

Positive bystander tips

Step in

- Do something positive to help the target.
- Speak out against the cyberbullying behaviour—if you feel safe doing so. Make it clear you find the behaviour unacceptable and ask for any hurtful texts/posts/images to be deleted.
- Encourage the target to get help from a trusted adult. Offer to go with them to make the report and give them information on where to get help.

Help

- Help in a way you feel comfortable. If you don't feel comfortable telling the bully to stop, think about ways you can help behind the scenes, such as saving the evidence of the cyberbullying (like screenshots or photos) or helping them check their privacy settings.
- Make contact with the target (online or offline). Email/message the target to let them know you feel for them and you don't agree with the cyberbully's behaviour.
- If you are not sure how to handle the situation, there are professionals and useful websites that can help. Check out the eSafety website at esafety.gov.au for useful tips on dealing with cyberbullying. The Kids Helpline also offers free and confidential counselling services on cybersafety issues, including cyberbullying. Visit kidshelpline.com.au or call 1800 55 1800.

Act

- Don't encourage the cyberbully. Choose not to comment on, resend or respond to posts that may offend or upset someone else.
- Group action—check with friends if they feel the same about the situation. Discuss what you can do together as a group to help resolve it. This might include sending a group message to those involved in the cyberbullying to stop their behaviour, blocking the main people involved or approaching a trusted adult as a group.
- Make it clear to your friends that you will not join in any cyberbullying behaviour.

Report

- Tell an adult you can trust and has the authority to help. This may be a parent, teacher, school principal, school counsellor, a coach or family member.
- Report cyberbullying to the police if you feel someone's personal safety has been threatened.
- Report anonymously. If you want to protect your identity, think about reporting the situation anonymously. For example, type up a note about what is happening and leave it in the letter box or under the door of an adult who can help.
- Report to an administrator. If you see cyberbullying online, report it to the administrator of the social media website to ask for content to be removed. Contact the relevant mobile phone company in the case of bullying text messages or calls.

Empathy

- Show your concern and support. Put yourself in the target's position—you would want somebody to support you if you were being cyberbullied.
- Chat with the target directly and away from an audience. You don't have to mention the cyberbullying behaviour. Check in with the target and comfort them—this could be done in person or via a text or private message. Your support might reduce any feelings of isolation a target may have.