

UPSTANDERS

STAND UP TO BULLYING
NEWSLETTER

Holocaust
MEMORIAL RESOURCE & EDUCATION
CENTER OF FLORIDA

BE AN UPSTANDER NOT A BYSTANDER

A Virtual Threat with Real
Consequences: CyberBullying

Help Your Teen Take Action!

Digital Positivity - Keeping
Kids Safe Online

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WELCOME

The UpStanders newsletter is specifically designed for parents, guardians, and caregivers of middle school students in the UpStanders: Stand Up to Bullying program. Over the next couple of years, as we work with your student to create a kinder, more respectful community, we would also like to provide you, as a caregiver, the resources you need to support your student in the process.



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DID YOU KNOW?

When bystanders intervene (and become UpStanders), bullying stops within 10 seconds 57% of the time.

Hawkins, D. L., Pepler, D., and Craig, W. M. (2001). Peer interventions in playground bullying. *Social Development*, 10, 512-527.



What's New With UpStanders?

UpStanders: Stand Up to Bullying is a two-year, multi-phased bullying prevention program created by the Holocaust Memorial Resource & Education Center. Our program is unique because we use the history and lessons of the Holocaust to help middle school students understand human behavior and the importance of standing up for what is good, kind, and just. It not only teaches them about the history of the Holocaust, but it emphasizes respecting differences of all sorts, and empowers them to be positive change agents at their schools by being UpStanders.

As with most things, UpStanders is going to look a little different this year. The program typically consists of a variety of face-to-face experiences including instructor led workshops, a field trip to the Holocaust Center, and a grade level assembly with a guest speaker. The health and wellbeing of all students and teachers is our utmost concern. Because of the unique challenges the pandemic has posed, we have built in more flexibility to each phase of the program. Each school's administration will be able to choose how their students experience UpStanders, whether that be in the classroom, virtually, or a combination of the two. No two schools are in exactly the same situation, and so we want to customize the program to suit the needs of your students. Regardless of the method of delivery, the Holocaust Center staff is here to provide a safe and engaging experience for all schools involved.

[Click here](#) for more detailed information about phase descriptions and optional changes that can be made to accommodate distance learning and social distancing. If you should have any further questions about the UpStanders: Stand Up to Bullying program, please contact Rachel Luce-Hitt, Education Director, at rluce-hitt@holocaustedu.org.

A VIRTUAL THREAT WITH REAL CONSEQUENCES: CYBERBULLYING

Stephen Poynor, *UpStanders Educator and Holocaust Resource Teacher*

As a parent, I have always worried about bullying more than I do anything else when it comes to protecting my children. Bullying is an ‘all too real’ threat that our kids face every day when they step out the door. However, bullying is no longer limited to social interactions outside of the home. The threat is now fluid across communication mediums and can follow victims anywhere they go. The threat is cyberbullying.

What Is Cyberbullying?

According to StopBullying.Gov, 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 causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behavior.

What are the Dangers of Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is dangerous and has a set of special concerns outside of other types of bullying. It is



Persistent, Permanent, and Hard to Notice. It can happen anywhere, anytime, and the bully does not need to be face-to-face with their victim(s) often leaving no safe place for victims. The victim might not even know who the bully is, or why they are being targeted. This is the danger of anonymity on the internet. Cyberbullying, just like all types of bullying, can be incredibly damaging to a person’s self-esteem, social skills and confidence. In serious situations, when cyberbullying goes unnoticed and untreated, individuals might attempt suicide.

Risks During Pandemic

For many children and teens, social distancing during the pandemic means that much of the contact they will have with other people will be virtual. They are using social media and apps like Discord, TikTok, FaceTime, and Snapchat a lot more frequently than in the past. As we have become more isolated, forming online relationships has become more important and gives kids a connection to the rest of the world — but those connections are not without risk.

With social distancing firmly in place and the vast majority of schools teaching remotely, it stands to reason that kids are going to be online now more than ever. Aside from the increased screen time for learning, many kids just enjoy being online during their free time.

Furthermore, the pandemic is highly stressful and confusing for kids. When kids are feeling this way, it can lead to acting out or lashing out at others, misunderstandings among friends, and risk-taking behaviors in response. Kids often don’t talk to their parents about it either because they are concerned their technology use will be restricted. Right now, their technology is their only connection to the outside world.

