CYBERBULLYING TIP SHEET

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using the Internet, Cell Phones or other electronic devices for the purpose of harassing, threatening, embarrassing, or otherwise hurting another person. Examples of cyberbullying include mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles. Cyberbullying can happen 24 hours a day 7 days a week and reach a kid even when he/she is alone, at home, any time of the day or night. Cyberbullying messages and images can be posed anonymously and distributed quickly to a very wide audience. It can be difficult and sometimes impossible to trace the source.

When Cyberbullying happens:

Steps to Take Immediately:

- DON'T RESPOND TO AND DON'T FORWARD CYBERBULLYING MESSAGES!
- DON'T DELETE THE MESSAGES/PICTURES/ETC.(Keep evidence, record the dates, times, and descriptions of instances when cyberbullying has occurred. Save and print screenshots, emails, and text messages.)
- REPORT Cyberbullying to Online Service Providers & the Social Media Site(s)
- Learn how to block users and change settings to control who can contact you

When should you report to Law Enforcement?

- Threats of violence
- Child pornography or sending sexually explicit messages or photos
- Taking a photo or video of someone in a place where he or she would expect privacy (eg. Bathroom/locker room)
- Stalking and Hate Crimes

Helpful Tips for Parents regarding Internet Safety and Cyberbullying Prevention:

- Establish rules and limits for online behavior and internet use. Have your child help come up with these rules – they'll be more inclined to follow them if they had a say in creating them!
- Establish a time each day that your child "**unplugs**" from all electronic devices – they need a break from the constant stimulus technology provides!
- Keep the computer/tablet/other electronic devices in common areas in the home. Don't allow your child to disappear behind closed doors with their devices.
- Learn how the various internet sites your child uses work. Become familiar with Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and other Apps your child uses. Make sure you are "friends", "follow", etc. your child on their various social media accounts to track what they are saying/doing.
- Contact your Internet and Cell Phone providers to learn about parental controls you can set on your child's devices to either block access to certain sites and/or alert you when you child accesses or does something on their device.
- Talk regularly and specifically with your child about online issues. Let them know they can come to you with anything that is upsetting, inappropriate or threatening in any way and that you'll help them.
- Don't overreact by blaming the victim. If your child is being bullied, be supportive and understanding. Find out how long it's been going on and promise them you will work together to find a solution.
- Don't underreact by telling them to "shrug it off" or just deal with it. The emotional pain of cyberbullying is very real and can have long lasting and devastating effects. Talk to your school's counselor and/or administration so they can keep an eye out for bullying during the school day.