Common Sense Media

The Power of Words

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to…

- Empathize with those who have received mean and hurtful messages.

- Judge what it means to cross the line from harmless to harmful communication online.

- Generate solutions for dealing with cyberbullying

Suggest emotions that match the emoji

Not everyone will react to an online situation the way you may react. Just because their reaction is different doesn't mean that their feelings are not important.

Words, whether typed or spoken, can impact how someone else feels.

- [The Power of Words](#)

Who has heard of the saying, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me?"

What did Guts mean in his text that sometimes words can hurt?

Legs, "How do you treat others online?"

What's the Problem?

Activity-Group

Have you seen mean messages sent to you or others online? Tell us about it, but do NOT use real names.

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Directions

Read the story below and then answer the questions that follow.

Rani and Aruna love a website that has games and chatting for kids. Their parents let them play on the site. Lately, though, Rani and Aruna have been receiving mean messages on the site, including:

Group Chat:

- Player A: I hate you!
- Player B: You are ruining the game!
- Player C: You are so stupid.
- Player D: You are a dork.

[send]

1 How do you think Rani and Aruna feel when they read those messages?

Rani and Aruna feel _____

_____

2 How would you feel if you received messages like these?

I would feel _____

_____

3 Why do you think people send these kinds of message to people they don't know?

People send these kinds of messages because

What's the Problem?

Activity-Write "You're weird" on your white board and hand it to your partner. Tell your partner that they just received this text.

What are the reasons the person might have texted "You're weird"?

How did that make you feel to receive that text?

Know SAY that to you're partner, "You're weird" with a **smile** ☺ on your face. What makes it different when you see the person?

Crossing the Line

- Activity-Students stand on one side of this line. Imagine you are online and somebody has sent you a message, which I am going to read to you. **STAY** where you are if the message is **OKAY** and **CROSS OVER** the line if the message is **NOT OKAY**. **STAND** on the line if the message is **IN BETWEEN**.

Crossing the Line

"You're an idiot"

"I'm having a party and you're not invited"

"I like your new haircut"

"You're really ugly"

"Thanks for the advice. Next time tell me in person rather than texting me "

"Did you finish your homework?"

"Why is it taking you so long to finish your homework?"

"You're such a freak"

Crossing the Line

Students like to go online and use cell phones to email, chat, watch videos, send messages, play games, and do homework. But sometimes the language can get mean or scary. Messages that make people feel bad cross the line. Sometimes that meanness is unintentional, but when people use tools such as the Internet and cell phones to deliberately upset someone else over and over, that's cyberbullying.

Talk and Take Action

It is easy to feel angry or upset when someone sends you a mean or scary message online.

Cyberbullying-cyberbullies deliberately try to make you feel that way, just like real-life bullies.

Talk and Take Action

What do we do when faced with cyberbullying?

•Cooling down can be a good first step when you receive a mean message online. Taking a deep breath, counting backwards from 10, or pausing to think about what you will do next can give you time to think of the BEST way to handle the situation.

•Finding help or telling a trusted adult or a friend can be a good way to take action. You shouldn't deal with the cyberbullying situation alone. The person you tell should be someone who wants to hear what you have to say, and will help you work on a solution. Adults can be especially good because they often have the power to influence the situation, or can give you advice about what to do.

Talk and Take Action

What do we do when faced with cyberbullying?

- Ignoring the person who is cyberbullying you can be very effective. Those who bully often like attention.

- Whatever you do, remember to keep a copy of your communication with the individual who is cyberbullying you. If you delete the communication, there is no proof of how the bully treated you if you need to show it to a trusted adult.

Talk and Take Action Handout

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Directions

Create a cartoon about a cyberbullying situation. Each frame should show a different part of the situation:

FRAME 1: Make a cartoon about something that a cyberbully might do or write online. Remember to use language appropriate for school.

FRAME 2: Show what you might do if you saw what the cyberbully has done or written.

FRAME 3: What might be a positive outcome, or result, of the situation?

What might a cyberbully say or do?	What would you do in response?

What would a positive outcome be?

Closing

Why is it a bad idea to send mean or scary messages online?

Why might there be more misunderstandings between people when they send online messages as opposed to face-to-face discussion?

What can students do when they get cyberbullying messages?