

# Parent & Carer Companion Guide

Online Bullying | Is it funny or is it hate?

## Introduction

As the world becomes more reliant on technology, it's important for children to grow up understanding how the online world works and what positive interactions look like. Digital Matters is designed to help children navigate online issues, risks and consequences safely.

**Is it funny or is it hate?** is divided into two sections that help your child develop their understanding of online bullying.

The first is **Interactive Learning**, which works best in the classroom and relies on discussion. Children learn about the impact of words, including jokes, and why it's hard to tell if someone is hurt by those words. They will also learn the actions everyone can take to stop bullying and hate online.

The second is **Once Upon Online**. 'Playing With Hate' shows examples of how hateful language and bullying takes place online. Children must use what they know to help the character, Nia, navigate online bullying to find support and a positive outcome.

## Take Home

As a part of the lesson, your child's teacher may assign take-home work to consolidate their learning. Teachers may choose from the following activities or may have their own activity for children to do.

**Option 1:** Your child might show you a copy of their Once Upon Online journey. With your help, they might need to consider what other choices the characters could make and how those choices lead to different results. Because the Once Upon Online story only allows children to select one of two choices, it's important to discuss other possibilities. It's unlikely that in real life children will only have two choices.

**Option 2:** Your child may share their Once Upon Online journey record with you, which features a selection of reflection questions for children to consider. At school or at home, children can answer these questions once they complete their journey and discuss their journey and these questions with you. At home, you may want to do the journey on your own to see what ending you get and to compare the choices you each made. You might also wish to complete the journey a second time with your child and discuss the potential outcomes for each decision point.

## Top facts about cyberbullying

Use these facts to have informed conversations about the topic with your child:



Children receiving free school meals are more likely than other children to experience online bullying or abuse\*. Previous research shows that children with other vulnerabilities – such as those with SEND – are also more at risk for these types of online harms.



While only a small percentage of children said they experienced online bullying from people they knew, 64% of this group said it had a high impact\*\*



Children report experiencing more bullying from strangers and hate speech online than their parents think or report (13% and 19% compared to 11% and 12%)\*\*\*



70% of 10-12-year-olds experience harassment in online games\*\*\*\*

*\*Digital wellbeing on a budget: Exploring the online lives of children receiving free school meals*

*\*\*Insights from Internet Matters' tracker survey*

*\*\*\*Exploring the impacts of online harms, Part 1*

*\*\*\*\*Hate Is No Game: Hate and Harassment in Online Games 2022 (US)*

## How much do you know about cyberbullying?

Help reinforce your child's learning and knowledge by competing against each other on the quiz below. Who can score the highest?

Once finished, check out the answers at the end of this document to see how you each did before learning a little more about the correct answers.

1. In an online video game, James makes a joke about Tyrell's skill. Tyrell responds with a laughing emoji. How is Tyrell feeling?
  - a) happy
  - b) angry
  - c) sad
  - d) we don't know
2. Which of the following things could spread hate online? Select all that apply.
  - a) jokes between friends (like banter)
  - b) commenting on someone's beliefs or appearance
  - c) sharing a funny image about different cultures
  - d) 'liking' videos that joke about a person's disability
3. Is it better to be a bystander or an upstander? Choose an answer and discuss with each other.
  - a) bystander
  - b) upstander
4. If someone hurts another person by mistake, what should they do?
  - a) apologise and learn from their mistake
  - b) talk to the victim normally, like nothing happened
  - c) explain that they didn't actually mean to hurt the other person
  - d) tell them they're too sensitive
5. If someone says hurtful things to you online, what should you do? Select all that apply.
  - a) say hurtful things back
  - b) report and block them
  - c) talk with a trusted adult about what happened
  - d) screenshot their messages and share with others



## Recommended Resources

This list of resources will help you learn more about managing children's personal information online so that you can be prepared from privacy and security issues that might come up.

### Internet Matters

#### [Cyberbullying advice hub](#)

Learn about cyberbullying through statistics and research. Then, find a range of resources to share with parents such as age-specific conversation guides.

#### [Online hate advice hub](#)

Get an overview of different types of online hate, including misogyny, ableism, religious discrimination, racism and hate against LGBTQ+. Browse additional resources that offer support.

