Did you know that 50% of US teens have experienced cyber-bullying? Almost the same number of kids has admitted to bullying others online. The facts tell a story that is a reality for our students—cyber-bullying is a prominent feature of growing up today. Since October is Bullying Prevention Awareness month, this week’s D50 Ed Tech Newsletter tackles cyber-bullying and provides educator’s resources to prevent bullying at their school. The following pages include: Fact sheet about cyberbullying, Parent Q&A sheets, Commonsense Media cyberbully lesson plans, and classroom posters for teachers. Let’s work together to make D50 a safe learning environment for all of our students!
Cyberbullying is Real!

• 32% of online teens say they have been targets of a range of annoying or potentially menacing online activities.
• 15% of teens overall say someone has forwarded or posted a private message they've written, 13% say someone has spread a rumor about them online, 13% say someone has sent them a threatening or aggressive message, and 6% say someone has posted embarrassing pictures of them online.
• 38% of online girls report being bullied, compared with 26% of online boys. In particular, 41% of older girls (15-17) report being bullied—more than any other age or gender group.
• 38% of social network users have been cyberbullied in some way, compared with 22% of online teens who do not use social networks.
• 20% of teens (12-17) say “people are mostly unkind” on online social networks. Younger teenage girls (12-13) are considerably more likely to say this. One in three (33%) younger teen girls who use social media say that people their age are “mostly unkind” to one another on social network sites.
• 15% of teens on social networks have experienced someone being mean or cruel to them on a social network site. There are no statistically significant differences by age, gender, race, socioeconomic status, or any other demographic characteristic.
• 13% of teens who use social media (12-17) say they have had an experience on a social network that made them feel nervous about going to school the next day. This is more common among younger teens (20%) than older teens (11%).
• 88% of social media-using teens say they have seen someone be mean or cruel to another person on a social network site. 12% of these say they witness this kind of behavior “frequently.”
• When teens see others being mean or cruel on social networks, frequently 55% see other people just ignoring what is going on, 27% see others defending the victim, 20% see others telling the offender to stop, and 19% see others join in on the harassment.
• 36% of teens who have witnessed others being cruel on social networks have looked to someone for advice about what to do.
• 67% of all teens say bullying and harassment happens more offline than online.
• 1 in 6 parents know their child has been bullied over social media. In over half of these cases, their child was a repeat victim. Over half of parents whose children have social media accounts are concerned about cyberbullying and more than three-quarters of parents have discussed the issue of online bullying with their children.
• 11% of middle school students were victims of cyberbullying in the past two months. Girls are more likely than boys to be victims or bully/victims.

Q&A: What's the definition of cyberbullying?

Because kids use technology so differently from parents, it's important to agree on a basic definition of cyberbullying.

Q. What is cyberbullying?

A. Cyberbullying is using digital communications (like the Internet and cell phones) to make another person feel angry, sad, or scared, usually again and again.

Many experts agree that intent and context are important, too. If the behavior was intentional, that's clearly cyberbullying and there should be consequences. But if a kid inadvertently hurts another kid, then he or she may just need to learn better online behavior.

Either way, if your kid feels bad as a result of someone else's online actions, then they may have been targeted and you should take it seriously. Kids' conversations can be rowdy and rude. But if they're not deliberately (and repeatedly) designed to inflict cruelty, and no one feels wronged, then chalk it up to juvenile antics. But keep an eye on it.

Q. How is cyberbullying different from bullying?

All bullying is extremely hurtful to the target and can make kids feel uncomfortable, embarrassed, helpless, sad, and angry. But cyberbullying is a particular form of bullying that often spreads faster and further to more people and can occur at any time of day or night.

Online messages can be more confusing or scarier than in-person communication because there are no face-to-face cues to help you understand people's intentions. Helping kids recognize bullying will help them learn to better deal with it.

- **Kids may use more hurtful and extreme language online than offline.** It's not uncommon for cyberbullies to say things like "I wish you would die," "You're ugly," and "Everybody hates you." If a kid said these things out loud in public, a teacher, a parent, or even another kid would probably overhear and intervene.
- **Cyberbullying can happen anytime, whereas regular bullying generally stops when kids go home.** Your kid could get a text, an email, or see a post -- or posts -- on Facebook at any moment.
- **Cyberbullying can be very public.** Posts can spread rapidly to a large, invisible audience because of the nature of how information travels online.
- **Cyberbullies sometimes act anonymously, whereas, with traditional bullying, it's often clear who the bully is.** Anonymity is a cloak that bullies hide behind. Not only does it encourage the bully to be more brazen, it makes him or her hard to trace.
- **In-person bullying can cause both physical and emotional harm.** Cyberbullying causes "only" emotional harm (though it can lead to physical bullying, as well).

