



## ThinkUKnow e-Newsletter - Volume 3 Issue 10

Much attention of late has been on what can be collectively referred to as “anti-social online behaviour” (ASOB) directed at well-known personalities. These include instances of so-called “trolling” which attracted much publicity and even campaigns to “Stop the trolls.” But what’s really going on? Is the internet full of heartless trolls wandering around and searching for their next victim? We look at these questions in this issue of the ThinkUKnow e-newsletter.

### Trolling vs Bullying

Trolling and cyberbullying are quite different forms of ASOB as they vary both in terms of intention and relationship between the two parties. Trolling is often performed by a person without a clear relationship to their intended recipient. Their goal in posting the offensive material is often to provoke a reaction. They’re not dissimilar to the sort of people who shout offensive comments at passers-by: their enjoyment comes when you turn around and react.

Cyberbullying, on the other hand, will usually involve people that are known to each other although the person bullying may seek to hide their identity. There is also a clear intention to cause harm or intimidate their recipient. Cyberbullying is often evidenced by a pattern of behaviour more so than a one-off incident.

### Triumphing over trolls

### Time2Talk

In this section we look at ways to start talking with children and young people about their use of technology.

**Do you know what trolling is?**

**How would you deal with someone you didn't know who was being mean to you online?**

**Who would you talk to about hurtful things online?**

**What can I do to help you out?**

### Beating the bullying

Dealing with cyberbullying involves the same actions of save, block, report and delete but there is also much more going on which needs to be addressed. It is vital that families, schools and communities work together to create a culture in which bullying-like behaviours are not tolerated. This will often involve elements of social and emotional learning (SEL) but it is also important that we provide children and young people with positive role models.

It is also crucial that we continue to talk about cyberbullying and how to prevent and manage it. Children and young people need to know that it is not a sign of weakness to

Whilst having a public profile or account isn't an invitation for ASOB, it can increase your risk of exposure. If you don't need a public presence, it's best to change your privacy settings so you approve who your friends and/or followers are.

If you do receive an offensive communication, we recommend the following steps:

Save a copy - either a screenshot or HTML version of the web page

Block the person - this stops them from communicating with you

Report the person - most social network sites have clear terms and conditions for using their services and harassing behaviour is deemed a violation of these terms.

Delete the communication - remove the post from your wall, feed or email so that you and others no longer have to see it.

Never respond or retweet - don't give them the reaction they want!

ask for help, rather it is a sign of maturity in being willing to confront the issue head on. As parents, we need to ensure that the knee-jerk reaction to a report of cyberbullying is not to confiscate or ban the technology, instead the focus should be on the human anti-social behaviour.

### Where to from here?

Unfortunately, we do not live in a perfect world free from offensive, mean or insensitive communications. We need to build resilience in ourselves and in children and young people to overcome the nastier aspects of our society and work together to promote a more positive culture of respect, tolerance and empathy.

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