



Adolescent Pregnancy  
Prevention Program

# Promoting Civility: Strategies to Address Cyberbullying

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Donna Golob and Jason Frederick, A Positive Approach to Teen Health

# Objectives

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By the end of this webinar, participants will be able to

- Describe the issue, prevalence, and outcomes associated with cyberbullying
- Identify at least two strategies for preventing cyberbullying
- Describe one way that cyberbullying prevention can be integrated into Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Programs

# Bullying: An Overview

# What Is Bullying?

## Uniform definition, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- Bullying is behavior among school-aged peers who are neither family nor in a dating relationship that
  - Is aggressive
  - Is in the context of a real or perceived power imbalance
  - Is, or has the potential to be, repeated

Source: Gladden, R.M., et. al (2014)

# Aggressive Behavior

- Different forms:
  - Physical
  - Verbal
  - Social/relational
- Different modes:
  - Direct
  - Indirect

JUST KIDDING



# Power Imbalance

- Real or perceived
- Any form of power:
  - Size/physical prowess
  - Social popularity
  - Access to information



# Repetition

- Potential to be repeated: one-time actions count!



# Definitions Vary

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- Perception matters!
- Someone can feel bullied even if their experience is not aligned to our own definition of bullying
- CDC's definition prioritizes the target; policies prioritize the aggressor

# Defining Cyberbullying

**Maureen Perkins**

**Public Health Analyst, Division of Child, Adolescent,  
and Family Health**

**Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB)**

**Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)**



# What Is Cyberbullying?

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- Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets
- Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, text, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content
- Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else; it can include sharing personal or private information about someone else to cause embarrassment or humiliation



# Concerns About Cyberbullying

- **Persistent:** Digital devices offer an ability to immediately and continuously communicate 24 hours a day, so it can be difficult for children experiencing cyberbullying to find relief.
- **Permanent:** Most information communicated electronically is permanent and public, if not reported and removed; a negative online reputation, including for those who bully, can impact college admissions, employment, and other areas of life
- **Hard to notice:** Because teachers and parents may not overhear or see cyberbullying taking place, it is harder to recognize



# Laws and Sanctions

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- All states have laws requiring schools to respond to bullying, but many states do not include cyberbullying under these laws or specify the role schools should play in responding to bullying that takes place outside of school
- Schools may act as required by law or in accordance with local or school policies that allow them to discipline or take other action
- Some states also have provisions to address bullying if it affects school performance



# Facts About Cyberbullying

# True or False?

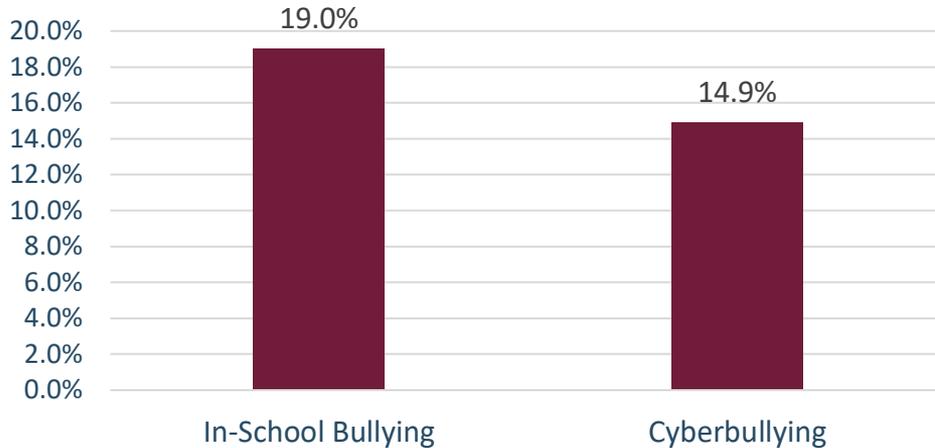
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- Cyberbullying is more prevalent than other forms of bullying