What Parents Can Do

Having conversations with children about cyberbullying is not a one-time event — it is ongoing. Because of COVID-19, kids are engaging online more than ever. This can be

an opportunity for parents and caregivers to be mindful of what their kids are doing online and how they are interacting with others on social media. Threatening to take kids offline can often backfire because students can get access to apps and the internet almost anywhere and it can adversely cause them to disconnect from you.

• Talk to Your Child. Listen.

Take the same approach as if this was bullying in person. Support your child and show them that you take cyberbullying seriously. Responding fully may require a different approach, so make sure you have the proper supports in place for yourself as well.

• Take Notice.

Recognize changes in behaviors and try to see what the cause is. Do they happen around your child’s use of a digital device?

• Document.

Keep records of what is happening. Tell your child to take screenshots of harmful posts if possible.

• Report.

If your child is the victim of cyberbullying, gather your documentation and report it. Take steps to block the bully if possible, report the behavior through policies of the concerned social media outlet, and finally involve your child’s school or the proper authorities.

• Support.

Peers, mentors, and trusted adults can sometimes intervene publicly to positively influence a situation where negative or hurtful content posts about a child. Public Intervention can include posting positive comments about the person targeted with bullying to try to shift the conversation in a positive direction.

Being an UpStander Against Cyberbullying

If you think your child is witnessing cyberbullying, there are things that you can encourage them to do - and not do. Such as:

• Do not participate.

Encourage children not to “like,” share, or comment on information that has been posted about someone, and do not forward a hurtful text to others. This can help to minimize the damage to the victim(s).

• Report it.

Most social media platforms and schools have clear policies and reporting processes. If a classmate is cyberbullying, report it to the school. If a child has received physical threats, or if illegal behavior is

DID YOU KNOW?

83% of young people believe social media companies should be doing more to tackle cyberbullying on their platforms.

“Safety Net: Cyberbullying’s Impact on Young People’s Mental Health: Inquiry Report Summary.” The Children’s Society. Accessed July 30, 2019. <https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/social-media-cyberbullying-inquiry-summary-report.pdf>.

occurring, report it to an adult right away.

- **Do not retaliate or respond negatively.** If a child feels that they must respond, encourage a calm, clear, and constructive response. Angry and aggressive reactions can make a bad situation worse. Encourage children (and adults!) to step away from the device. This provides time to get calm so they can create a response that makes it clear that others’ behaviors are hurtful and not acceptable.
- **Respond privately to the person who created the hurtful message.** Only if they feel safe doing so, it may be helpful to follow up with the person who created or shared message privately, either online, in a phone call, or in person. Doing so can make it clear they do not support the negative actions. It may also give them a chance to share concern about the behavior and find out what is driving it.
- **Reach out to the person who was targeted.** By reaching out, a child can send a powerful message that they care about the person and they do not support the negative behaviors. If needed, this connection can also provide an opportunity to assist the person in finding help related to the cyberbullying situation.

Dealing with cyberbullying alone can feel overwhelming simply due to the nature of technology that is ever-present and ever-changing. You are not alone. Together, as a community, we can stand up to cyberbullying through education and by giving kids the support they need. If you have any questions about additional resources or if you need to speak with us about our UpStanders program, please contact me directly at spoynor@holocaustedu.org.

DID YOU KNOW?

About 37% of young people between the ages of 12 and 17 have been bullied online. 30% had it happen more than once.

Patchin, Ph.D, Justin. "2019 Cyberbullying Data." Accessed July 30, 2019, <https://cyberbullying.org/2019-cyberbullying-data>.



HELP YOUR TEEN TAKE ACTION!

PACER Center, Inc.

There is a lot of silence around bullying. When bullying happens, it's important that parents, educators, and youth are all involved in the solutions. Addressing bullying can be very challenging when youth don't have the opportunity to connect with a caring adult or are uncomfortable communicating their thoughts, feelings, and opinions about bullying. Someone who is targeted by bullying may be silenced by the stigma of the situation and think that they did something to deserve it. Someone who witnesses bullying may wonder if they should get involved and risk being bullied, too. Those who are engaged in bullying behavior might not view their behavior as an issue.

The "[Student Action Plan Against Bullying](#)" can help guide youth through the communication process, providing them with a structure to share their ideas and opinions about potential solutions to bullying. It can also help them feel more in control of the situation. Because most bullying will not stop unless a supportive and caring adult is involved,

we encourage adults to join students in working through the Student Action Plan. With the support of an adult, students can feel empowered to speak out and end the silence around bullying.

