The impact of cyberbullying on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing

– Martha Evans

Anti-Bullying Alliance

Anti-Bullying Alliance

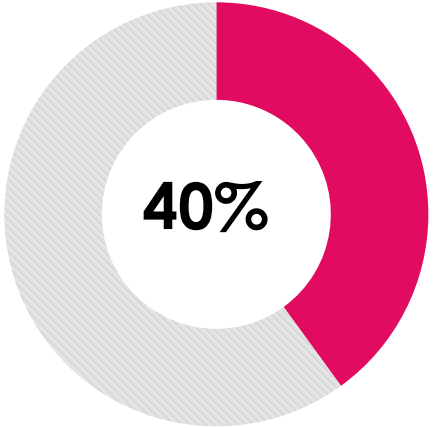
ncb
National Children's Bureau

Mission: To reduce bullying of all children and young people and improve responses to bullying by uniting the sector against bullying

- **Voice of young people**
- **Membership**
- **Research and evidence**
- **Listening and sharing**

1. Campaigns	2. Practice improvement	3. Policy
Anti-Bullying Week	Programme work	Consultation
Other campaigns	Training delivery	Influencing parliamentarians / government
Media and social media	Tools and reports	

True or false?



40% of 6-15 year olds have been bullied in the past year?

• True

Anti-Bullying Alliance

ncb
National Children's Bureau

True or false?

Children are five times more likely to be bullied online than at school?

• **False**

Anti-Bullying Alliance

ncb National Children's Bureau

True or false?

16,000

11-15 year olds are absent from school at any one time due to bullying?

• **True**

Anti-Bullying Alliance

ncb National Children's Bureau

What is bullying?

What is bullying?

The ABA (Anti-Bullying Alliance) defines bullying as:

The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological.

It can happen face-to-face or online.

Is it bullying?

Anti-Bullying Alliance

ncb
National Children's Bureau

Power Imbalance: two friends fall out

Insult

Insult

No imbalance of power

Stop it!

Insult

Insult

Insult

Imbalance of power through repetition, threat, etc.

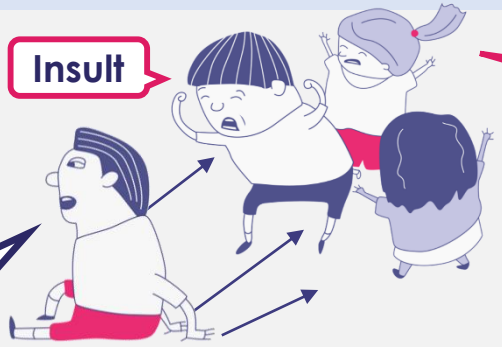
Stop it all of you! It's not true!!

Insult

Insult

Insult

Rumour spread



Clear imbalance of power

Anti-Bullying Alliance

ncb National Children's Bureau

What is cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is any form of bullying that is carried out through the use of electronic media devices, such as computers, laptops, smartphones, tablets, or gaming consoles

