stand up against it.
  12. Explain to students that they will now have the opportunity to explore cyberbullying and mean online behavior. Divide students into groups of 4–5 students each. Explain that they will be given three scenarios and they will discuss them as a group and answer a few questions about them using the *Scenario Worksheet* handout. They will discuss the scenario and then (1) determine if it is mean behavior or cyberbullying, (2) identify the reasons for the behavior, (3) discuss the impact of the behavior and (4) come up with ideas about what could have been done or could be in the future. Give students 10–15 minutes for this task.
  13. After students discuss the scenarios in their small groups, have them share in the larger group what they came up with for each scenario. Discuss one scenario at a time, first asking whether it was cyberbullying or mean behavior and why and then going through the other questions and having them share their responses.
  14.  Ask students: *What can we do to be safe and responsible with our technology use?* Brainstorm a list and then distribute the *Navigating a*



**FLIPPED  
CLASSROOM IDEA**

Make a short video of you reading aloud some of the key points from the *Navigating a Digital World: Tips for Youth* handout.

*Digital World: Tips for Youth* handout to each student. Read aloud and engage students in a brief discussion by asking the following questions:

- Do these make sense for you?
- Which of these have you used?
- Which of these will you try to use in the future?
- Are there any other strategies that you would add? Please explain.

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Have students take one point from the *Navigating a Digital World: Tips for Youth* handout and create a poster about it, using the language itself or a slogan that is catchy, and creating an illustration that goes along with it. As a class, think together how these posters may be useful, either gaining permission to hang them around the school building or having an information assembly about Internet safety strategies.
- Use some of the questions from the *Teens, Technology and Friendship Report* and have students create a survey for the school that has students respond to some of the same questions and then use the data to compare their school to the United States as a whole.

# MY TECHNOLOGY USE

Please check *yes* if you have done this in the past week and *no* if you have not.

1. I spent more than two hours at one time on a social networking site like Instagram, Twitter or Snapchat.  Yes  No
2. I spent more than an hour at one time texting with a friend.  Yes  No
3. I watched a video on YouTube.  Yes  No
4. I participated in a group texting chat.  Yes  No
5. I made a new friend through an online game.  Yes  No
6. I unfriended, unfollowed or blocked someone I used to be friends with.  Yes  No
7. I sent or received a picture of someone without their permission.  Yes  No
8. I took a screen shot of a private text conversation and sent it to someone.  Yes  No
9. I received or sent, or know someone who received or sent, a hurtful, mean or hate motivated text or text message.  Yes  No
10. I felt threatened or know someone else who has felt threatened, by something online.  Yes  No
11. I was supportive to someone who experienced cyberbullying.  Yes  No

# SCENARIO WORKSHEET

**Scenario 1:** Every time Hayley posts a picture on Instagram, a girl named Jessica—who has many more friends and followers than Hayley—writes a sarcastic or nasty comment. Yesterday Hayley posted a picture of herself at the beach and Jessica wrote, “OMG, you’re so pale. Is that why you went to the beach?”

Is this cyberbullying or mean behavior? Why?

Why do you think Jessica is doing that?

How do you think Hayley feels?

What should Hayley do?

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**Scenario 2:** A group of five friends participate regularly on a group chat. Three of them went shopping together the day before and the other two are mad about it because they weren’t invited. They start arguing with each other, calling each other names on the group chat. Jasmine, one of the three friends who didn’t get invited, takes a screen shot of the text argument and sends it to her other friends.

Is this cyberbullying or mean behavior? Why?

Why do you think Jasmine sent the screen shot to her other friends?

How do you think all of the friends in this scenario feel?

What should they all do?

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**Scenario 3:** Brandon and Jose are friends online—they “met” through a video game they play together. They live near each other but have some mutual friends. Jose has suggested they get together which made Brandon uncomfortable and he has started accusing Jose of being gay. Brandon has a picture that Jose sent to him being goofy that he sent around to a bunch of their mutual friends and he keeps implying on Snapchat that Jose is gay.

Is this cyberbullying or is it mean behavior? Why?

Why do you think Brandon is doing that?

How do you think Jose feels?

What should Jose do?



# NAVIGATING A DIGITAL WORLD

## Tips for Youth



### Before going online...

#### Set Guidelines

Make some rules together with your family before you go online, like the time of day and length of time you can use technology, and sites and apps you are allowed to use. Don't bend the rules or use unapproved apps without their permission.

#### Limit Electronic Use

Be self-aware of how often you use your phone, computer and other electronic devices. Make sure you are keeping a healthy balance between digital and in-person activities.

#### Consider What It Means to Be Responsible Online

Keep in mind that no digital message is completely private, including texts, private/direct messages, etc. Others may be watching your online activity, and law enforcement can recover all messages—even if you deleted them. Using technology to embarrass, threaten, harass or hurt others is irresponsible and can have serious consequences.