Benefits of involving youth in the bullying prevention response

Experiencing or witnessing bullying often leaves young people feeling powerless. For those engaged in bullying behavior, it's important that they have the opportunity to recognize their actions and change their behavior. Talking about bullying and its emotional aspects, being a part of the solution, and weighing the impact of different responses are important steps toward helping youth become better advocates for themselves and others, whether they've been bullied, have witnessed bullying, or are bullying.

When parents and educators help youth understand and respond to bullying, youth gain:

- The self-advocacy skills to help them speak up on

their own behalf, an important tool in any bullying scenario and in life.

- The ability to express themselves and be heard, knowing they are an important part of the solution.
- The opportunity to advocate for others. Many students who witness bullying think it's wrong but aren't sure how to respond. Thinking through responses gives them a better understanding of the different ways they can be part of the solution to bullying.
- The opportunity to change negative behavior patterns with the goal of helping others instead of hurting them.
- A greater investment in preventing bullying, by including their ideas, concerns, and feelings in the solutions.
- An increased likelihood that the proposed solutions will fit the skills and needs of those involved.

Steps to take when completing the Student Action Plan

There are a few different ways that the plan can be completed. Some youth will want to fill out the form on their own and then share their responses with an adult for further discussion. Some youth might want assistance from an adult they trust while completing the form. Make sure the youth understands that the plan works for students in any situation: whether they are bullying, they have witnessed, or they are being bullied themselves. Let the student decide how they would like to complete the Student Action Plan and keep these tips in mind:

1. Review the plan on your own.

- Page one of the Student Action Plan Against Bullying provides directions.
- Pages two and three illustrate a completed plan, including examples of a student being bullied and a student witnessing bullying.
- Page four is blank and ready to be filled out as a personal, customized action plan.

2. Be flexible when recording the responses.

The form can be completed by the student on their own or through conversation and dialogue. For example, the student may have an easier time communicating verbally and would be more comfortable discussing the questions and letting the parent or educator record their responses.

3. Provide prompts for each of the steps.

As the student moves through the plan, it's helpful to guide them by asking open-ended questions, informed by their situation (i.e., are they being bullied,

have they witnessed bullying, or are they the one who is engaged in bullying). Make sure to spend time on defining terms and clarifying details, as well. (Prompt questions listed below correspond with each step in the "Student Action Plan Against Bullying" template.)

4. Be patient with how youth tell their story.

The process of filling out the plan does not need to be linear, which means that though there are three simple steps outlined, addressing bullying can be much more complicated in practice. It's the student's story to tell, and adults should be open to letting them tell it in their own way.

- Youth may have to try different methods to share their own story. For example, they may start with what they want the end result to be (Step 3) versus starting with what happened (Step 1).
- They may focus more on the emotional aspects than the specific details of the behavior
- It may take more than one conversation to complete the plan. After an initial discussion, they might want time to think about potential solutions before starting the conversation again.

The plan is filled out — now what?

Having something in writing is powerful! It can help offer greater clarity for moving forward and establishes a written record of your ideas. Next steps include:

- **Share**
Reach out to educators or other adults involved in the student's life, such as coaches, club leaders, or faith leaders. Tell them about the ideas in the Student Action Plan Against Bullying and encourage them to share their insights about moving forward and implementing the proposed solution.
- **Record**
Write a summary of your conversations with those involved and include a timeline for action steps.
- **Implement**
Include check-in points so that everyone involved can assess what progress has been made and decide if the plan requires adjustments.
- **Stay involved**
Consider the action plan a living document that should be revisited and adapted as needed.

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HELP YOUR TEEN TAKE ACTION!

Take Action | Step One

DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE

Take Action | Step Two

REFLECT ON YOUR IDEAS

Take Action | Step Three

DEVELOP POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

Take Action | Step One

- Can you help me understand what happened?
- Who all is involved?
- Has it happened more than once?
- Has the situation become worse for you?
- Is the bullying happening online?
- Can you tell me more about how the bullying made you feel?
- Are there certain areas at school where you don't feel safe?
- Do you think bullying is a serious issue at your school or in your community?
- If you put yourself in the other student's shoes, can you imagine how your behavior might have hurt them?