#### [Tackling online hate interactive quiz](#)

Created with Samsung, The Online Together Project offers two quizzes to challenge bullying and hate online. Breaking Down Gender Stereotypes helps

children understand the stereotypes among boys and girls, and the harm this can pose. Tackling Online Hate specifically addresses online hate, including information about the law and actions to stop the spread of hate online. Both quizzes can be adapted for classroom use or shared with parents and carers to do with their children at home.

#### [What is misogyny?](#)

Find advice provided by Dr. Tamasine Preece, Curriculum Lead for Health and Wellbeing at a school in Wales and member of our expert panel. Find guidance on addressing the topic of misogyny on a whole-school level in a direct and effective way.

#### [BBC Bitesize: Why do people troll and what can you do about it?](#)

An insight into the trolling influencers face online. It includes personal stories, videos and related resources.

#### [Childline: Types of Bullying](#)

This UK helpline also provides advice for children on handling different types of bullying, including in the online space. These useful articles can be shared with students or parents, or you can utilise them for another part of teaching about cyberbullying.

#### [Cybersmile Education Program](#)

Find quizzes around cyberbullying, online hate and more, including #NoRoomForAbuse and Hope United, which deal with how it shows up in sport.

#### [Stop Hate UK: Young People's Resource Hub](#)

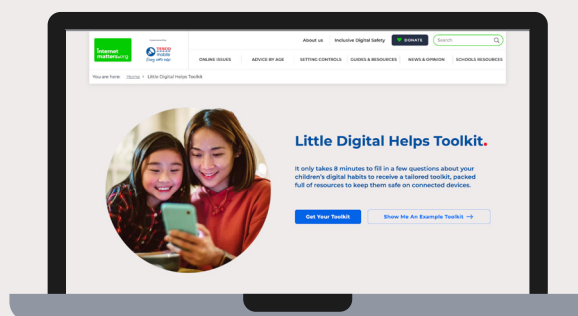
Explore information around hate crime along with its impact and how to challenge it. Designed for young people, parents and educators, the hub includes advice and media to support learning.

## Little Digital Helps Toolkit

### Stay on top of your child's online safety

Fill in a few questions about your children's digital habits to receive a tailored toolkit, packed full of resources to keep them safe on connected devices.

[CREATE YOUR TOOLKIT](#)



## Answers to the Cyberbullying Quiz

See how you did on the cyberbullying quiz. Discussing the answers with your child will help them to consolidate the information they learnt from the module. These conversations are vital to keeping your child safe online.

- 1. The answer is D – we don't know!** Even though someone responds with a laughing emoji, that doesn't mean they are happy. Because we're separated by a screen, we can't really know how someone reacts to hurtful words. Even jokes can make someone feel really low. Remember that people often hide how they feel so they can fit in, so it's important to be careful with our words.
- 2. All of these options can spread hate online.** Jokes can spread hate and so can sharing videos about cultures. However, it depends on the content. A joke that makes fun of another person could spread hate; however, a joke about an orange probably wouldn't. A video that talks about interesting cultural customs probably doesn't spread hate, but a video calling those customs strange or weird might. When someone makes rude comments about beliefs or appearance, that could spread hate. When you like a video where someone makes fun of a disability, that could spread hate. Remember to think carefully about the words you say or the content you 'like' and 'share' online. If you're not sure, ask a trusted adult.
- 3. The answer is B – upstander.** A bystander is someone who sees cyberbullying or online hate and does nothing. They might scroll on by or walk away. The cyberbullying or hate can then continue spreading because no one is stopping it. An upstander is someone who sees cyberbullying or online hate and takes action. They might report the behaviour, reach out to the victim, share correct information and more. Even if the behaviour doesn't affect them, an upstander knows their actions can stop cyberbullying or hate affecting others.
- 4. The answer is A - apologise and learn from their mistake.** The only way to move forward after hurting another person is to apologise and take ownership of the hurt they caused. Even if they didn't intend to, they still hurt someone. They shouldn't try to defend themselves by saying they didn't mean to hurt them or that the other person took it the wrong way. They should admit their mistake, learn from their mistake, and try to move forward behaving in a more positive way.
- 5. The answer is B - report and block them and C - talk with a trusted adult about what happened.** Saying hurtful things back will turn you into the bully or will continue spreading hurt and hate online. Taking screenshots of cyberbullying is a good idea in case you need evidence of the behaviour; however, sharing it with others is not the right action. This will just spread hate and hurt. Instead, report the user, block them to stop seeing their hate and then talk with a trusted adult about what happened and how it made you feel to get support.