**FALSE**

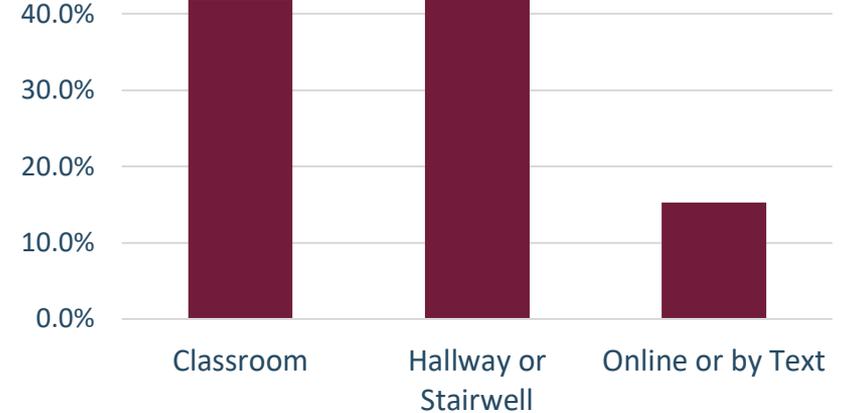
# Other Forms of Bullying Remain More Prevalent

Bullying among students in grades 9-12



Source: Kann, L. et. al (2018).

Of 12- to 18-year-olds reporting being bullied, percentage reporting bullying in certain contexts



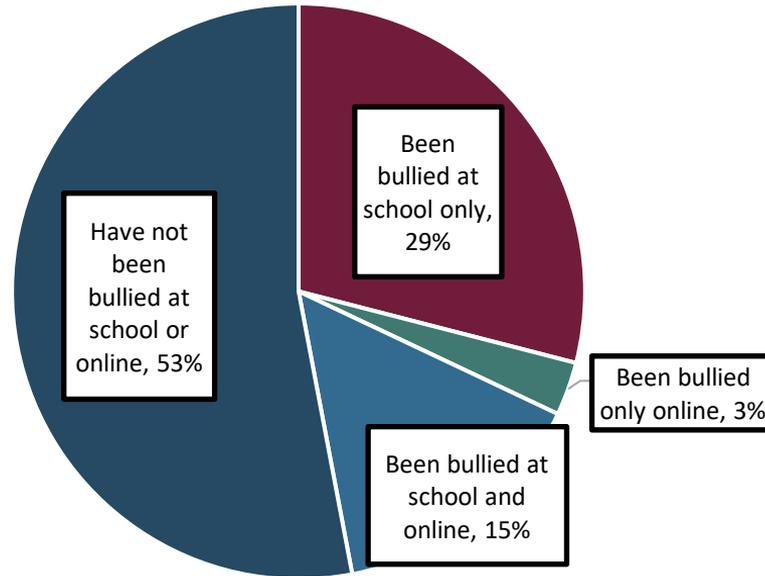
Source: U.S. Department of Education (2019)



# Bullying and Cyberbullying Overlap

## Been Bullied at School and Online

Nationally representative sample of 4,500 U.S. 12- to 17-year-olds



Source: Hinduja S. & Patchin, J.W. (2016).  
Cyberbullying Research Center  
[www.cyberbullying.org](http://www.cyberbullying.org)

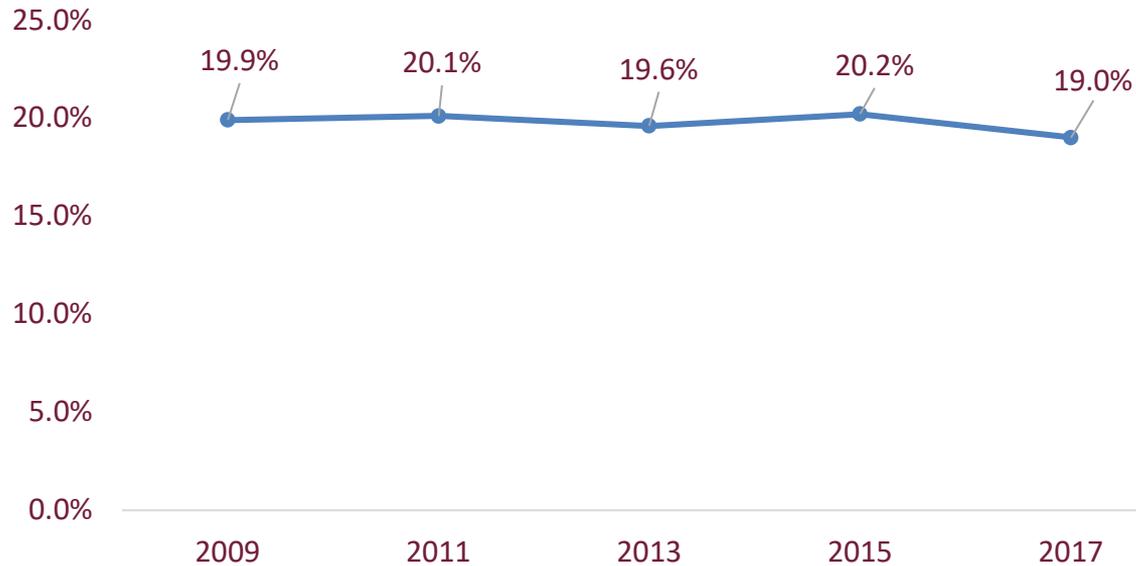
# True or False?

