How to Protect Your Children from Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying can happen any time of the day.
Teenagers use cell phones and computers to harass others by sending malicious text messages, uploading embarrassing photos or videos on web and social media sites like Facebook, or taking over someone's social media profile by creating a new one.

Although it takes place in cyberspace, there are several things you can do at home to protect your children from being harassed online. These tips will help you get started.

Prevent Cyber Bullying
You can prevent cyber bullying by knowing what your kids are doing online and establishing certain rules on the use of cell phones and computers. This will help minimize the chances that your teenager will harass someone online or be a victim of cyber bullying.

Here are several tips to help protect your child:

- Install monitoring software on your kids' devices and tell your children that it's your responsibility as a parent to check their interactions when you consider it appropriate
- Teach your kids to abstain from sharing photos or videos that might cause them problems if other people see them, especially people who are not their friends
- "Follow" your kids on social media or ask another adult to do it on your behalf so you can stay up-to-date on what they are doing or saying
- Tell them it's important that they tell you if they are the victims of cyber bullying so that you can help them

You can start to put an end to cyber bullying by doing the following:

- Don't answer cyber bullying messages and ask your son or daughter to share with you all of the messages they've received
- Block the bully on social media and eliminate or block the bully's e-mail address
- Keep all evidence of cyber bullying, including text messages and harassing e-mails

Report Cyber Bullying
States have laws and policies against bullying, so be sure to contact your school if your child is being harassed online. Schools can take several measures to respond to specific cases.

Parents can also report bullies to the social media sites as bullies often violate the company's policies and terms and conditions. Parents can also contact the police. Cyber bullying is a crime when messages contain:
- Threats of violence
- Child pornography or photos with sexually explicit messages
- Images taken from places where the person expected privacy, like a bathroom Cyber bullying is also a crime when someone is stalking a victim or engaging in activities considered to be a hate crime.

For a presenter on Cyber Bullying, contact:
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