

## **HOW TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO CYBERBULLYING**

### **Preventing**

#### **1. Always respect others**

Remember that when you send a message to someone, you cannot see the impact that your words or images have on the other person. That is why it is important to always show respect to people and be careful what you say online and what images you send. What you think is a joke may really hurt someone else. Always ask permission before you take a photo of someone. If you receive a rude or nasty message about someone, or a picture, do not forward it. You could be assisting a bully, and even be accused of cyberbullying. You could also be breaking the law.

#### **2. Think before you send**

It is important to think before you send any images or text about yourself or someone else by email or mobile phone, and before you post information on a website. Remember that what you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever. Do you really want your teacher or future employer to see that photo? Think about the information you have in the public domain. Be careful who you give your mobile phone number to, and consider whether, for example, you should remain a member of a network where people are treating you badly.

#### **3. Treat your password like your toothbrush**

Don't let anyone know your passwords. It is a good idea to change passwords on a regular basis. Choosing hard-to-guess passwords with symbols or numbers will help stop people hacking into your account and pretending to be you. Remember only to give your mobile phone number or personal website address to trusted friends.

## Responding

### 4. Block the bully

Most responsible websites and services allow you to block or report someone who is behaving badly. Make use of these features; they are there for a reason! As a last resort, changing contact details, such as an instant messaging identity or a mobile phone number, can be an effective way of stopping unwanted contact.

### 5. Don't retaliate or reply!

Replying to bullying messages, particularly in anger, is just what the bully wants.

### 6. Save the evidence

Learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations. These will help you demonstrate to others what is happening, and can be used by your school, internet service provider, mobile phone company or even the police to investigate the cyberbullying. You can tell the other person that you are saving the conversations, which may put a bully off. (For more information on how to do this, see the 'BBB Locked' section of [www.websafecrackerz.com](http://www.websafecrackerz.com).)

### 7. Make sure you tell...

You have a right not to be harassed and bullied online. To get help, tell:

- \* an adult you trust, who can help you report the incident to the right place, or call a helpline like ChildLine on 0800 11 11 in confidence;
- \* the provider of the service (e.g. your mobile phone operator or social network provider) that you have been bullied; check providers' websites to see where to report incidents;
- \* your school: your teacher or the anti-bullying co-ordinator at your school can support you and can discipline the person bullying you;
- \* the police, if the cyberbullying is serious and a potential criminal offence has been committed.

**Finally, don't just stand there – if you see cyberbullying going on, support the victim and report the bullying.**

**How would you feel if no-one stood up for you?**