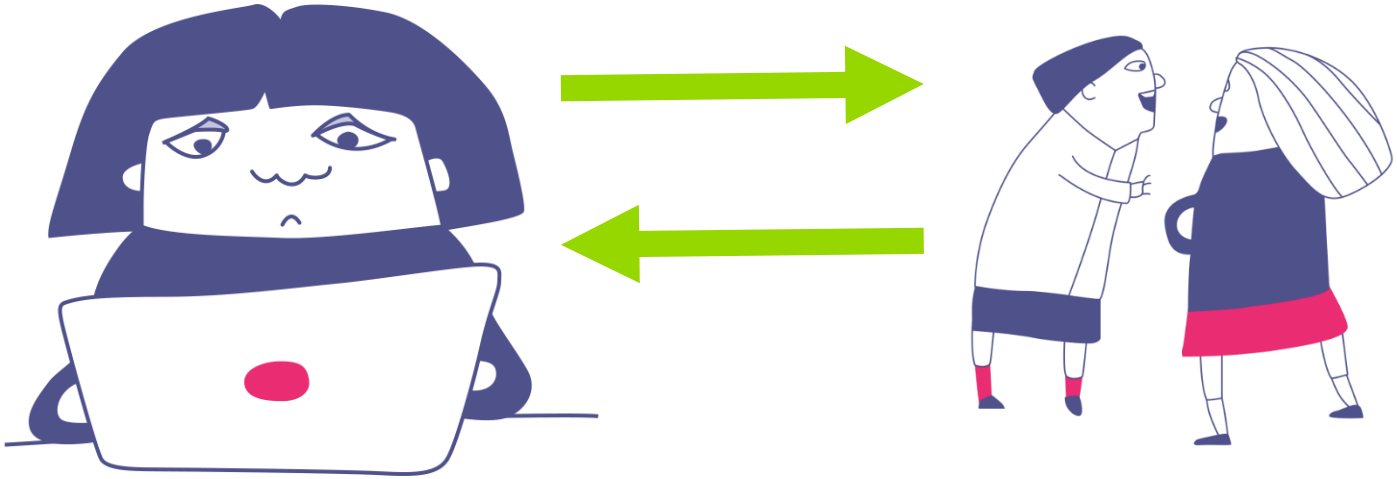
Anti-Bullying Alliance

ncb National Children's Bureau

Prevalence

- Varied data
- 24% of children and young people will experience some form of cyberbullying
- Same study said 17% will of CYP will cyberbully others
- Name calling is the most common type of cyberbullying

The relationship between cyberbullying and 'traditional' bullying



Anti-Bullying Alliance

ncb
National Children's Bureau

Cyberbullying vs. Traditional Bullying

A study of 3,000 adolescents in the UK found:

29% experienced bullying

Only 1% exclusively involved in cyberbullying

A different study found:

80% cyberbullying victims were also victims of traditional bullying

90% of children who cyberbullied others also perpetrated traditional bullying

10% children involved in cyberbullying have not experienced bullying

Anti-Bullying Alliance

ncb National Children's Bureau

Cyberbullying vs. Traditional Bullying

Cyberbullying is "another tool in the toolbox" for traditional bullying, but doesn't create many unique online victims.

Cyberbullying: a storm in a teacup? Dieter Wolke, Kirsty Lee, Alexa Guy, 2017

What are the key issues for young people?

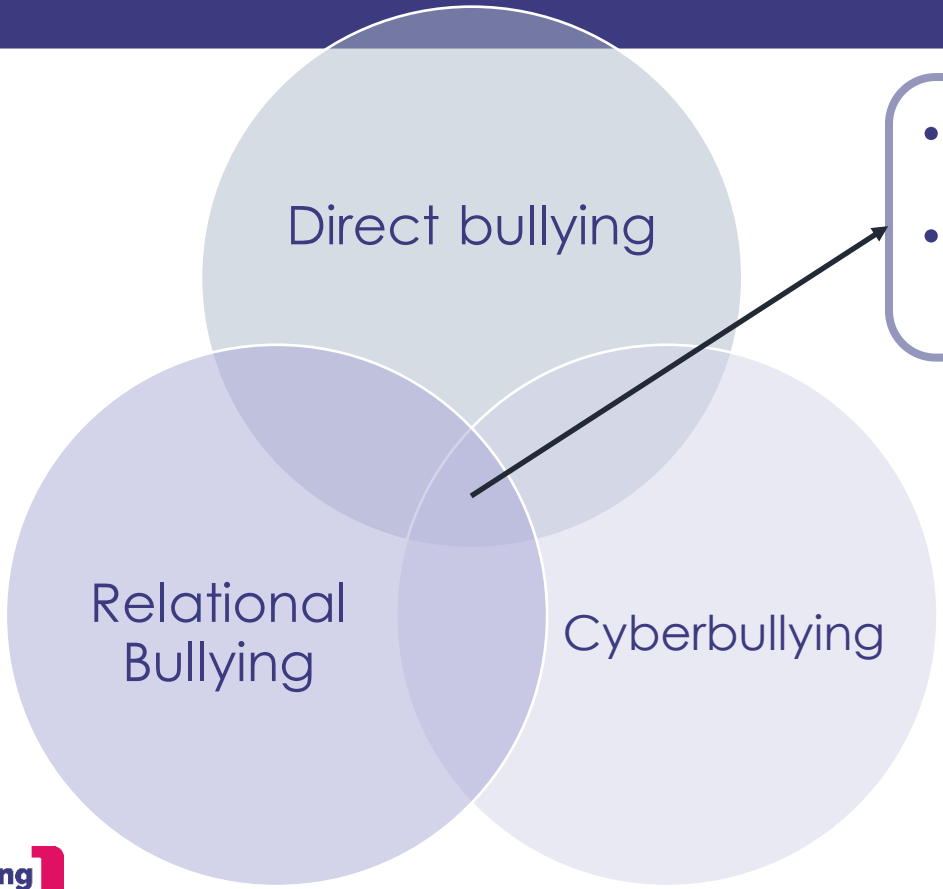
What makes it different?

