Cyberbullying: Prevention & Action Tips

Sometimes the Internet hurts. Children can lash out at and target others without being seen.

Such attacks with a wide audience can damage a reputation, hurt school performance and leave a child feeling ridiculed, isolated and depressed. In extreme cases, nasty emails, texts, tweets, images and postings on social media have led to suicide.

The best way to protect your child from bullies using 21st Century technology is to talk about what's being said about him or her that is out of bounds.

Ask your child:

- **Have you or anyone you know been harassed online in a hurtful way?**

- **When someone sends you a mean message about someone, what do you do?**

- **Are you using vulgar language aimed at a person or group of people on the Internet?**

- **Have you shared someone's secret online?**

Remind your child to:

- **Change their passwords frequently and never to disclose it to friends.**

- **Never share details or photos unsuitable for the front page of a newspaper.**

- **Never send a message pretending to be someone else.**

- **Always report any Internet abuses to you.**

- **Never retaliate online; it may lead to trouble and increase the possibility of your child becoming a bully, too. Tell the bully to stop or other measures will be pursued.**

Take action. Encourage your child to support others by not distributing harmful materials. Report the bullying behavior to the website or service. Locate the email contact on the home page and provide the links, messages or photos. Contact the offender's parents, school officials, the police or an attorney if the Internet abuse crosses the line into sexual, physical violence or criminal territory.