Take Action | Step Two

- How would you like this situation to be different?
- Is there anything you've already tried to stop the bullying?
- What can be changed to help stop the behavior?
- What would be helpful from your parents?
- What would be helpful from adults at school?
- Which friends or peers do you feel safe with at school?
- In an ideal world, what would help you feel safe again?
- Would it be helpful to talk with someone, such as a teacher, sibling, or counselor?

Take Action | Step Three

- You have amazing ideas - how can I support you?
- Which adults do you feel safe with at school? How can we involve them in this plan?
- I know there are a lot of ideas, but you don't have to act on them alone. What steps do you feel comfortable taking and what can others do to help?
- How could you respond if another bullying situation happens?
- What do you want me to do if another bullying situation happens? Once we put the plan in place, when should we check in again to see how it is going and if changes need to be made to the plan?



DID YOU KNOW?

Instagram is the social media site where most young people report experiencing cyberbullying, with 42% of those surveyed experiencing harassment on the platform.

"The Annual Bullying Survey 2017." Ditch the Label. Accessed July 30, 2019.
<https://www.ditchthelabel.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/The-Annual-Bullying-Survey2017-1.pdf>



INSTAGRAM'S COMMITMENT TO LEAD THE FIGHT AGAINST ONLINE BULLYING

Rachel Luce-Hitt, Education Director, Holocaust Memorial Resource & Education Center

So, how familiar are you with Instagram? It is a social media app that encourages the curation of photos, videos, and messages to help one share their thoughts, experiences, values, and personality in an online environment. Many teens use Instagram as a way to express themselves and build community with others. It can be a truly empowering place for teens to explore and connect with people and ideas they don't always come across in person. Unfortunately, it also happens to be a place where cyberbullying can occur.

According to the 2017 Annual Bullying Survey, Instagram is the social media site where most young people report experiencing cyberbullying, with 42% of those surveyed experiencing harassment on the platform. Another survey reported that 83% of young people believe social media companies should be doing more to tackle cyberbullying on their platforms. Well, it was very refreshing to learn that Instagram is taking this seriously!

If you haven't yet seen [Know How to Talk with Your Teen About Instagram: A Parent's Guide](#), you have to check it out. This guide, offered in 18 different languages, is meant to help parents and caregivers feel better equipped to begin conversations with your teen about their online safety and wellbeing. Even for those of us who regularly use Instagram, we may not be as familiar with all of its different functionalities. For example, did you know you can:

- Customize filters to remove from your view any comments with words, phrases, or emojis that you deem offensive?
- Pin up to three comments at the top to highlight positivity?
- Anonymously report bullying or harassing accounts, photos, comments, messages, videos, or stories?
- Responsibly manage your time through the Activity Dashboard?
- Protect your privacy by controlling who can interact with you and your content on a variety of levels?

Something to keep in mind is that this all starts with a conversation. This kind of open communication can empower teens to use the tools and resources to make

better decisions and take control over their own privacy and digital identity. As part of the guide, they provide 10 Questions to Help You Start the Conversation. Why not give some of these a try today?!

1. What do you like about Instagram?
2. What do you wish I knew about Instagram?
3. What are the top five Instagram accounts that you enjoy following?
4. What are some things you think about before you post something on Instagram?
5. If you have multiple Instagram accounts, what do you share in each account?
6. How do likes and comments affect how you feel about a post?
7. Do you know your followers? (If your teen has a private account, ask them how they decide who follows them.) What do you do when someone you don't know tries to contact you via direct message?
8. How do you feel about the amount of time you spend online?
9. Have you ever felt uncomfortable with something you saw or an experience you had online?
10. What would you do if you saw someone being bullied on Instagram? (Do you know about the reporting tools and the offensive comment filter on Instagram?)

For more information about Instagram's commitment to bullying prevention, please visit:

<https://about.instagram.com/community/parents>

<https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/continuing-our-work-to-fight-online-bullying>

<https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/instagrams-commitment-to-lead-fight-against-online-bullying>

KNOW HOW TO TALK
WITH YOUR TEEN
ABOUT INSTAGRAM:
A PARENT'S GUIDE



DIGITAL POSITIVITY - KEEPING KIDS SAFE ONLINE

..... Trisha Prabhu

If you missed our special guest speaker the first time around, we have you covered! Check out the recording of Trisha Prabhu, founder and CEO of ReThink. She discusses cyberbullying — what it is (in its many forms), who it most impacts, and why science says it happens. You'll also get a comprehensive introduction to the ReThink tool, an app that encourages tweens and teens to make positive decisions online.

