



El Dorado County Sheriff Crime Analysis Unit – Crime Tips

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CYBER BULLYING

Cyber bullying poses a serious threat to our children, and we as leaders are spreading the word. New polls found that more than 13 million children in the United States, aged 6 to 17, are victims of cyber bullying. One-third of all teens and one-sixth of all pre-teens have had mean, threatening or embarrassing things written about them online. Two million-plus don't ever tell anyone - a teacher, a parent, a sibling, a friend. We want to help, here are some key steps you can take to reduce cyber bullying.

- ✧ Kids should tell an adult if they have been cyber bullied or know of other kids who have been cyber bullied. They should report to their parents, a teacher or the police any messages or postings that are mean, embarrassing or threatening to themselves or other students.
- ✧ Parents should look for signs that their child might be a victim of cyber bullying, including have nightmares, avoiding school, acting sad or withdrawn, or suddenly shown disinterest in computers or rapidly switching screens.
- ✧ Parents should discuss cyber bullying and bullying with their kids, encourage their kids to tell them if they have been bullied and let them know it is wrong to do it themselves. Parents should also discuss with their kids what kinds of Internet activities the kids enjoy.
- ✧ Emails, chats, text messages including instant messages and web pages sent or posted by bullies should be saved as evidence.
- ✧ Parents should instruct their kids: one, don't respond to bullying messages; two, if the messages continue, take a break and then reply strongly telling the sender to stop; three, block or filter all further messages; four, if necessary, change their email address, account, username or phone number.
- ✧ Kids should not give out ANY private information such as full names, addresses, phone numbers, personal identification numbers, passwords, school names or names of family members or friends. Kids should not say anything in a chat room or post anything to a web site that they would not want to be made public. Kids should use a screen name different from their email address.

- ✧ If children are cyber bullied, families should file complaints with the Internet service provider, Cell Phone Company or web site. Cyber bullying is typically a violation of the “terms of use” and violators are subject to adverse action.

For more information go to <http://www.fightcrime.org/cyberbullying/index.php>