[http://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/qa-how-is-cyberbullying-different-from-bullying](http://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/qa-how-is-cyberbullying-different-from-bullying)
Q&A: What are some examples of cyberbullying?

Kids should be able to recognize all of the different types of cyberbullying to be able to handle it if it happens.

**Q. Someone took a photo of my kid, wrote a silly caption, and texted it to the entire school. Does that count as cyberbullying -- and what are some other types of cyberbullying?**

**A.** Usually, cyberbullying is characterized by repeated cruelty. Whether this was a thoughtless, one-time prank or a more deliberate act of cruelty, it sounds as if your kid was humiliated over and over as every kid saw the picture. That's what matters most. Hopefully, the kids' parents were notified and your kid recovered.

Here are some other examples of behavior that could cross the line into cyberbullying:

- sending a mean email or IM to someone
- posting mean things about someone on a website
- making fun of someone in an online chat
- doing mean things to someone’s character in an online world
- creating a hostile environment in an online world or game
- impersonating someone online -- including creating a fake online profile
- repeatedly texting someone to the point of harassment
- directly threatening or intimidating someone online or in a text
- starting rumors or spreading gossip online
- stealing someone's password and logging into someone else's account
- taking a photo or video and sharing it without the subject's consent, knowing it might be embarrassing

http://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/qa-what-are-some-examples-of-cyberbulling
Q&A: What are some signs that your child is cyberbullying?

It's hard to admit that your kid might be hurting others. These signs could indicate a problem.

Q. My kid spends a lot of time on the computer and texting, but I don't have time to look over his shoulder constantly. He's gotten in trouble for bullying and I worry that he could be cyberbullying. What signs should I look for?

A. Kids with a history of face-to-face bullying could also start to cyberbully, so you're right to be concerned. Getting help for your son is important for his own well-being -- and that of others. These are some signs of cyberbullying behavior:

Behavior changes. Is his behavior especially concerning while he's using digital devices?

Slipping grades. If schoolwork is suffering, there could be a problem.

Moodiness. He's only happy when he's texting or on the computer — or he's only happy when he isn't doing it.

Habitual use. His phone is constantly buzzing and he's using the computer or texting at all hours.

Secretive or evasive behavior. He won't let you see anything he does online or on his phone; he switches screens quickly when you walk by.

Multiple accounts. Having several different online profiles for one social network (each with different user names and email addresses) isn't necessary, so it could be a red flag.

http://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/qa-when-should-you-get-involved-if-your-kid-is-cyberbullied
Q&A: When are kids "just being mean" online -- and when is it cyberbullying?

Messages that make people feel badly cross the line.

Q. The stuff I see on my kids' texts and posts -- like "you're so dumb," or "your taste in music sux" -- sometimes borders on inappropriate for my taste. But they think it's harmless. When does cruel behavior become cyberbullying?

Kids like to go online and use cell phones to email, chat, watch videos, send messages, play games, and do homework. But sometimes their language can get mean or scary. Because so much communication is done online, it's really important for kids to appreciate that their words can cause unintentional harm.

A person's intentions, as well as the context of their behavior, are important factors in determining whether cyberbullying occurred. Sometimes meanness is accidental, but when people use tools such as the Internet and cell phones to deliberately upset someone else over and over, that's cyberbullying.

Help kids develop empathy for others. Explain to your kids that the Internet is a community that only functions well when all of its citizens are responsible and respectful. Teach them to use communication tools responsibly and respectfully, and model good digital behavior yourself.

No matter what, if someone says something that makes your kid feel bad, he or she should flag the behavior and tell a trusted adult. If your kid hurts a friend, he or she should apologize (in person).

http://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/qa-when-are-kids-just-being-mean-online-and-when-is-it-cyberbullying
Q&A: When should you get involved if your kid is cyberbullied?

Don't rush in to fix things -- but don't ignore it, either.

Q. At what point should parents get involved if your kid is cyberbullied? And is there an age when kids are too old for their parents to intervene?

A. Many kids don't tell their parents that they were cyberbullied. So if your kid told you, or you found out some other way, it's probably time to get involved.

But proceed with caution. One of the reasons kids don't tell their parents that they were cyberbullied is because they're afraid their parents will intervene and make things worse. Your kid should be able to trust that you won't exacerbate the problem. That's easier with younger kids, whom you should step in and protect immediately. But with older kids, it can backfire if parents take over.