<https://www.holocaustedu.org/virtual-program-recordings/digital-positivity-keeping-kids-safe-online/>

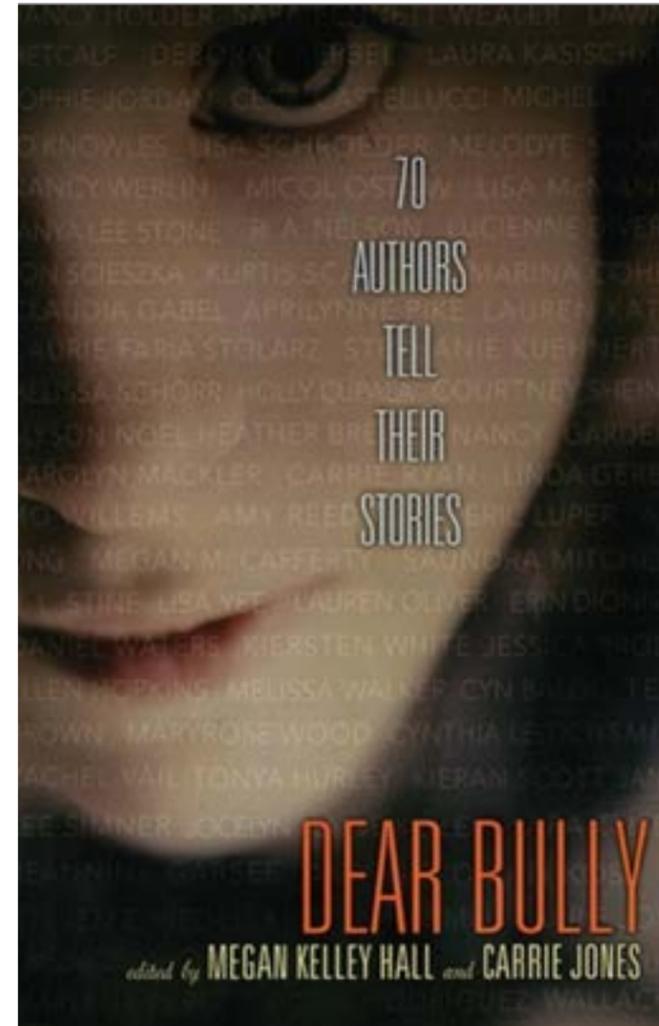


DID YOU KNOW?

The reasons for being bullied reported more often by students include physical appearance, race/ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, and sexual orientation.

"Student Reports of Bullying: Results From the 2017 School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey," National Center for Educational Statistics. July 2019. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2019/2019054.pdf>

READING CORNER



THE BULLY: 70 AUTHORS TELL THEIR STORIES

EDITED BY MEGAN KELLEY HALL & CARRIE JONES

Today's top authors for teens and young people come together to share their stories about bullying — as bystanders, as victims, and as the bullies themselves — in this moving and deeply personal collection.

Lauren Oliver, R. L. Stine, Ellen Hopkins, Carolyn Mackler, Kiersten White, Mo Willems, Jon Scieszka, Lauren Kate, and many more contributed 70 heartfelt and empathetic stories from each corner of the schoolyard.

In addition, Dear Bully includes resources for teens, educators, and parents, and suggestions for further reading. For those working to support social and emotional learning and anti-bullying programs, Dear Bully can help foster reflection and empathy.

Reviews:

"This anthology of personal essays provides empathetic and heartfelt stories from each corner of the schoolyard: the bullied, the bystander and the bully himself are all represented. Their words will be a welcome palliative or a wise pre-emptive defense against the trials of adolescent social dynamics."

-- New York Times

"Two of them, both authors of novels for young adults (Megan Kelley Hall and Carrie Jones), have drawn on the power of the written word to focus attention on the problem and offer solace to the bullied."

--The Boston Globe

"With authority often turning a blind eye and cyber-bullying rampant, this timely collection is an excellent resource, especially for group discussion, and the appended, annotated list of websites and further reading extends its usefulness."

- Booklist

"Powerful...All of these stories feel authentic and honest, and readers will find a story or a person to identify with, to look to for comfort or guidance."

- School Library Journal

"You'll love it if... You know someone (or are someone) who's ever been involved in any type of bullying incident. There's something in it for everyone, on all sides of the spectrum. You'll love it even more if you can find a story that inspires you to help someone else."

- Seventeen.com