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- Rates of bullying (and cyberbullying) have increased over the last decade

**FALSE**

# Rates of Bullying are Stable



Source: Kann, L. et. al (2018).

# True or False?

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Cyberbullying is driving increasing rates of youth suicide

**FALSE**

Source: Temkin, D. (2017)

# Outcomes Associated with Cyberbullying

● Trouble sleeping, headaches, stomachaches, poor appetite

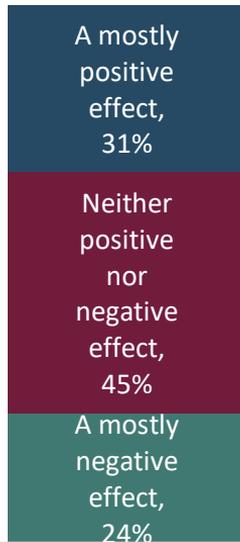
● Depression, anxiety, anger, fear, worry, suicidality

● Skipping school, getting in fights, bringing a weapon to school

● Substance abuse

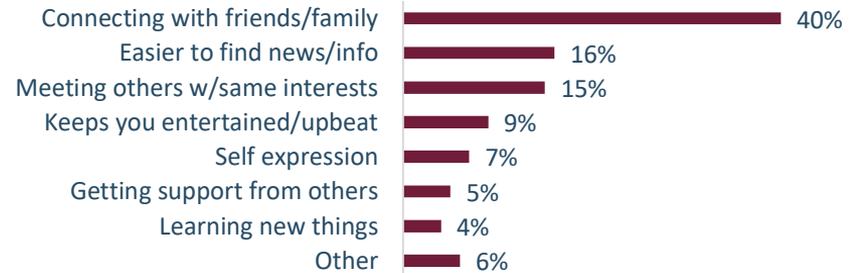
# It's Not All Bad News...

Percentage of U.S. teens who say social media has had \_\_\_ on people their own age

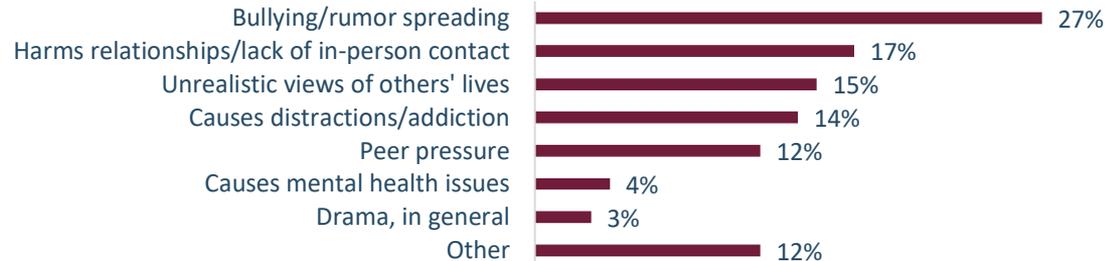


Source: Pew Research Center (2018).

Among those who said mostly positive, percentage who give these as the main reason



Among those who said mostly negative, percentage who give these as the main reason



# Preventing and Addressing Cyberbullying

**Maureen Perkins**

**Public Health Analyst, Division of Child, Adolescent,  
and Family Health**

**Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB)**

**Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)**



# Warning Signs

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- A child exhibits a noticeable increase or decrease in device use, including texting
- A child exhibits emotional responses (laughter, anger, upset) to what is happening on their device
- A child hides their screen or device when others are near and avoids discussion about what they are doing on their device
- Social media accounts are shut down or new ones appear
- A child starts to avoid social situations, even those that were enjoyed in the past
- A child becomes withdrawn or depressed or loses interest in people and activities

# What to Do When Cyberbullying Happens

- **Notice:** Recognize if there has been a change in mood or behavior and explore what the cause might be; try to determine if these changes happen around a child's use of their devices
- **Talk:** Ask questions to learn what is happening, how it started, and who is involved
- **Document:** Keep a record of what is happening and where and take screenshots of harmful posts or content if possible; most laws and policies note that bullying is a repeated behavior, so records help to document it



