Cyberbullying in Schools:
What Parents Need to Know

What is Cyberbullying?

Bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers and tablets by one student towards another student or school staff, that hurts, harms, humiliates or intimidates, and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive, that creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment. It can happen on the school campus, on a school bus or a school event on or off campus, and can use a non-DOE network, if the conduct impacts the educational environment.

What does cyberbullying look like?

Harmful messages and posts are done deliberately and repeatedly and can include:

- Posting or sending messages that threaten or intimidate others.
- Spreading hurtful rumors online.
- Sharing someone's personal information without their permission.
- Posting embarrassing or insulting photos of someone else without their permission.

What are the signs of cyberbullying?

- Being upset during or after being online
- Avoiding school or group gatherings
- Changes in mood, behavior, sleep or appetite
- Suddenly wanting to stop using technology

- Being nervous or jumpy when getting a message, text or email
- Slipping grades or focus at school
- Withdrawal from friends and family

If cyberbullying impacts your child's education:

- Keep a record of the incidence, capture screenshots if possible.
- Notify the school in writing of the incident.
- You may need to call an IEP meeting if the incident has impacted their learning.

- Offer comfort and support to your child.
- Let your child know it's not their fault.
- Encourage your child to block the bully instead of responding.
- Take a short break from technology.

How to keep your kids safe online:

- Create a Family Media Agreement with your kids that you are willing to follow and enforce.
- Know what sites your child uses. Have copies of usernames and passwords and check in on them from time to time.

- Discuss what can be posted and shared online, and what should not.
- Check or update privacy settings.
- Ask them to talk to you if they are concerned about cyberbullying.