

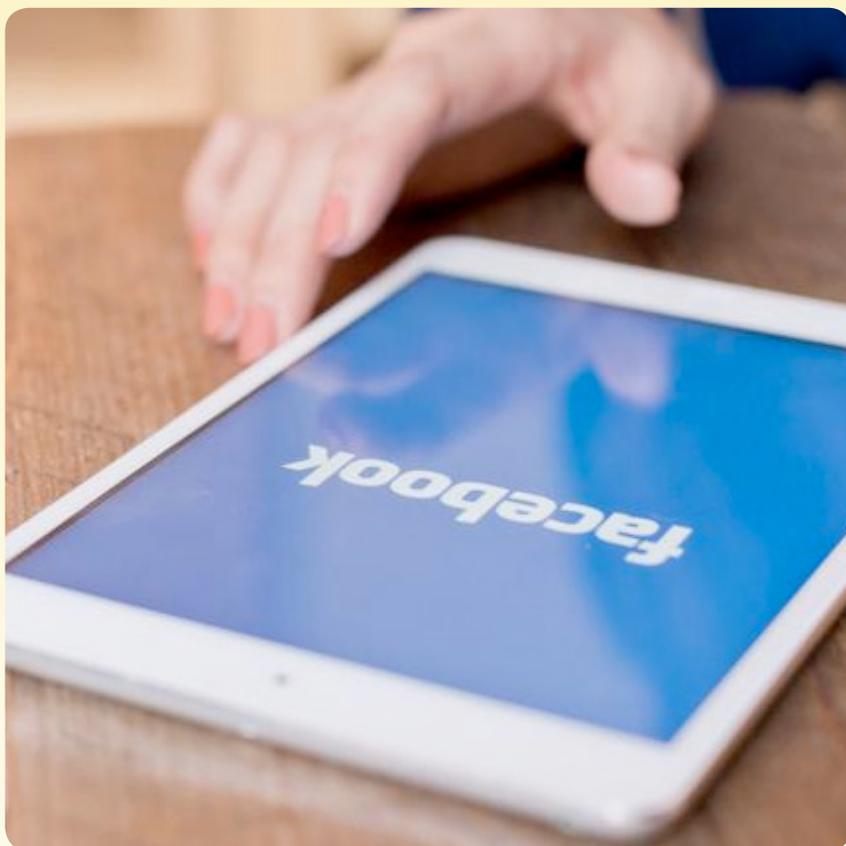
CYBERBULLYING

What is cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying means bullying a person using technology. Cyberbullying can take place in many different ways: sending mean or threatening messages by e-mail or text, posting hateful comments on social media, posting embarrassing pictures or videos, etc.

It is an act of violence that is unacceptable and can be punishable by law. Perpetrators who are 12 years old or over can be arrested, charged and sentenced. People can also become accomplices to the cyberbullying by being a passive bystander to it or by circulating the hateful content.

Unlike face-to-face bullying, cyberbullying can be relentless. It can reach a victim anywhere at anytime. It can spread quickly.



Consequences

The consequences for the person being bullied may be serious, even at a young age:

- Stress, anxiety, depression
- Social anxiety, loneliness, isolation
- Loss of self-esteem
- Absenteeism
- Suicidal thoughts, attempts, or suicide

If you know or believe that your child is **being cyberbullied**:

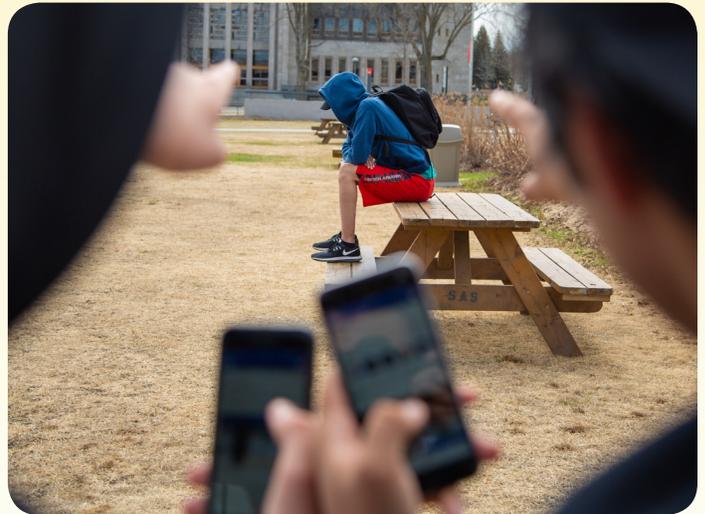
- Tell your child to immediately leave the platforms where the bullying is taking place and block the bullies from his social media accounts and contacts.
- Talk with your child and tell him that he can trust you and that he does not have to deal with the cyberbullies alone.
- Do not blame your child for not telling you sooner.
- Keep the evidence.
- Cyberbullying can be a crime. Report all crimes to the police. The Montreal police department gives good advice on dealing with cyberbullying: <https://www.spmv.qc.ca/en/Fiches/Details/Cyberbullying>

What you need to know if you think your child is involved in cyberbullying:

- Cyberbullying can give a sense of power, control, and importance over others.
- Some kids use cyberbullying as a way to fit in.
- Others become involved in cyberbullying for revenge, often because they have been a victim.
- Some are not aware that what they are doing is cyberbullying and think it is just a joke.
- Some cyberbullies believe that the victim deserves it.
- Cyberbullying may also be in response to peer pressure.

Signs your child may be involved in cyberbullying:

- Your child has a lot of social networking accounts on multiple sites, sometimes under a pseudonym.
- You notice aggressive behaviour while your child is texting.
- Your child quickly changes the screen when you walk in on him, he hides his messages, he refuses to loan his cell phone to you.
- Your child is spending time with friends who behave in ways that are mean to others.



Important: If your child is involved in cyberbullying, that does not mean he is a bad kid or that you are a bad parent!

What you can do if your child is involved in cyberbullying:

- Talk to your child about cyberbullying.
- Take action in the home to stop cyberbullying behaviour.
- Get outside help to deal with the cyberbullying.
- Do not get angry with your child. He also needs your support!

How old should a child be to have a social media presence?

Your child must be at least 13 years old to have a Facebook account. It is not as clear for other social media platforms. You have to make the right decision for your child.

RESOURCES

Kids Help Phone: www.kidshelpphone.ca

LigneParents: <http://ligneparents.com/> (in French only)

Get Cyber Safe: <https://www.getcybersafe.gc.ca>

PREVNet: <https://www.prevnet.ca/>