

UNDERSTANDING CYBERBULLYING AND CYBERSTALKING!

In school, you don't want anyone to think of you as a "gossip" or someone who says bad things about other people. Everyone wants to be "nice." But online, you don't have to be nice if you don't want to be... anonymous 13 year old female

WHAT TO KNOW!

- ❖ Cyberbullying occurs when a child/adolescent is harassed, embarrassed, humiliated or digitally attacked via IMs, Internet sites, blogs, cell phones, etc. by a child/adolescent
- ❖ Cyberstalking refers to the digital stalking of an adult by another adult to threaten their physical safety, job, family, reputation, character and earnings
- ❖ Kids may be attacked directly by getting threatening text messages, having their passwords stolen and accounts changed, having hateful blog entries, and by sending threats, porn, and junk from their changed accounts
- ❖ Kids can be attacked indirectly by impostors using their accounts to attack others, by provoking others in hate chat rooms/sites, and by getting others to text bomb the victim
- ❖ Cyberstalkers use blogs, journals, message boards, and social networking sites to defame other adults and are almost always anonymous
- ❖ Cyberstalkers will vandalize a person's email/website, post unfavorable reviews of them, and disclose personal information including phone/Social Security numbers
- ❖ Adults mostly cyberstalk to gain a business advantage over a competitor or to avenge a bad romance or other personal relationship in which they feel unfairly treated
- ❖ A 2004 survey of 1500 students by I-Safe.Org. found 42% of kids were bullied while online, 35% had been threatened online, 21% have received threatening emails or messages, 58% had mean things said to them online, and 58% did not tell anyone
- ❖ Sexting which is becoming more frequent among teens refers to the act of sending sexually explicit messages or nude photos mostly between cell phones
- ❖ Victims of cyberbullying experience great stress and have run away from home, cheated on tests, skipped school, used drugs and alcohol, and committed suicide
- ❖ Victims of cyberstalking report lost wages, defamation, damaged credit reports, identity theft, and disclosure of personal, medical, and mental health information

WHAT TO DO!

- ❖ Get educated about cyberbullying/cyberstalking in order to be supportive of the victim
- ❖ Keep children's computers in view and discuss online activities with them
- ❖ If a child, inform the school and teachers; if an adult at work, inform HR
- ❖ Educate your child to never respond to a cyberbully, to tell a trusted adult, to block the sender, and to save messages and forward to ISP and cell provider
- ❖ Never give out personal information or agree to meet someone you do not know
- ❖ If personal information has been posted or direct threats made, notify local law enforcement agency and use wiresafety.org
- ❖ Avoid chat rooms, change email addresses, change passwords
- ❖ Refuse to forward cyberbullying messages and tell friends/colleagues to stop
- ❖ Notify the ISP and cell provider, file a complaint, and block sender where possible
- ❖ If you become depressed, anxious, and feel helpless due to being a victim of cyberbullying/cyberstalking, seek professional help to feel empowered

WE CAN HELP!

Call us at **954 755-2885** or email us at **DrKimmel@aol.com**.

Joel I. Kimmel, Ph.D. P.A. and Associates
5551 N University Drive
Coral Springs FL 33067