Social Media Bullying

Signs that may point to Social Media Bullying:

Social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships.

Social bullying includes:

Leaving someone out on purpose

Telling other children not to be friends with someone

Spreading rumors about someone

Embarrassing someone in public

What Is Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets.

Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, Text, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content.

Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else.

It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation.

Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behavior.

The most common places where cyberbullying occurs are:

- Social Media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Tik Tok

- Text messaging and messaging apps on mobile or tablet devices

- Instant messaging, direct messaging, and online chatting over the internet

- Online forums, chat rooms, and message boards, such as Reddit

- Email

- Online gaming communities

Cyberbullying Tactics

It is important to understand how children are cyberbullied so it can be easily recognized and action can be taken.

Some of the most common cyberbullying tactics include:

Posting comments or rumors about someone online that are mean, hurtful, or embarrassing.

Threatening to hurt someone or telling them to kill themselves.

Posting a mean or hurtful picture or video.

Pretending to be someone else online in order to solicit or post personal or false information about someone else.

Posting mean or hateful names, comments, or content about any <u>race, religion, ethnicity,</u> or other personal characteristics online.

Creating a mean or hurtful webpage about someone.

Doxing, an abbreviated form of the word documents, is a form of online harassment used to exact revenge and to threaten and destroy the privacy of individuals by making their personal information public, including addresses, social security, credit card and phone numbers, links to social media accounts, and other private data.

Warning Signs a Child is Being Cyberbullied or is Cyberbullying Others

Many of the warning signs that cyberbullying is occurring happen around a child's use of their device.

Some of the warning signs that a child may be involved in cyberbullying are:

Noticeable increases or decreases in device use, including texting.

A child exhibits emotional responses (laughter, anger, upset) to what is happening on their device.

A child hides their screen or device when others are near, and avoids discussion about what they are doing on their device.

Social media accounts are shut down or new ones appear.

A child starts to avoid social situations, even those that were enjoyed in the past.

A child becomes withdrawn or depressed, or loses interest in people and activities

Prevent Cyberbullying

Be Aware of What Your Kids are Doing Online

A child may be involved in cyberbullying in several ways.

A child can be bullied, bully others, or witness bullying.

Parents, teachers, and other adults may not be aware of all the digital media and apps that a child is using.

The more digital platforms that a child uses, the more opportunities there are for being exposed to potential cyberbullying.

What to Do When Cyberbullying Happens

If you notice warning signs that a child may be involved in cyberbullying, take steps to investigate that child's digital behavior.

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying, and adults should take the same approach to address it:

support the child being bullied, address the bullying behavior of a participant, and show children that cyberbullying is taken seriously.

Because cyberbullying happens online, responding to it requires different approaches.

If you think that a child is involved in cyberbullying, there are several things you can do:

Notice – Recognize if there has been a change in mood or behavior and explore what the cause might be.

Try to determine if these changes happen around a child's use of their digital devices.

Talk – Ask questions to learn what is happening, how it started, and who is involved.

Document – Keep a record of what is happening and where.

Take screenshots of harmful posts or content if possible.

Most laws and policies note that bullying is a repeated behavior, so records help to document it.

Report – Most social media platforms and schools have clear policies and reporting processes.

If a classmate is cyberbullying, report it the school.

You can also contact app or social media platforms to report offensive content and have it removed.

If a child has received physical threats, or if a potential crime or illegal behavior is occurring, report it to the police.