



Educator Guide: Truth or Myth Activity

Recommended for Grades:

9th – 12th grades

Time:

3 minutes

National Health Education Standards:

This activity aligns with the following National Health Education Standards:

- Standard 1: Use functional health information to support health and well-being of self and others.

For more information about the National Health Education Standards, visit the SHAPE America website: shapeamerica.org.

Learning Objectives:

After completing this activity students will be able to:

1. Identify the effects of cyberbullying on the person being bullied, the bystanders and the person who is bullying.
2. Explain what social media sites do to prevent and stop cyberbullying.
3. Identify two positive ways to use social media.

Activity Description:

A lot of myths exist about cyberbullying. In this activity students will have an opportunity to differentiate between the truths and myths around the topic of cyberbullying.



Vocabulary:

Use the following list of vocabulary as a reference for yourself and your students as you complete the Truth or Myth Activity. You may choose to use this list in any way that fits your needs.

- Anxiety – a mental health condition when a person worries even though there is nothing to worry about, or worries all the time and it affects their daily life
- Cyberbullying – bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers and tablets; using technology to repeatedly harass, threaten or embarrass someone, where the bully has real or perceived power over the victim
- Depression – a mental health condition that negatively affects how you feel, think and act, causing feelings of sadness and a loss of interest in things you once enjoyed
- Social media – forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, videos, etc.

Supplemental Activity: Social Media

Objectives:

After completing this activity students will be able to:

- Explain what social media sites are doing to prevent and stop cyberbullying.

Materials Needed:

- Access to various social media sites

Time Required:

60 minutes

Instructions:

Compile a list of social media sites that students currently use. Once you have a list compiled, divide students into small groups and assign each group a specific social media site. Each group will research what their assigned site is currently doing to prevent or stop cyberbullying. If class time is limited, or students are unable to access social media within school, the research portion of this activity could be assigned as homework.

Students should investigate how users can report cyberbullying to the site. Encourage students to document the exact reporting process, as each site's process will be different. Each site will also have their own terms of service, policies and community standards or guidelines. Students may also want to research what companies may be doing on the back end to detect cyberbullying before it is even reported. There are new technologies that companies use to do this.

Once students have gathered all the information for their assigned social media site, they should prepare a short presentation to share their information with the rest of the class. After the presentation is a great time for a class discussion. Possible discussion questions could include:

- Are social media sites doing enough to prevent cyberbullying?
- Did any social media sites stand out above the rest based on their tactics to reduce cyberbullying?
- How much of the responsibility to reduce cyberbullying falls on these companies vs. on the teens and adults who use their sites?
- Were you surprised by any of the technologies that companies are using behind the scenes to reduce cyberbullying?



Handouts

Included on the following pages are additional resources that you and your students' families may find useful.



Cyberbullying

What Is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers and tablets. It includes:

- Posting mean, hurtful or embarrassing comments or rumors about someone online
- Threatening to hurt someone or telling them to kill themselves
- Posting a mean or hurtful picture or video
- Pretending to be someone else online in order to get or post personal or false information about someone else
- Posting mean or hateful things online about any race, religion or ethnicity
- Creating a mean or hurtful webpage about someone

How Can I Stop Cyberbullying?

Some teens have learned to stop cyberbullying and keep it from happening. Here's what you can do:

- Do not re-send cyberbullying messages.
- Block contact with cyberbullies.
- Tell your friends to stop cyberbullying.
- Report cyberbullying to a trusted adult.
- Work with other students, teachers and school leaders to create rules against cyberbullying.
- Help your community learn more by holding an assembly or other event.
- Make a contract to be safe online with your parents or caregivers. Come up with the rules together.

Cyberbullying Resources

- Children's Wisconsin, [ParentsActNow.com](https://www.ParentsActNow.com)
- Cyberbullying Research Center, [cyberbullying.org](https://www.cyberbullying.org)
- KidsHealth, kidshealth.org
- National Crime Prevention Council, [ncpc.org](https://www.ncpc.org)
- Pew Research Center, [pewresearch.org/topics/teens-and-technology/](https://www.pewresearch.org/topics/teens-and-technology/)
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, [stopbullying.gov](https://www.stopbullying.gov)



Transcript

Slide 1

Truth or myth? Social media sites and online gaming platforms don't do anything about cyberbullying.

Truth: Sorry, but that's a myth. Social media sites and online gaming platforms do take cyberbullying seriously and offer users ways to report and address it. These sites often post what type of content is, or is not appropriate for their site, and offer the opportunity to block and report users who may be engaging in cyberbullying. Check out your favorite platform's help page to learn about their community guidelines and reporting policies.

***Myth:* You're right! That's a myth. Social media sites and online gaming platforms do take cyberbullying seriously and offer users ways to report and address it. These sites often post what type of content is, or is not appropriate for their site, and offer the opportunity to block and report users who may be engaging in cyberbullying. Check out your favorite platform's help page to learn about their community guidelines and reporting policies.**

Slide 2

Truth or myth? Social media is a negative influence and it's best to avoid it altogether.

Truth: Sorry, but that's a myth. Social media has the potential to be a force for good by connecting others meaningfully. Social media can be used to spread awareness on important issues, learn what's going on in the world and introduce new people and ideas into your life. Avoiding social media will not solve cyberbullying. An effective use of each platform's community guidelines, as well as reporting and blocking tools, can create positive and safe online communities.

***Myth:* That's right! Social media has the potential to be a force for good by connecting others meaningfully. Social media can be used to spread awareness on important issues, learn what's going on in the world and introduce new people and ideas into your life. Avoiding social media will not solve cyberbullying. An effective use of each platform's community guidelines, as well as reporting and blocking tools, can create positive and safe online communities.**



Slide 3

Truth or myth? Cyberbullying can have serious consequences that carry on into adulthood.

***Truth:* You're right! Both victims and people who cyberbully others have more social, behavioral, emotional, and academic problems than those who aren't involved. Victims of cyberbullying are more likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and loneliness. Research shows all these effects are still detected when the victims are adults.**

Myth: Not quite, that is actually true. Both victims and people who cyberbully others have more social, behavioral, emotional and academic problems than those who aren't involved. Victims of cyberbullying are more likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and loneliness. Research shows these effects are still detected when the victims are adults.

Slide 4

Truth or myth? If you witness cyberbullying, you can do something to help.

***Truth:* You're right! There are things you can do. If you witness cyberbullying, you can help stop the behavior by not forwarding the cyberbullying messages and informing a trusted adult. These steps help create safe online communities for everyone.**

Myth: That is actually true. There are things you can do. If you witness cyberbullying, you can help stop the behavior by not forwarding the cyberbullying messages and informing a trusted adult. These steps help create safe online communities for everyone.

Slide 5

Truth or myth? Cyberbullying is a rite of passage all teens experience these days.

Truth: Sorry, but that's a myth. While bullying has been around for a long time, it shouldn't be considered normal. Cyberbullying, like traditional bullying, is an experience of pain, embarrassment and humiliation for the victim. Bullying, in any context, is never acceptable.

***Myth:* You're right, that is a myth! While bullying has been around for a long time, it shouldn't be considered normal. Cyberbullying, like traditional bullying, is an experience of pain, embarrassment and humiliation for the victim. Bullying, in any context, is never acceptable.**



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Ashley Jors, Germantown School District

Tim Riffel, MS, LPC, Children's Wisconsin





Contact us:

**Children's Wisconsin
E-Learning Center**

(866) 228-5670

healthykids@childrenswi.org

