Cyber Bullying:

A Prevention Curriculum
for Grades 6-12
Scope and Sequence

Cyber Bullying:
A Prevention Curriculum for Grades 6-12

What is *Cyber Bullying: A Prevention Curriculum for Grades 6-12?*

Cyber Bullying: A Prevention Curriculum for Grades 6-12 is a program that deals with attitudes and behaviors associated with cyber bullying. It consists of an eight-session curriculum, with additional resources on a CD-ROM that includes:

- Reproducible parent resources
- Reproducible student fact sheet
- Program poster and student handouts
- Resources to address cyber bullying schoolwide (establishing a school policy and addressing legal concerns, for example)
- Peer leader training materials
- A short training on cyber bullying for program facilitators

Most materials needed to implement the program are included in the manual and on the CD-ROM. In addition, a Web site has been established that will provide up-to-date information about cyber bullying. This Web site can be accessed at www.hazelden.org/ cyberbullying.

What Are the Goals of the Program?

This program strives toward achieving the following results:

- Raise students' and parents' awareness of what cyber bullying is and why it is so harmful.
- Equip students with the skills and resources to treat each other respectfully when they use cyber technologies; and help students know how to get help if they, or others they know, are being cyber bullied.
- Equip students with the skills to use cyber technologies in positive ways.

For more information on the learner outcomes for each session, turn to the Curriculum Scope and Sequence toward the end of this document.

Who is the Intended Audience?

Cyber Bullying: A Prevention Curriculum for Grades 6-12 is designed for middle school and high school students. This program would fit well within a health education, communications, technology, or general life skills curriculum (see references to national academic standards at the end of this document). Teachers may use their discretion to adapt some activities to the age and maturity level of their students.

The curriculum is most effectively used as part of a broader, ongoing bullying prevention program, such as with Hazelden's *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program,* or as part of a general violence prevention effort.

This curriculum utilizes trained student peer leaders who assist in teaching portions of the lessons. These leaders should be selected by their peers, whenever possible. Encourage students to select those teens that they admire and respect. You may also want to consider having older teens teach the program to younger teens. More information about peer leader selection and training is available in the curriculum's introduction. Peer leadership is a key component of this program and should not be omitted.

A school counselor could offer *Cyber Bullying* as part of a support group, counseling or education program, or it could be used in after-school, community, youth enrichment (such as YMCA or Scouts), or faith-based youth programs.

Is This a Research-Based Program?

Cyber Bullying is not a research-based program, but it is based on the latest research in prevention and on the topic of cyber bullying. Many of the lesson activities are patterned after prevention models that research has shown to be effective in decreasing negative student behavior, and increasing student attitudes toward refraining from negative behaviors. These models include selecting and using peer leaders, providing parent-student activities, doing cooperative learning and project activities, and identifying the causes of why students behave as they do.

The curriculum also recommends that schoolwide policies and procedures be implemented to effectively address cyber bullying in a broad way, while establishing a climate that is conducive to positive interactions among students. Research-based programs, such as the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program,* have proven that schoolwide efforts are more effective in addressing bullying than classroom components alone.

This curriculum utilizes trained student peer leaders who assist in teaching portions of the lessons.

Cyber Bullying: A Prevention Curriculum for Grades 6-12 Main Components

The following is a brief description of each component of the cyber bullying program.

Eight-session Curriculum

Each session can be completed in fifty minutes and includes detailed instructions on presenting the information, activities to reinforce the key concepts, and reproducible student handouts.

Throughout the curriculum, some activities will be designated for students in middle school or students in high school. These activities include small group discussion situations, and a few other activities. Activities for each grade level will be designated by icons throughout the curriculum.

The first five sessions of *Cyber Bullying* for students in middle school include journal entries from four fictional students who are learning about cyber bullying. Students will read the journal entries and discuss them in peer-led small groups. These journal entries engage students in the topic of the session and help them understand how to react to cyber bullying situations. The use of these fictional peers is an effective teaching tool in evidence-based programs, such as Hazelden's *Project Northland* alcohol use prevention curricula. It is important that you read through all of the journal entries before beginning the program in your classroom so that you are aware of the story line and each character's personality.

The first five sessions of *Cyber Bullying* for students in high school consist of real life stories, one per session. These stories are based on actual news events; names and some minor details have been changed, and the characters' points of view are dramatized. The stories found in the curriculum will make cyber bullying real to students, and include discussion questions to help spark discussion.