# What to Do When Cyberbullying Happens

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- **Report:** Most social media platforms and schools have clear policies and reporting processes
- **Support:** Peers, mentors, and trusted adults can sometimes intervene publicly to positively influence a situation where negative or hurtful content posts about a child

# What Can Parents Do?

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- Monitor a teen's social media sites, apps, and browsing history, if you are concerned that cyberbullying may be occurring
- Review or reset your child's phone location and privacy settings
- Follow or friend your teen on social media sites or have another trusted adult do so
- Stay up to date on the latest apps, social media platforms, and digital slang used by children and teens
- Know your child's user names and passwords for email and social media
- Establish rules about appropriate digital behavior, content, and apps



# What Can Educators Do?

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- If you think a child is being cyberbullied, speak to them privately to ask about it; they may also have proof on their digital devices
- If you believe a child is being cyberbullied, speak to a parent about it; serve as a facilitator between the child, parent, and the school if necessary
- To understand children's digital behavior and how it relates to cyberbullying, increase your digital awareness
- Develop activities that encourage self-reflection, asking children to identify and express what they think and feel and to consider the thoughts and feelings of others
- Model, reinforce, and reward positive behavior toward others
- Encourage peer involvement in prevention strategies



# Digital Citizenship Fact Sheet



- Digital citizenship is appropriate, responsible behavior when using technology
- When children learn positive online behaviors, social media can be used in productive ways

<https://www.stopbullying.gov/sites/default/files/2018-08/Digital-Citizenship-Factsheet.pdf>

# Cyberbullying Infographic

- A free, downloadable infographic with information and data on what cyberbullying is, how kids are cyberbullied, how cyberbullying is different from other types of bullying, and how to prevent and respond to cyberbullying



[Download Infographic - PDF](#)

[Download Infographic in Spanish - PDF](#)

# Stopbullying.gov Training Center

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## Bullying Prevention Online Training Course

- Earn continuing education credits and learn how to take a public health approach to bullying prevention

## Bullying Prevention Self-Assessment and Change Package

- Determine where your organization's efforts are in relation to best practices in bullying prevention and select evidence-informed and evidence-based strategies to support prevention efforts

## Bullying Prevention Training Module

- Lead bullying prevention efforts in your community with this research-based resource

## Community Action Toolkit

- Discover key resources for planning, executing, and assessing a community event



# Approaches to Preventing Cyberbullying

# Current Approaches

- Most bullying prevention programs have not been evaluated
- Those that have been evaluated do not show strong efficacy, especially in the United States
- Few programs have an explicit focus on cyberbullying
- Programs that embrace broader, skill-based approaches show promise

# Current Approaches

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- Current policy approaches take a discipline/justice approach
  - Focus is on proving someone engaged in bullying behavior to justify discipline
- Trauma-informed approaches address the needs of youth regardless if bullying can be proven
  - Focus is on restoring a harmed youth's sense of safety

# Implications for Adulthood Preparation

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- Parent-child communication
- Healthy life skills
- Healthy relationships
- Educational and career success

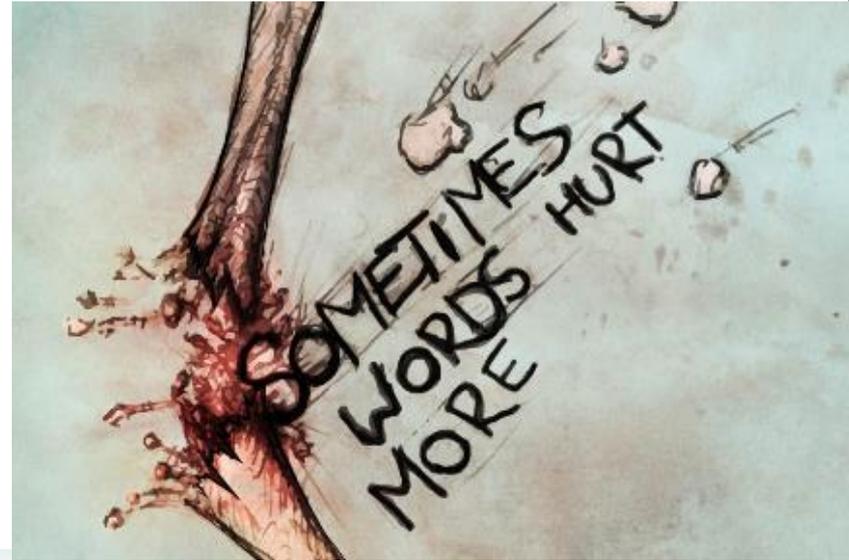
# A Grantee Perspective: A Positive Approach to Teen Health (PATH)

