Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is the use of technology to bully a person or group with the intent to hurt them socially, psychologically or even physically.

What does cyberbullying look like?
Examples of cyberbullying include:
- abusive texts and emails
- hurtful messages, images or videos
- imitating, excluding or humiliating others online
- spreading nasty online gossip and chat
- creating fake accounts in someone's name to trick or humiliate them.

Online bullying can have a devastating impact on young people, whose online life is a key part of their identity and how they interact socially.

I think my child is being bullied
Your child may not tell you if they are experiencing bullying behaviour online because of a fear it might make things worse for them or they may lose access to their devices and the internet.

Signs to watch for:
- being upset after using the internet or their mobile phone
- changes in personality, becoming more withdrawn, anxious, sad or angry
- appearing more lonely or distressed
- unexpected changes in friendship groups
- a decline in their school work
- changes in their sleep patterns
- avoidance of school or clubs
- a decline in their physical health
- becoming secretive about their online activities and mobile phone use.

What can I do?

Talk to your child about cyberbullying before it happens. Together you can work out strategies to address any potential issues and reassure them you will be there to support them.

If your child is experiencing cyberbullying
- **Listen, think, stay calm** — talk to them about what happened, try to remain open and non-judgemental, ask them how they feel and ensure they feel heard.
- **Collect evidence** — it is a good idea to collect evidence, such as screenshots, of the bullying behaviour, in case you need to report it later on.
- **Block and manage contact with others** — advise your child not to respond to bullying messages and help your child block or unfriend the person sending the messages.
- **Report to site or service** — many social media services, games, apps and websites allow you to report abusive content and request that it is removed.
- **Report to eSafety** — if serious cyberbullying is affecting your child and you need help to get the material removed from a social media service or other platform you can make a cyberbullying report to us.
- **Get help and support** — check in with your child regularly about how they are feeling. If you notice any changes that concern you, get help through a counselling or online support service.