In sessions six and seven, all students will work on small group projects to create a plan for their own social networking Web site. (Students will not actually design a Web site, but create a plan for one.) They will need to meet specific criteria to ensure that the Web site is safe for the users and creates positive interactions among teens. Each small group will present their Web site plan to the class during session eight.

This program also includes a pre- and post-test that can be used to assess your students' knowledge and attitudes before and after presenting the curriculum.

The curriculum utilizes peer leaders to lead a significant portion of each lesson, with the last three sessions serving as a cooperative learning- and project-based opportunity.

It is highly recommended that educators implement this program as part of an on-going, comprehensive bullying prevention effort, such as the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program.*

Parent Materials

As in every strong prevention effort, it's important to actively involve students' parents or guardians when implementing this program. Provided in this curriculum is a parent letter that informs parents about *Cyber Bullying: A Prevention Curriculum for Grades 6-12.* It is recommended that this letter be delivered to parents or guardians prior to implementing the program.

Each of the first five sessions has a take-home assignment for students to complete with a parent or guardian. Parents and students are asked to sign the assignment and return it after completion. If students are not able to have parent participation, they can complete the activity with another close adult such as a relative, neighbor, or if possible, a school staff person such as a school counselor.

All parent materials are provided in both English and Spanish.

Teacher Training Outline

An outline for a three-hour teacher training is provided with the curriculum.

Teacher Training PowerPoint

Included on the CD-ROM is a PowerPoint training that includes in-depth information and statistics on cyber bullying for teachers. This PowerPoint can be used as either a self-led training, or as part of the Teacher Training Outline.

As in every strong prevention effort, it's important to actively involve students' parents or guardians when implementing this program.

Why is it Important to Teach about Cyber Bullying?

As youth become more computer and Internet savvy, instances of cyber bullying have risen. Cyber bullying can have devastating effects, including clinical depression and suicide. In order to understand these effects, it is important to understand just what cyber bullying is.

What is Cyber Bullying?

Cyber bullying is bullying through e-mail, instant messaging, in a chat room, on a Web site, or through digital messages or images sent to a cellular phone or personal digital assistant (PDA) (Kowalski et al, 2008). Cyber bullying, like traditional bullying, involves a negative action, which is often repeated, and an imbalance of power.

In traditional forms of bullying, individuals may have more power over another by being bigger, stronger, or more popular. With cyber bullying, an individual may have more power just by being able to instantly share negative comments or photographs with a multitude of people by e-mail, instant messaging, text messaging, or through Web site posts. Cyber bullying may also involve several individuals targeting one individual, or a more popular student targeting a less popular classmate.

Traditional bullying is also defined by mean or negative actions being repeated and occurring over time. When someone is cyber bullied, this repetition of negative behavior can occur by sending one embarrassing photo or one degrading e-mail message, which may in turn be forwarded to an entire class or grade level. The perpetrator, while usually known in a traditional bullying situation, might go unidentified in the case of cyber bullying.

Traditional bullying usually occurs in a certain time and space, perhaps during school in the bathrooms or the hallways. Students who are bullied can usually find some relief at home or away from school. When a student is cyber bullied, the incident can happen whenever someone turns on their computer or goes online. This often happens at home at any time of the day or night.

Cyber bullying poses unique challenges because it frequently happens outside of the school setting, and thus may be difficult for educators to observe. In addition, students may feel invisible or anonymous online, and this may lead to a greater willingness to engage in negative actions. Finally, without face-to-face interaction, students who cyber bully have no opportunity to witness the emotional distress their comments may be inflicting on a peer.

There is a bright spot, however. While direct evidence may be hard to obtain in many traditional forms of bullying, cyber bullying typically involves a form of communication that can be saved and printed from a computer or saved on a cell phone. Such obvious evidence can be helpful when intervening in cyber bullying incidences.

Why should schools address the issue of cyber bullying?
Schools have rapidly embraced technology in order to offer advanced learning opportunities and resources to students. Teachers use blogs, students post assignments online, and some schools issue laptops and PDAs to students as instructional tools. By embracing technology and encouraging students to explore its various forms, educators also have a responsibility to teach students to use technology in a responsible manner.

