Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is treated as a form of harassment and intimidation under the IU Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct. Cyberbullying is also prohibited by Indiana state law and falls under Intimidation (IC 35-45-2-1), Harassment (IC 35-45-2-2), and Unlawful use of a communications medium (IC 35-45-2-3). While IU Northwest recognizes and encourages freedom of expression, members of the campus community have the right to be free from harassment, conduct that interferes with an individual’s academic performance, or a learning environment that is intimidating, hostile, or offensive. Cyberbullying constitutes conduct that may compromise the security of the university or the integrity of the educational process. We uphold our institutional values when we ensure the highest level of mutual respect and a culture of inclusion and dignity for all.

Cyberbullying may come in the form of emails, text messages, or the use of online social networking sites, cell phones or cameras. Social networking sites include, but are not limited to, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Vine, and blogs. The University will not tolerate lewd, intimidating or other forms of harassing conduct by or toward members of its community. It is important that students report being harassed to University Police, the Dean of Students, and/or the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Multicultural Affairs or the Office of Affirmative Action to investigate the issue, discuss options and student rights, as well as to provide on-campus or off-campus resources as needed.

Cyberbullying and other electronic communication information and resources are available through University Information Technology Services:

What to do about harassing email?

Protecting your personal information if you use social networking sites (e.g., MySpace or Facebook)

Tips for avoiding getting into trouble with email

How can I avoid identity theft online?

What is IU’s misuse and abuse of information technology resources policy?

The National Crime Prevention Council provides Frequently Asked Questions about Cyberbullying, which outlined below.

How are people cyberbullied or cyber stalked?

Being a victim of cyberbullying can be a common and painful experience. People who cyberbully or cyber stalk:

- Pretend they are other people online to trick others
- Spread lies and rumors about victims
• Trick people into revealing personal information
• Send or forward mean or inappropriate text messages
• Post pictures of victims without their consent

Of people surveyed by the National Crime Prevention Council (2010), 81 percent said that cyberbullies think their actions are funny. Other’s believe those who cyberbully:
• Don't think about the consequences
• Are encouraged by friends
• Think everybody cyberbullies
• Think they won't get caught

How do victims react?
Contrary to what cyberbullies may believe, cyberbullying is a big deal, and can cause a variety of reactions. Some people have reacted in positive ways to try to prevent cyberbullying by:
• Deleting messages without reading them
• Talking to a friend about the bullying
• Reporting the problem to an Internet service provider or website moderator
• Calling IU Northwest Police (219-980-6501), the Dean of Students (219-981-5660), the Office of Affirmative Action (219-980-6705), or the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Multicultural Affairs (219-980-6596).

Young adults and youth who are cyberbullied report feeling angry, hurt, embarrassed or scared. These emotions can cause victims, similar to other forms of harassment, to react by
• Seeking revenge on the bully
• Avoiding friends and activities
• Cyberbullying back

Some people feel threatened because they may not know who is cyberbullying them. Although cyberbullies may think they are anonymous, they can be found. If you are cyberbullied or harassed and need help, save all communication with the cyberbully and talk to your CA, University Police, the Office of Equity and Diversity, or the Office of the Dean of Student Life.

How can I prevent cyberbullying?
• Tell friends to stop cyberbullying
• Block communication with cyberbullies
• Share NCPC's anti-cyberbullying message with friends

What else can I do to stay cyber-safe?
Remember that the Internet is accessed by millions of people all over the world, not just your friends and family. While many Internet users are friendly, some may want to hurt you.
Below are some ways to stay cyber-safe:

- Never post or share your or anyone else’s personal information online (this includes your full name, address, telephone number, school name, parents' names, credit card number, or Social Security number).
- Never share your Internet passwords with anyone, except your parents.
- Never meet anyone face-to-face whom you only know online.
- Be sure to remember that future employers will likely be checking information related to you online.

Other helpful information and resources on cyberbullying can be found at stopbullying.gov, the Cyberbullying Research Center, and Office of the Indiana Attorney General.