Another reason not to rush to a solution: Research indicates that peers sticking up for each other is a very effective defense against bullies. Bullies work by trying to isolate their victims. When kids rally around the target, it thwarts the bully. Of course you may not be able to wait for that to happen -- but do what you can.

Try this:

• Collect more facts by talking the situation through with your kid.
• Work out a plan of action together.
• Make sure you and your kid agree on what the outcome should be.
• Ramp up your efforts as the situation demands.

http://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/qa-when-should-you-get-involved-if-your-kid-is-cyberbullied
Q&A: How can parents empower kids to deal with cyberbullying constructively?

Help kids learn how to handle any situation they encounter online responsibly so they can keep their experiences positive.

Q. I know it’s important for kids to tell a trusted adult if they encounter cyberbullying. But I also want my kid to learn how to solve his own problems as he grows up.

A. You’re right that kids should report cyberbullying. But that doesn’t mean you should rush to solve the problem. Develop an action plan together -- one that allows him to take safe, age-appropriate steps to deal with the problem and that keeps you in the loop.

Teach younger kids the rules of STOP:

- **STOP** using the computer.
- **TELL** an adult you trust what happened.
- Get the **OK** by an adult before going back online or returning to the website where it happened.
- **PLAY** with other kids who don’t take part in cyberbullying.

Lastly, your kid may want to tell the bully how his actions made her feel, after she gets advice from an adult.

Give older kids a checklist:

- **Don’t respond or retaliate.** Cooling down is a good first step when you receive a mean message online. Take a deep breath, count backward from 10, or pause to think about what you’ll do next. That’ll give you time to think of the best way to handle the situation.
- **Tell a trusted adult.** Don’t deal with a cyberbullying situation alone. The person you tell should be someone who wants to hear what you have to say, and will help you work on a solution.
- **Block the bully so that he or she can’t send you messages online.** You can also just delete messages from bullies without reading them. When you deprive bullies of the attention they crave, they may lose interest.
- **If the bullying continues, save and print the messages.** These could be important evidence to show your parents or teachers if the bullying does not stop.
- **Talk to a friend.** When someone makes you feel bad, sometimes it can help to talk

http://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/qa-how-can-parents-empower-kids-to-deal-with-cyberbullying-constructively
Q&A: What should I do about cyberbullying in an online game?

Kids who play games online should know how to flag -- and report -- bad behavior.

Q. My kid plays an online game in which the other players use strong language and make threats. What should I do?

A. First, determine if it’s real cyberbullying or just heated trash talk. Here are some examples of game bullying that could cross the line into cyberbullying:

- **"Griefing."** Repeatedly harming a player's character or placing the player in harmful situations that make it hard to play the game. Often directed at new players by more experienced players.
- **"Trolling."** Intentionally trying to frustrate, anger, and offend other players. They may pretend to be someone they’re not, or say inflammatory things.
- **Invading privacy.** Using personal information (such as address, phone number, or even friends' names) in direct threats.
- **Stalking.** Everywhere your kid goes in a game, the bully is there -- often with private information on his or her targets.
- **Ganging up.** Enlisting other players to surround a player and intimidate and scare him.

If your kid is the target of hostile online play, he or she should block that player, flag the behavior, and report them. Nearly every reputable online game (and virtual worlds for younger kids) has community reporting tools that you can use to call out behavior that violates the site's terms of service (which bullying does).

Many online gaming sites also employ human moderators that help set the tone for the game experience. Some online monitors act like referees, and they also help new users find their way around a game. Make sure your kid knows the site's rules of behavior and how to use the reporting tools. It's every user's responsibility to make the Internet a good community.

http://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/qa-what-should-i-do-about-cyberbullying-in-an-online-game
Q&A: How do I monitor my kids' online use without "spying" on them?

Focus your efforts more on management than total control.

Q. My kid resists all of my attempts to keep an eye on her online behavior. So, how do I protect her when I don't really know what she's doing?

A. It's tough. Kids consider their online accounts and digital devices to be their own personal property. They can password-protect their phones, download apps you can't access, and refuse to friend you on Facebook.

Most kids use this stuff responsibly. And, having grown up in a world with unprecedented access to media and technology, many kids are incredibly sophisticated users. Still, their technical savvy often far exceeds their judgment. As parents, it's our responsibility to set rules, establish consequences for misuse.

There's no one-size-fits all solution for how to supervise kids' online exploits because every kid is different. When it comes to media and technology, you want to establish a relationship where your kid will come to you if something awkward, inappropriate, or uncomfortable happens online. Talking to her non-judgmentally -- and getting her to demonstrate -- the apps and sites she loves, will show her that your interest goes beyond policing her activities.