#### Understand Digital Behavior

Be aware that many apps, social media sites and cell service providers have rules about behavior. If you break them, your account—and every account in your home—could be disabled or canceled. Law enforcement may become involved in serious situations.

### While online...

#### Be Respectful of Others

Consider whether your actions contribute to creating a positive digital community. Don't write mean things to or about others, spread rumors/gossip or post things that might make others feel unsafe or uncomfortable, even if you mean it as a "joke." Never share others' *private* information, messages, photos or videos without their permission.

#### Be a Positive Role Model

Model positive digital behavior by writing supportive posts and messages and applauding positive content that affirms people and communicates respect. Don't follow along when others are behaving negatively and remember to press pause and think before hitting "send."

#### Engage in Respectful Dialogue

If you choose to engage in online discussions about controversial topics or issues, remember to always pause and think: *Is this how I want my ideas to be expressed online?* Focus your discussion on the ideas and not the individual(s) with whom you're communicating. It's okay to agree to disagree.

#### Don't Confide in People You Don't Know

It is very easy for people to lie about who they are online. Use caution when sharing personal information or discussing your life with someone you meet online.

## ☑ Never Meet a Stranger without Parental Approval

Don't arrange to meet up in-person with people you have met online without your family's permission.

## ☑ Maintain Privacy and Safeguard Security Information

Don't share personal or private information online—like your full name, school name, home address, phone number and personal photos—with people you don't know or trust. Use the privacy and security features for social media apps you use. Keep passwords and PINs to yourself, but share this information with your

parents/guardians. They'll trust you more if you're open with them and they can help you if a serious problem occurs.

## ☑ Be Cautious of Messages from Strangers

Don't open messages or attachments from people you don't know. In many instances it may be best to just delete them and even report them.

## ☑ Keep Electronics in View at All Times

Don't leave electronic devices out of sight because they can be hacked or stolen.

# What can I do if I experience CYBERBULLYING?

## ☑ Don't Respond

Don't respond to bullying or inappropriate messages, but save them as proof.

## ☑ Act as an Ally

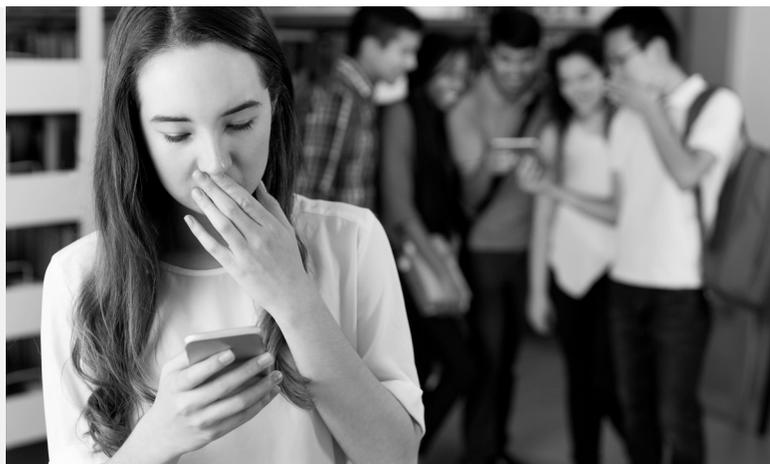
Support people who are targets of mean behavior and bullying by reaching out to the target and/or telling the aggressor to stop. Report what is happening through the site's anonymous reporting procedures or tell a trusted adult in your life what is happening.

## ☑ Communicate Issues with a Trusted Adult

Talk about problems you experience or witness online with an adult that you trust, like a family member, teacher or school counselor.

## ☑ Report Behavior/Incidents

Always report cyberbullying, hate messages, inappropriate sexual content and threats (including possible suicide attempts) to an adult family member, school staff or the police right away. Use ADL's online *Cyber-Safety Action Guide* to find out how to report inappropriate content to popular online companies, including reporting abuse to apps if available. For serious or continuing problems, file complaints with Internet Service Providers, social media companies, e-mail services, Web sites, cell phone companies, etc. They can find the offenders and take further action.



## ☑ Ask for Assistance in Reporting

If you don't feel comfortable reporting problems yourself, ask an adult to do it for you. Keeping the people close to you aware of what's going on and seeking their support helps when you are targeted.

## ☑ Stop and Reject Communication

Block the cell phone numbers and electronic communication (e.g., posts, texts, etc.) of people who are sending unwanted messages. Change your phone numbers, e-mail addresses, screen names and other online information, if necessary.

## ☑ Log Off!

When in doubt about what to do, log off or shut down and ask for help from a trusted adult.

### Resources for Youth, Parents/Families and Educators

[www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/bullying-and-cyberbullying-prevention-strategies](http://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/bullying-and-cyberbullying-prevention-strategies)