# PATH's Experience

- PATH, Inc. added the topic of cyberbullying to our Positive Potential curricula and overall programming in 2016
- Both students and school faculty have given us positive feedback
- Evaluation findings of the Positive Potential program have shown a significant decline in bullying and cyberbullying
- Findings showed a 4.6% decrease in these behaviors compared to those who did not participate in the program

# PATH's Programming Goal

- It is the goal of our programming to enable young people to understand the impact that bullying behavior can have on others, what language and behavior is not tolerated on social media platforms, and the consequences of engaging in online bullying
- The old saying, “sticks and stones may break your bones, but words will never hurt you” is simply not true



# Incorporating Lessons on Cyberbullying within Positive Prevention

- Various activities to increase awareness of cyberbullying
- [Cyberbully News Video](#)

# Preview of PATH Curricula Content

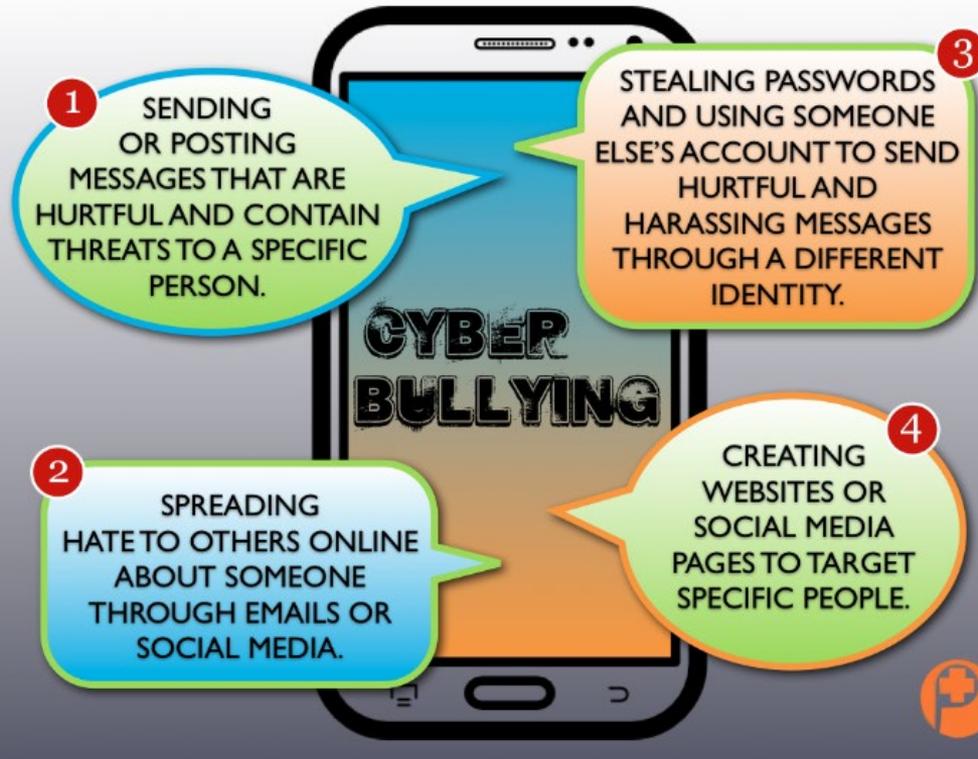
**CYBERBULLYING**

**THE USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION TO SPREAD MESSAGES OR PICTURES WITH THE INTENT OF THREATENING, INTIMIDATING, EMBARRASSING OR HARASSING ANOTHER PERSON.**



Sources: Webster, R. (ND);  
Pew Research Center  
(2018); John, A. et. al  
(2018).

# Preview of PATH Curricula Content



# Preview of PATH Curricula Content

- 1 TELL SOMEONE IF YOU WITNESS CYBERBULLYING. ASK FOR HELP.
- 2 DON'T RESPOND. THIS IS USUALLY WHAT THE BULLY WANTS.
- 3 SAVE THE EVIDENCE.
- 4 CONTACT THE POLICE IF THE HARASSMENT CONTINUES.
- 5 DON'T POST PERSONAL INFORMATION ONLINE AND KEEP YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS PRIVATE.
- 6 DON'T GIVE OUT YOUR PASSWORDS AND CHANGE THEM REGULARLY. 
- 7 BE THE CHANGE!

# Preview of PATH Curricula Content



# Questions?

# Taking Action

- What is one action step you will take based on what you learned?



# Contact Information

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# References

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# Thank you!