- 24-7 nature
- Potential wider audience and long lasting impact
- Isolation
- Evidence
- Potential to hide your identity
- Degree of separation

I'd say it's worse [than face to face]. It's more pervasive and far more intrusive… The difference now is that bullies don't stop at the gates. They follow you into your homes.. And it's now got that constant feel to it.

ncb
National Children's Bureau

Impact of cyberbullying alongside other forms



- Lowest self-esteem
- Most emotional and behavioural problems

Anti-Bullying Alliance

ncb
National Children's Bureau

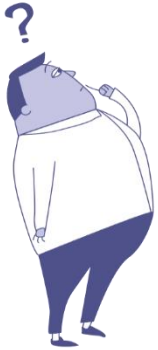
Cyberbullying and SEN/Disability

- Disabled children and those with SEN are more likely to:
  - Not be online
  - Experience cyberbullying
- Not taught about internet safety and cyberbullying as much as others.
- Discouraged from using the internet
- See disablist language online

Addressing online bullying: what does the law say?

Cyberbullying and the law

Is cyberbullying actually illegal?



- Cyberbullying is NOT a specific criminal offence in the UK
- Cyberbullying activities could be a criminal offence in the UK
- There are laws that can apply

Anti-Bullying Alliance

ncb National Children's Bureau

Cyberbullying and the law

Can I get involved in bullying out of school?

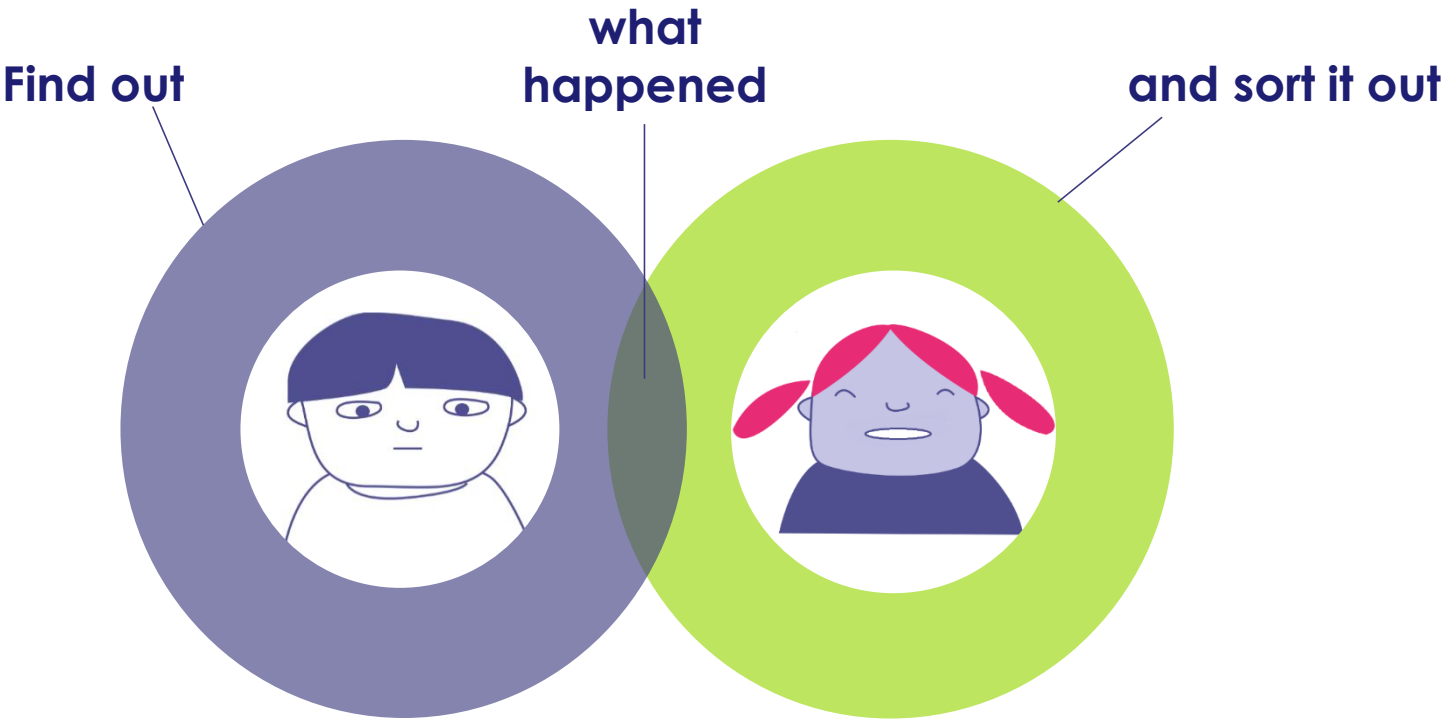
- Teachers and leaders in the school community have a duty of care for its members
- This may mean taking action on out of school activities.
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Head Teacher the power, 'to such an extent that is reasonable', to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are offsite.