In addition, many schools are already adopting comprehensive bullying prevention programs, such as the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program,* or are at least teaching classroom lessons that address bullying behaviors. Cyber bullying is one form of bullying that should be specifically addressed as part of these comprehensive efforts.

Research has shown that not all students perceive cyber bullying as a form of bullying behavior (Kowalski et al. 2008). Therefore, classroom lessons and discussions that focus directly on cyber bullying are critical to preventing it from flourishing.

Curriculum Scope & Sequence

	By the end of each session, students will be able to
Session 1: **What Is Bullying?**	• Define bullying. • Identify examples of bullying. • Identify the roles students play in the "Bullying Circle." • Identify rules against bullying.
Session 2: **What Is Cyber Bullying?**	• Define cyber bullying. • Identify the technologies used in cyber bullying. • Identify cyber bullying situations.
Session 3: **How Does Cyber Bullying Affect People?**	• Identify the effects of cyber bullying on the child who is bullied, the bystanders, and the child(ren) who bully. • Identify how to use technology in a positive way.
Session 4: **Why Do People Cyber Bully Others?**	• Identify reasons why people think they can get away with cyber bullying others. • State why they think cyber bullying is unacceptable.
Session 5: **How Should You React to Cyber Bullying?**	• Identify what steps to take if they are cyber bullied. • Identify what steps to take if they know that someone else is being cyber bullied.
Session 6: **Creating a Positive Cyber Site— Part I**	• Describe how some social networking sites began. • Explain what social networking sites do to curb abuse. • Describe the steps in planning a social networking site.
Session 7: **Creating a Positive Cyber Site— Part II**	• Describe the components of an effective presentation. • Identify how they personally will commit themselves to stop or prevent cyber bullying.
Session 8: **Creating a Positive Cyber Site— Part III**	• Make a public commitment to preventing cyber bullying. • Identify positive ways to use social networking Web sites.

For more information or to order, visit **www.hazelden.org/cyberbullying** or call Hazelden toll-free at **1-800-328-9000.**

Meeting National Academic Standards with
Cyber Bullying: A Prevention Curriculum for Grades 6-12

Using *Cyber Bullying: A Prevention Curriculum for Grades 6-12* will help you meet the following national academic standards:

Health Education Standards [1]

Grades 6-8

- Describe how peers influence healthy and unhealthy behaviors.
- Analyze how the school and community can affect personal health practices and behaviors.
- Analyze how messages from media influence health behaviors.
- Analyze the influence of technology on personal and family health.
- Apply effective verbal and nonverbal communication skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate how to ask for assistance to enhance the health of oneself and others.
- Demonstrate behaviors that avoid or reduce health risks to oneself and others.
- Work cooperatively to advocate for healthy individuals, families, and schools.
- Identify ways in which health messages and communication techniques can be altered for different audiences.

Grades 9-12

- Analyze how peers influence healthy and unhealthy behaviors.
- Evaluate how the school and community can affect personal health practices and behaviors.
- Evaluate the effect of media on personal and family health.
- Evaluate the impact of technology on personal, family, and community health.
- Use skills for communicating effectively with family, peers, and others to enhance health.
- Demonstrate how to ask for and offer assistance to enhance the health of oneself and others.
- Demonstrate a variety of behaviors that avoid or reduce health risks to oneself and others.

---

1. Joint Committee on National Health Education Standards. *National Health Education Standards, Second Edition, Achieving Excellence.* The American Cancer Society. 2007.

• Work cooperatively as an advocate for improving personal, family, and community health.

• Adapt health messages and communication techniques to a specific target audience.

Technology Education Standards [2]

Grades 6-12

Communication and Collaboration

Students in grades 6 through 12 will

• interact, collaborate, and publish with peers, experts, or others, employing a variety of digital environments and media.

• communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences, using a variety of media and formats.

• contribute to project teams to produce original works or solve problems.

Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making

Students in Grades 6 through 12 will

• identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.

• plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project.

• collect and analyze data to identify solutions and make informed decisions.

• use multiple processes and diverse perspectives to explore alternative solutions.

Digital Citizenship

Students in grades 6 through 12 will

• advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology.

• exhibit a positive attitude toward using technology that supports collaboration, learning, and productivity.

• demonstrate personal responsibility for lifelong learning.

• exhibit leadership for digital citizenship.

---

2. *National Educational Technology Standards for Students,* Second Edition, International Society for Technology in Education). 2007. www.iste.org.