Mandatory measures — like demanding kids' passwords or insisting they friend you on Facebook — tend to backfire. Kids can get around any crackdowns you impose. If you're really having problems, then look into monitoring programs for their online accounts. And never forget that you're your kids' digital role model, so model the kind of behavior you want them to emulate.

http://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/qa-how-do-i-monitor-my-kids-online-use-without-spying-on-them
Q&A: How do you talk to a parent about their kid's bullying?

Assert yourself, but don't threaten or blame. A mutual goal is the best way to help kids in the long run.

Q. How do you have the conversation with another parent about their kid's bullying?

A. If your kid is bullied by someone he or she knows, you should probably talk it over -- face to face -- with the kid's parents. These steps can help you achieve a cooperative conflict resolution that will get everyone working together.

Schedule a meeting. While your impulse may be to confront the kid's parents immediately, it's better to set a time to meet and discuss the situation in a civilized manner.

Explain that you're there for your kid. Say that your kid reported the incident and you wanted to follow up. That takes the heat off of the parents and allows you both to discuss your kids' actions.

State your goal. Yes, you're angry and hurt, but your goal should go beyond blaming. You want to end the bullying and have your kids stop engaging in destructive behavior.

Let the other parent talk. Hear them out; they may have information that you don't know.

Bring the evidence. Show printouts or the devices on which the bullying occurred.

Work together. As much as possible, try to enlist the other parent so you can work as a united front.

Talk about next steps. Create a plan for how to proceed as well as a check-in schedule so you can see how things are progressing. Depending on whether things calm down or escalate, you may need to bring in a neutral party — a teacher, counselor, even a community leader — to deal with the problem and help you all move forward.

Lesson Plans from Commonsense Media (Elementary)

Lessons: Screen Out the Mean (K-2)

Students first read a scenario about mean online behavior. They then discuss what cyberbullying is, how it can make people feel, and how to respond. Then they use their knowledge to create a simple tip sheet on cyberbullying. Students recognize that it is essential to tell a trusted adult if something online makes them feel angry, sad, or scared.

Students will be able to ...

- analyze online behaviors that could be considered cyberbullying.
- explain how to deal with a cyberbullying situation.
- recognize the importance of engaging a trusted adult when they experience cyberbullying.


Lessons: What’s Cyberbullying? (3-5)

Students learn the definition of cyberbullying and help the teacher fill in a Venn diagram that compares in-person bullying with cyberbullying. They then read a story of a student who is cyberbullied, identifying the players involved and how the target might feel.

Students will be able to ...

- empathize with the targets of cyberbullying.
- recognize some of the key similarities and differences between in-person bullying and cyberbullying.
- identify strategies for dealing responsibly with cyberbullying.

Find lesson materials and instructions here: http://www.commonsensemedia.org/educators/lesson/whats-cyberbullying-3-5

Lessons: Group Think (3-5)

Students learn the definition of cyberbullying and help the teacher fill in a Venn diagram that compares in-person bullying with cyberbullying. They then read a story of a student who is cyberbullied, identifying the players involved and how the target might feel.

Students will be able to ...

- empathize with the targets of cyberbullying.
- recognize some of the key similarities and differences between in-person bullying and cyberbullying.
- identify strategies for dealing responsibly with cyberbullying.

Find lesson materials and instructions here: http://www.commonsensemedia.org/educators/lesson/whats-cyberbullying-3-5
Lesson Plans from Commonsense Media
(Middle School)

Lesson: Cyberbullying: Crossing the Line (6-8)
Students watch the video “Stacey’s Story – When Rumors Escalate,” a documentary-style story in which a girl reflects on what it was like to be the target of cyberbullying. Students then discuss the video and related case studies in the Cyberbullying: Crossing the Line Discussion Guide.

Students will be able to ...
• analyze online bullying behaviors that “cross the line.”
• learn about the various ways that students can be cyberbullied, including flaming, deceiving, and harassing.
• adopt the point of view of teens who have been cyberbullied, and offer solutions.

Find lesson materials and instructions here: http://www.commonsensemedia.org/educators/lesson/cyberbullying-crossing-line-6-8

Lesson: Cyberbullying: Be Upstanding (6-8)
Students reflect on what it means to be brave and to stand up for others. They fill out the Why Care? Student Handout, create a diagram of the players involved, and generate ideas about how bystanders can become upstanders. They then identify concrete solutions for dealing with cyberbullying situations.

Students will be able to ...
• reflect on what it means to be brave and stand up for others offline and online.
• learn to show empathy for those who have been cyberbullied.
• generate multiple solutions for helping others when cyberbullying occurs.

