

# CyberBullying

## Facebook launches safety tips as part of anti-bullying week

### Social networking site offers advice to prevent cyber-bullying

The theme of this year's National Anti-Bullying-Week is cyber-bullying. In fact, after name calling cyber-bullying is the most common type of bullying, as a recent study for the Department for Children, Schools and Families (UK) revealed.

It is an issue has to be taken seriously: 47% of 14-year-olds in the survey reported bullying. Its impact continues as kids get older: 41% of 15-year-olds and 29% of 16-year-olds report facing the problem.

Facebook is taking part in the campaign. Its director of European public policy, Richard Allan, said: "National Anti-Bullying Week is a really important campaign and Facebook takes the issue of cyber-bullying very seriously. It's a great opportunity for us to communicate to our users about safety. There's no place for bullies on Facebook."

Bebo has a site open for teenagers to talk about being bullied and some background tips for parents, while Facebook offers concrete advice to parents and children, listed below:

1. **Only accept friends you know** - In order to prevent harassment from strangers, only accept friend requests from people you know and report any messages or profiles that look suspicious. Facebook is based on a real name culture, and fake profiles are regularly disabled when they're reported to us.

Only confirmed friends can post to your Walls or contact you via Facebook Chat, so if you're worried that someone will make inappropriate posts or send offensive messages, you should ignore that person's request.

2. **Stop abusive behaviour** - A block prevents someone from viewing your profile. If you receive inappropriate or abusive communication, you can block the person by listing his or her name in the "Blocking People" box at the bottom of the privacy



page. In addition to blocking, if you receive abusive messages on your wall or via Facebook chat, you can remove the offender from your friend list.

3. **Report trouble directly to Facebook** - You can report an abusive user by clicking the "Report/Block person" link that appears at the bottom of that person's profile. Additionally, if you are informed of inappropriate behaviour on the part of someone you have already blocked, ask a friend to report that person on your behalf.

Reports are confidential and the person being reported does not know that they have been reported. After a report is submitted, Facebook will investigate the issue and make a determination as to whether or not the content should remain on the site based on its terms of use. A Facebook administrator looks into each report thoroughly in order to decide the appropriate course of action.

4. **Keep your information private** - Restrict your privacy settings on Facebook so that certain people can't access information like your Wall, photos, or profile. You can also customize your privacy settings if you feel uncomfortable about being found in searches or having your profile viewed publicly. Privacy on Facebook is controlled primarily from the privacy settings page, which can be accessed from the settings link at the top of any Facebook page.
5. **Don't react to bullies** – block, report or delete them - Rather than responding to a bully directly via inbox, a Wall post, or Facebook Chat, you can delete offensive posts from your Wall or messages from your Inbox and then use the "Blocking" or "Reporting" functions to resolve the issue safely.

To delete an offensive Wall post, hover over the post in question, click the "Remove" button that appears, and select "Delete" in the dialogue box.

To delete a message from Inbox, simply click the "Delete" button at the top of the message. Because only confirmed friends can post to a Wall or send a message through Chat, users who don't like the posts and Chat messages they're receiving should consider removing the people responsible from their friends list.

Adapted from: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/pda/2009/nov/16/bullying-facebook-bebo-national-anti-bullying-week>