Anti-Bullying Alliance

ncb National Children's Bureau

Addressing bullying behaviours

The traditional view



Anti-Bullying Alliance

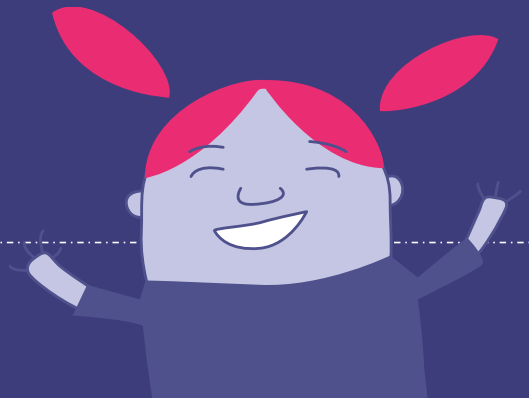
ncb National Children's Bureau

Bullying as a group behaviour

Anti-Bullying Alliance

ncb National Children's Bureau

What works?



What works?

Lower levels of cyberbullying:	Positive family communication, especially with a father
	Positive perceptions of the school environment
	Feelings of safety in young people's local neighbourhood

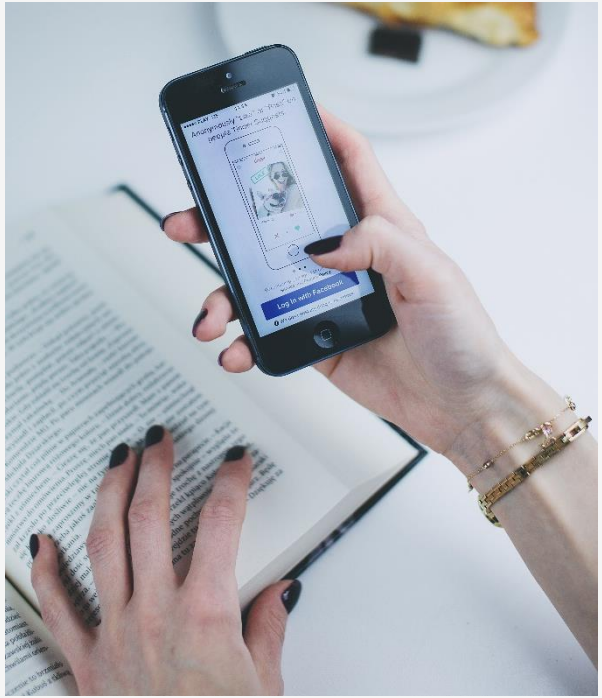
Cyberbullying → Influences

Anti-Bullying Alliance

ncb National Children's Bureau

Preventing Cyberbullying

- Encourage children to think before they post and be ‘upstanders’ online
- Promote the positive aspects of technology
- Cover online safety through the curriculum
- Provide information about cyberbullying in a variety of formats throughout school
- Ask young people about their experiences!



What can schools do?

- Use a whole-school approach
- Specifically refer to cyberbullying in your policies
- Be clear of the school's position
- Make sure the school community understand what cyberbullying is
- Make sure young people know how to report online

A collective effort by the whole school community

- Keep pace with new tech
- Part of regular curriculum learning, not a one-off workshop
- Policies on both traditional bullying (inc online)
- Professional development opportunities
- Students to understand about respect online
- Parent learning opportunities

Anti-Bullying Alliance

ncb National Children's Bureau

Thanks for participating.

If you need support on any aspect, please contact ABA

You can access the All Together programme here:

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/alltogether