

What Should I Avoid Doing if my Child is Being Cyberbullied?

It can be difficult for a young person to come forward when they are being bullied; even to mom or dad. To build trust, try not to overreact. Don't forbid your child to use the Internet in the hope of eliminating the source of the problem: for your child, this is equal to social death and will leave her or him feeling even more victimized (not to mention the fact that an extreme reaction such as this will probably cause your child to avoid confiding in you again when feeling threatened).

Other things to avoid:

- Telling them to stop “tattling” or “snitching”
- Telling them they should solve the problem themselves
- Blaming them for being a target
- Minimizing or ignoring the situation

How Can I Learn More?

As much as possible, show an interest in your child's online life: where does he or she go online? What does he or she do? What is it about these online experiences that are so absorbing? If you're in the habit of sharing your own online experiences with your child, she or he will be more likely to talk to you when having a negative experience.

If you want to better understand your child's online experience, check out MediaSmarts' resources at: <http://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/digital-issues/cyberbullying>.

