

Police

News Cyber Crime

Its time to get proactive by protecting ourselves

According to the NetAlert helpline (http://www.netalert.gov.au/about_netalert/helpline.html) cyber bullying is on the increase, although it is important to recognise that bullying is not confined to the younger generation and is apparent within our society as a whole. Young people are particularly vulnerable to online bullying due to various factors including; the increased amount of time they spend online and their access to mobile phones; advances in technology, lack of supervision and awareness; and their need to be constantly connected to their social network.

Tips to stay safe online

- When using social networking sites such as Facebook, Bebo, Myspace etc you should;
 - NEVER accept friend requests from, or engage in conversation with, STRANGERS.
 - Protect your profile page by increasing the security to limit all access to friends only.
 - Do not display your date of birth, address and other personal information on your profile page.
- Be aware that images and messages posted online become part of your digital footprint. They can be copied and forwarded with ease and may be impossible to remove or delete.
- Images and messages uploaded on the internet have the potential to last FOREVER.
- Be aware that images and messages uploaded on the net may be potentially damaging to a persons future.
- Be positive about what you say online.
- Be sensitive about what you say online.
- Be aware that what you say online can be construed in a manner other than what you intended.
- Think before you click. Are you angry, have you addressed it to the right person, can the message be misconstrued, do you have permission to forward the message or photo.
- DO NOT share passwords.
- Have separate passwords for each of your online accounts.
- Don't provoke any bullying by arguing or annoying someone.
- Protect yourself by blocking and reporting bullies.
- Don't respond to bullies.
- Save and keep a record of bullying messages.

- Change your contact details if you're being bullied.
- Tell someone if you being bullied and if the bullying conduct amounts to a criminal offence report to the Police.
- If you ARE chatting to someone you don't know and they make you feel uncomfortable, it's important to tell an adult. If they ask you to meet them somewhere, it is important that you don't go and you tell an adult immediately.

Tips for parents

- Children under 16 should be actively supervised online.
- Parents should consider setting up a separate account for their children on the family PC so that appropriate security settings can be installed to prevent access to certain sites.
- Parents should have clear rules about internet and mobile phone use.
- Social networking sites and instant messenger services are usually where most online bullying occurs.
- **You must be at least 13 years** of age to use social networking sites such as; Bebo, Facebook and Myspace.
- Parents should monitor which sites their children are accessing.
- The use of Webcams by children is not recommended unless strictly supervised.
- Parents should keep the lines of communication open and talk with their kids about internet safety and cyber crime.

Law

Online Bullying may be a criminal offence in the following circumstances;

- It if involves threatening conduct,
- If it amounts to harassment or intimidation,
- If it is used to stalk a person,
- If it is offensive or menacing.

Penalties

- Imprisonment of up to 10 years.
- Warnings
- Cautions





NSW Police Force
www.police.nsw.gov.au



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- Fines
- Charge
- Criminal and Police record