

When is cyberbullying actually cyberbullying?

Ages 11–14



THE CYBERSMILE FOUNDATION

When is cyberbullying actually cyberbullying?

OBJECTIVE

To be able to recognize when cyberbullying is happening.

OUTCOME

To recognize the difference between a helpful comment and a rude comment.

To recognize the difference between a joke and cyberbullying.

Your dress isn't like what you normally wear.

Your dress looks horrible on you.

You look so ugly in that dress.

Your dress doesn't look nice on you.

Your smile looks different.

Why are you trying to pout? You can't even do it properly!

You look better smiling and showing your teeth.

Are you trying to pout?

You look like you have put on a few pounds.

You look so fat!

You look lovely in that picture.

You look different from the last time I saw you.

10 MINS

11-14 YRS

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MATERIALS

Cut-outs of the characteristics from the 3 sections above for the first activity (you can use the accompanying slides), 3 sheets of paper and a pen for the second activity.

INSTRUCTIONS

ACTIVITY 1

1. Introduce the exercise to the children, and present the objectives and outcomes.
2. Arrange the children into pairs (they can also work individually).
3. Give them cut-outs of the characteristics for all three sections. Ensure you give them each section separately so they do not mix them up. Ask them to rank the characteristics from each section from the least rude comment to the most rude comment. See pages 8-10 for answers.
4. Go through the answers and ask the children how they would feel receiving these comments.
5. End the exercise by telling the children how important it is to be able to accurately recognize cyberbullying. Advise them to ask someone older than them if they are ever unsure.

ACTIVITY 2

6. Ask one child to volunteer to act as a cyber victim and then ask them to step outside of the room.
7. Choose 3 other children to each write the same mean comment in their own way on a sheet of paper. Ensure that only one of the comments has “lol” written at the end, as this one will appear as being the jokey comment, for example: “Fatty lol,” “You smell lol.” Then get the children to fold up their comments and hand them to you.
8. Tell the ‘cyber victim’ to come back inside and give them each of the papers to open (start with the one that says “lol” in it) and read them one-by-one.
9. Ask the ‘cyber victim’ to share with the other children how it made them feel to read each comment. Prompt the ‘cyber victim’ by using the following questions:
 - “Did you notice a difference in how you felt when reading the first comment from the second and the second from the last?”
 - “Do you think you can guess who wrote the comments?”
 - “Would you feel better knowing who wrote the comments and why?”
 - “Did you believe what the comments said?”
10. End the exercise by assuring the child who volunteered to be the cyber victim that the comments are not true. Make a point about how one comment can be taken as a joke, but receiving the same comment again and again can lead to cyberbullying especially if they get worse and make the receiver feel really upset. So therefore, the children should be careful how they phrase what they are saying so that the comment appears helpful and not rude.

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