

Cyberbullying: Crossing the Line

Lesson Plan

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Essential Question: When does inappropriate online behavior cross the line to cyberbullying, and what can you do about it?

Learning Overview and Objectives

Overview: Students learn to distinguish good-natured teasing from cyberbullying. Students learn about serious forms of cyberbullying, which include harassment, deception, “flaming,” and threats to safety.

Students watch the ***Connected Culture Student Video Vignette – Stacey’s Story***, a documentary-style story of young people who have been involved in cyberbullying situations. Students then discuss the video and related case studies in the **Cyberbullying: Crossing the Line Discussion Guide**.

objectives

Students will:

- Analyze online bullying behaviors that “cross the line”
- Learn about the various ways that students can be cyberbullied, including flaming, deceiving, and harassing
- Adopt the point of view of teens who have been cyberbullied, and offer solutions

Materials and Preparation

Materials

- ***Connected Culture Student Video Vignette – Stacey’s Story***
- **Cyberbullying: Crossing the Line Student Discussion Guide**
- **Cyberbullying: Crossing the Line Student Discussion Guide – Teacher Version**

Preparation

- Download the ***Connected Culture Student Video Vignette – Stacey’s Story***, preview the video, and be prepared to play video for the class
- Copy the **Cyberbullying: Crossing the Line Student Discussion Guide** for all students
- Review the **Cyberbullying: Crossing the Line Student Discussion Guide – Teacher Version**

Parent Resources

- Send home the **Cyberbullying Parent Tip Sheet**
- Send home the **Connected Culture Parent Tip Sheet**
- Send home the **Connected Culture Parent/Teacher Intro Video**



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Key Vocabulary

- **Harassing:** Bombarding someone with messages over digital media. Repeated contact when it is least expected
- **Deceiving:** Using fake names, posing as someone else, or creating a fake profile about someone else
- **Flaming:** Saying mean things, usually in ALL CAPS, and often in a public forum with the intention to humiliate
- **Hate Speech:** A verbal attack targeting someone because of their race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation

teaching plans

Introduce

ASK *What are some of the ways that you and your friends tease each other online for fun?*

Sample responses:

- *Send jokes back and forth*
- *Alter photos of one another, but in a goofy, not mean, way*

ASK *What are signs that online teasing has moved from being harmless to crossing the line? How might it feel?*

Sample responses:

- *Statements feel scary, not funny anymore.*
- *You feel helpless.*
- *You feel like your reputation might suffer.*
- *You are worried about your safety.*

SHARE with students that it is often hard to decide what to do in cyberbullying situations, but that there are some situations when students must report cyberbullying. Let them know that it is important to tell a trusted adult (someone who will listen and who they believe will have the skills, desire, and authority to help them) immediately if any of the following situations arise:

- *You are being bombarded by messages repeatedly.*
- *Many kids get involved, making you feel as if you cannot get away.*
- *Any physical threats are made.*
- *People engage in hate speech (a verbal attack targeting someone because of their race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation).*

EXPLAIN that you are going to watch videos of a teen who was part of a cyberbullying situation.

Teach 1: View Video

REVIEW Key Vocabulary with students. Ask students if they have heard these words before, and what they think the words mean. Then share the definitions with students and ask them to generate examples.

SHOW the *Connected Culture Student Video Vignette – Stacey’s Story*

EXPLAIN that the video contains a real cyberbullying story.





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Teach 2: Discuss Vignettes

DIVIDE students into groups of four or five and hand out copies of the **Cyberbullying: Crossing the Line Student Discussion Guide** to each student. Review the Video Discussion Questions with students as a whole group. Refer to the **Cyberbullying: Crossing the Line Student Discussion Guide – Teacher Version** for guidance about leading the discussion.

If there is time, students should read Case Study 1, Attacked from All Sides, and/or Case Study 2, Election Sabotage.

Wrap Up and Assess

Use the following questions to assess if students understood the lesson objectives.

ASK *What are some of the different forms of cyberbullying?*

Sample responses:

- *Harassment, which feels virtually impossible to escape*
- *Deception, because it is dishonest to impersonate someone else, and it can damage their reputation*
- *Flaming, because of the extreme and cruel language*
- *Hate speech, which is discriminatory, and very damaging to someone’s reputation*

REVIEW that cyberbullying can make you feel angry, frustrated, sad, or fearful, especially when you don’t know who is sending the harassing messages. **EXPLAIN** that it can be hard to judge someone’s intentions online. Let students know that no matter how a message is sent, words used with the intention of hurting someone are taken very seriously by schools, parents, and even the police. Let students know that they should tell trusted adults if they observe or are involved in cyberbullying, and that they must report it to the school, their parents, or other trusted adults when someone has threatened to hurt someone else.



Extension Activity

Students brainstorm about an anonymous reporting system. Tell them that most kids say they would report cyberbullying if they did not have to identify themselves. Ask students to brainstorm ways for students to anonymously report cyberbullying at school. Have them make an action plan for dealing with the problem and a proposal for convincing administrators, teachers, students, and parents to get involved.



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Alignment with Standards — National Educational Technology Standards for Students[®] 2007

(Source: International Society for Technology in Education, 2007):

2. Communication and Collaboration

- a. interact, collaborate, and publish with peers, experts, or others employing a variety of digital environments and media
- b. communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats

5. Digital Citizenship

- a. advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology
- d. exhibit leadership for digital citizenship

Common Sense Media is an independent, nonprofit resource that helps families and educators teach kids how to be safe and smart in today's 24/7 media world. Go to www.commonsensemedia.org for thousands of reviews and expert advice.

