

Do First

Do not retaliate. When people find out that something mean or nasty or untrue is being said about them, they often want to get back at whoever did it. Not only will that make things worse, but you will be giving the person who is cyber bullying what he or she wants—a reaction from you.

The people who are cyber bullying may think they have power over you because you can't see them, but they also can't see your reaction. People sometimes bully others to make them mad and upset, so don't let them have their way. If you don't try to get back at them, they might think it didn't matter to you and may leave you alone. But if you do try to get back at them, the students who are cyber bullying could use what you did as evidence against you.

Off your buddy list! If you've been bullied through IMing or a social-networking site such as MySpace or Xanga, remove the screen name from your list so the person won't bother you anymore. It's possible that they may start to bully you with another user name or in another way, however, so be on the lookout.

Figure out who it is. If you've been bullied through text messages on your cell phone, you can trace the number through your phone. If you know who it is, you might decide to avoid that person if it's someone at school. Or you might think of a possible response, which is different from retaliation.

If you are receiving threatening email messages, these can be traced through your Internet service provider. You can get an adult to help you with this. Social-networking sites also have ways to trace these kinds of messages. If you are receiving messages or posts that threaten your safety or someone else's safety, you need to talk to an adult right away.

Ignore it. Sometimes just ignoring it makes the people who are cyber bullying stop, because their actions are not having the effect they're hoping for. If someone sends one mean email, you can probably ignore it.

Respond after you think about it carefully. A response is different than retaliation. You might be hurt or angry or upset, but you don't want to give the people who are cyber bullying the satisfaction of knowing it. So if you choose to respond, make it clear and cool. Don't give the people who are bullying anything that could be used as bullying evidence against you.

Save the evidence! This is very important! Save anything that is harmful—even the messages you decide to ignore—in case more of them come later. If the bullying continues, you will need to have evidence before steps can be taken to make it stop. You can save it by printing it, copying and saving it, or just not erasing it.

Tell an adult! If you receive or are aware of threatening or disturbing messages, it is important that you tell an adult immediately. This could be an adult at school or an adult at home.

Here are some ways that you can tell an adult about bullying or cyber bullying:

1. In person (bring a friend with if it would be easier for you).
2. Over the phone.
3. In writing.
 - Use only facts (who, what, where, when, why).
 - State the impact it is having on the person being cyber bullied.
 - List anything you have done to try to help (if you haven't been able to help, say that too).
4. Explain what you would like to see happen and what you think would help.