

Could your child be facing Online Bullying?

Learn how to spot the signs, support your child, and take action.

What is Online Bullying?

Online bullying, sometimes called cyberbullying, happens when technology is used to deliberately hurt, embarrass, or threaten someone. It's more than just a few mean messages. **It can be ongoing, damaging, and invisible to adults.**

It might look like cruel texts, fake accounts spreading lies, or a game chat full of insults. For your child, it might feel impossible to escape, even in the safety of their room.

Need help? Visit our resource hub or support services



Other support services

Childline – 0800 1111 – childline.org.uk

The Mix – themix.org.uk

Ditch the Label – ditchthelabel.org

Report Harmful Content – reportharmfulcontent.com

Who's at risk?

Every child who uses a phone, tablet, or game console could be affected. Social media, messaging apps, and online gaming all create spaces where bullying can happen and where children can feel pressured to stay quiet.

Children who are shy, different, or going through changes like starting secondary school, may be more vulnerable. But even confident, outgoing kids can be targeted.

Signs to look out for

You know your child best. Trust your instincts if something seems off. Some signs include:

- Becoming withdrawn, anxious, or unusually quiet
- Avoiding devices or getting upset after using them
- Not wanting to go to school or social events
- Changes in sleep, appetite, or physical health
- Refusing to talk about their online life

These can be signs that your child is struggling but might not know how to ask for help.

What can parents do?

Start with open, judgement-free conversations. Make it clear you're a safe place. Ask things like:

"Has anyone ever said something online that made you feel uncomfortable or sad?"
"What would you do if you saw a friend being picked on online?"

Let them know that bullying is never their fault. They won't be in trouble for telling the truth. If your child is being bullied, save the evidence, block the abuser, report the incident, and involve school or online platforms.

Should I monitor my child's devices

It's natural to worry, but spying can damage trust. Younger children should be supervised online. Only monitor if you believe they're at real risk (e.g. unsafe contact or sexting).

Instead:

- Talk openly about their online activity.
- Reassure them they can come to you with concerns.
- Stay up to date with apps and trends.
- Agree clear rules together (e.g. no Wi-Fi at bedtime).
- Find more parent resources on our website.

You're not alone and neither are they

Online bullying can leave emotional scars but with your support, children can heal and grow in confidence.