

Cyber Bullying: Worse Than Traditional Bullying

Abridged from [Scott Meech](#) May 01, 2007, *from Educators' eZine*

To most teachers, the general stereotype of a bully is an over-sized male student who uses verbal and/or physical abuse to torment the smaller or weaker child. This stereotype is perpetuated throughout pop culture.

But the Internet has changed that, as it has changed so much else. Now there is "Cyber Bullying," and although it is less physical than traditional forms of bullying, it can have more devastating and longer-lasting effects. It is rapidly becoming a major problem.

Cyber bullying is a very difficult form of bullying to prevent and to police. A major difference between cyber bullying and traditional bullying is the ability to bully without a face-to-face confrontation. Kids become emboldened by the false feeling of being anonymous and they say things they might not have said in person.

Authorities have greater difficulty in tracking down the bully because of problems in identification. Students are too often lax in their security with usernames and passwords so messages can be falsely written by individuals and misrepresented.(Beckerman & Nocero, 2003).

The long-term impact of cyber bullying is greater than with traditional bullying. Digital images, cell phones, and other electronic means can greatly increase the speed in which the bully's messages can spread. Instead of remaining a private matter or event known by only a small group, text or photographs can be communicated to a large audience in a short time" (Strom & Strom, 2005).

Perhaps the greatest long-term effect is the loss of the home as a safe-zone. Traditional bullying usually ended when a person was home, safe with their family. Cyber bullying enters into the home and is with the students at all times.

Students need to be educated on how to deal with cyber bullying as much as learning the traditional issues of drugs, sex, and nutrition. There are additional strategies that should be employed when dealing with cyber bullying. Never respond to a cyber bully. This just provides fodder and they now know that have actually made official contact. Protect your personal information with technology and change your online information including password and screen names on a regular basis.