Find lesson materials and instructions here: http://www.commonsensemedia.org/educators/lesson/cyberbullying-be-upstanding-6-8
Lesson: Taking Perspectives on Cyberbullying (9-12)

Students begin by exploring a scenario from the TV show *Friday Night Lights*, in which a teen girl creates a hate website about another girl. Students take the perspective of different characters and brainstorm alternative decisions each character could have made. Finally, students discuss what actions they can take when they encounter online cruelty in their own lives, including how to be an upstander. (Note: The term “online cruelty” encompasses what is often referred to as “cyberbullying,” but it covers a broader range of behaviors and may speak more effectively to teens than the term cyberbullying. We use the term “online cruelty” throughout this lesson.)

*Students will be able to ...*

- articulate why it’s important to consider the perspectives of others in online (and offline) communities.
- consider the motivations and feelings of all the parties involved in an incident of online cruelty.
- draw conclusions about how they should respond when someone is the target of online cruelty.

Find lesson materials and instructions here: [http://www.commonsensemedia.org/educators/lesson/taking-perspectives-cyberbullying-11-12](http://www.commonsensemedia.org/educators/lesson/taking-perspectives-cyberbullying-11-12)

Lesson: Turn Down the Dial on Cyberbullying and Online Cruelty (9-12)

Students learn that cruelty can escalate quickly online because people are often anonymous and posts spread quickly. Students view the video, “*Ricardo’s Story – Making Fun of Others Online*,” and identify the factors that contribute to online cruelty. Students then watch the video, “*Stacey’s Story – When Rumors Escalate*,” identify the roles of various players in the video, and describe what upstanders can do to lessen the effects of this online cruelty. Students then create diagrams on their *Dial It Down Student Handout* to show how online cruelty can either escalate or de-escalate.

*Students will be able to ...*

- reflect on the factors that intensify online cruelty and cyberbullying.
- identify what targets and upstanders can do when online cruelty occurs.
- recognize their own role in escalating or de-escalating online cruelty.

ALL DIGITAL CITIZENS

PROTECT PRIVATE INFORMATION for themselves and others.

RESPECT THEMSELVES AND OTHERS in online communities.

STAY SAFE ONLINE by listening to their gut feelings.

STAND UP TO CYBERBULLYING when they see it happening.

BALANCE THE TIME they spend using media and doing other activities.

For information and resources about digital citizenship, visit www.commonsense.org/educators.
It’s Hard to be a Bully when there are Two... or Three... or More... who stand up to you.

- Find friends.
- Speak up for each other.
- Tell an adult you trust.
- Don’t let the bullies win.
Protect yourself from CYBERBULLYING!

- Hide your personal details:
  - real name
  - password and pin
  - social activities
  - family details
  - email address
  - home address
  - username
  - mobile/home phone number
  - personal photographs

- React appropriately to hurtful or nasty messages.
- Block the sender of hurtful or nasty messages.
- Set networking sites and profiles to ‘Private’.
- Save nasty links, texts, messages and emails.
- Never open messages from someone you don’t know.
- Always ask permission before revealing someone else’s details.
- Only give details to trusted friends you know in real life.
- Change your password often.

- Follow netiquette:
  - communicate clearly
  - use emoticons
  - be polite
Cyberbullying is...

deliberately hurting someone’s feelings using information and communication technology, such as:

- emails
- mobile phones
- online polling sites
- instant messaging
- online gaming sites
- chat rooms
- social networking sites
- blogs

- communicated quickly to a wide audience
- invasive
- often anonymous
- difficult to escape from or stop
- sometimes a criminal act
Dealing with BULLYING!

Report it.
Stay calm and in control.
Don’t show emotions like anger, fear and being upset.
Be assertive—speak clearly and firmly.
Show confidence—use positive body language.

Try to have a ready response.
Try to avoid the bully.
Try to make more friends by joining in different activities.
Ask the bully to stop what he or she is doing.
Tell the bully you don’t like what he or she is doing.

Try a strategy that may work for you:
Dealing with bullying!

- Ask someone for help.
- Stay with friends.
- Try not to look upset or scared.
- Keep away from bullies.

You can:
- ☑️ tell bullies you don’t like what they’re doing
- ☑️ tell the bully to stop
Are YOU a cyberbully?

Using a device or the internet to emotionally harm another student

"You're ugly and fat"

"No one likes you"

Mean text messages—meant to harm

Intentional and repeated

Using Facebook or Twitter to spread harmful rumors

Stealing passwords, setting up fake accounts
STOP BULLYING