Cyber Dangers 101:

Teaching students to think critically online

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child safety worldwide

Cyber Dangers 101: Teaching students to think critically online

By Kidproof Safety

ABOUT KIDPROOF

Kidproof Safety is a Canadian Child Safety Education provider and publisher. With sixteen years of worldwide experience in safety education, Kidproof has become the preferred partner and trusted source for private & public child-centric organizations, as well as local government agencies and institutions. Educators, child psychologists, law enforcement specialists and subject matter experts assist in creating the most current safety education lessons on the planet. Through Kidproof's courses, workshops, seminars, training programs, and curriculum development, we reach millions of child care supervisors, educators, schools, parents, and children every year.

ABOUT KIDPROOF'S "CYBER DANGERS 101: TEACHING TEENS TO THINK CRITICALLY ONLINE" COURSE

Despite being seemingly Internet-savvy, today's teens are vulnerable to a frightening range of dangerous situations online, including online romantic relationships and predators. A growing number of teens are being asked by people they know, trust, and sometimes love, to expose themselves inappropriately through sexting, which is not only illegal, but can expose them to humiliation, isolation, and depression. Also, a majority of teens will be victims or witnesses of cyber bullying, without having the tools necessary to protect themselves and without knowing how to stop it.

Kidproof's **Cyber Dangers 101** provides educators with research-based safety instruction strategies, giving you effective, preventative and engaging teaching tools, to help develop your students' critical thinking skills when it comes to the top 3 online dangers that students face in today's world: Online predators, sexting, and cyber-bullying.

So let's get started!

ONLINE PREDATORS

Online predators: know your enemy.

- Lurks in chat rooms, social networking & Gaming sites
- Is looking to build trust
- Is looking for vulnerable targets
- Grooms target, starts with small tests

Vulnerable targets are:

- Children between ages of 11 & 15
- Seeking more independence, testing limits, exploring their identity
- Isolated, lonely children
- ALL children: kids tend to develop trust too easily

Modus operandi

- Targets kids on social networking sites, chat rooms, instant messaging, email, blogs, or discussion boards
- Talks to kids about the latest trends, including music and entertainment
- Lures their victims with gifts, attention, and affection
- Listens and sympathizes with children and their problems
- Gains their trust and gradually introduces sexual content
- Determines if the kid is worth meeting face to face later

Develop your students' critical thinking skills in regards to online predators

OLD

- Don't talk to strangers online.
- Don't meet anyone in person that you have met online.
- Don't give out personal information.

NEW

- Explain the profile & tricks of online predators.
- Explain "why" online relationships are a bad idea.
- Criminal activity.
- Deceptive & manipulative motives of predator.
- Increased danger for others.
- Role play scenarios.

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SEXTING

Exchange of sexually explicit or sexually suggestive messages, pictures, or videos, primarily between mobiles phones.

Develop your students' critical thinking skills in regards to sexting

START THE CONVERSATION

- Do you think it's OK to send "sexy" images? Why?…
- What could happen to you if you send or forward a naked picture, or an inappropriate message?
- Have you ever received a sexy or naked picture on your cell phone?
- Has anyone ever asked or pressured you to send a nude or sexual picture?
- Have you ever done anything online that you have regretted? How did you feel just before doing it?
- Role play scenarios.

LESSON

- Illegal activity
- Texting is viral—anything sent in a text can be easily forwarded and shared.
- Possible negative consequences.
  - ❖ may face severe social and academic consequences
  - ❖ future embarrassment

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CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying is using the Internet or technology to tease, embarrass, threaten or harass someone else. This can include IM, email, cell phone texting and social networking sites.

Common types of cyberbullying

Flaming and trolling: This is when someone sends or posts hostile messages intended to make someone very mad or "inflamed" for the purpose of starting a conflict with the person.

Happy-slapping: This is when someone is being harassed (often physically abused) and then recorded and posted online for others to see.

Identity theft: This is when someone steals another person's passwords or takes over their online account and uses them to send or post incriminating or humiliating pictures or videos online.

Photoshopping: This is when someone alters a digital image and puts the main subject in an embarrassing situation.

Physical threats: This is when someone sends a threatening message making the receiver fear for their safety.

Rumour spreading: This is when someone spreads gossip through email, text messaging, or social networking sites to hurt the victim.

Why do bullies bully?

- Feeling insecure (low self-esteem or poor self-image)
- Feeling badly about themselves, jealousy
- Lacking in empathy
- Wanting attention or friends
- Wanting to feel cool or popular
- Family problems
- They are being bullied themselves
- Bullying to prevent being bullied
- Want to feel better about their own problems by exerting power or belittling someone else

Why do cyberbullies bully?

- Revenge or anger
- Power
- Entertainment

Signs your student is being cyberbullied

- Loss of interest in school or extracurricular activities
- Withdrawal from friends or from using the computer
- Noticeable anxiety
- Appears depressed or sad
- Begins behaving impulsively or reacting aggressively to comments
- Increased negative self-perception

Preventing and responding to cyberbullying

Educational curriculum[1] :

Implement an education curriculum that promotes kindness, communication, cooperation, and friendship, and includes lessons and activities stressing empathy, anger management, and conflict resolution skills. An educational curriculum will allow students to learn how to:

- Define bullying and cyberbullying.
- Recognize the different tactics bullies use.
- React to bullying if they are being bullied or witness others being bullied.
- Avoidance techniques.
- Increase levels of tolerance and empathy.

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[1] To learn more about Kidproof's Protect Ed™ education program and how it can be implemented in your school, visit www.kidproofsafety.com or contact us at protected@kidproofme.com

- Exhibit the five core elements of good citizenship: courage, compassion, respect, responsibility and honesty.

Teaching students to respond to bullying

ACTING ON BULLYING

The best way to respond to a bully is to freeze them like ICE[2]. This stands for:

- **I**gnore the provocation. (if possible)
- **C**ommunicate by making an assertive statement. (repeat if necessary)
- **E**xit and tell someone. Ask for help.

Bullying must be reported every time.

WITNESSING BULLYING

If your student sees someone being bullied, they need to ACT[3]:

- **A**ssess the situation quickly.
- **C**alm yourself. You don't want to alarm the bully and have him/her come after you.
- **T**ell an adult you trust immediately.

ACT with compassion: Do not encourage it or ignore it, take a stand against it.

Develop your students' critical thinking skills in regards to cyberbullying

WHAT YOU CAN DO:
- Encourage your students to tell you if they witness or are a victim of cyberbullying.
- Tell them not to join-in on the cruelty if they see another child being bullied.
- Tell them not to forward messages that could harm or hurt another person.
- Role play scenarios.

TELL YOUR STUDENTS TO:
- Tell them to never respond to mean or threatening messages.
- Save the evidence, such as emails, text messages and screen shots.
- Block harassing accounts, email addresses and phone numbers.
- Change cell phone numbers and account formation.
- Contact their Internet service provider (ISP) or cell phone provider for assistance.
- Ask website administrators to remove any content created to hurt your student.
- Contact the police.

USING TEACHABLE MOMENTS
A teachable moment: An unplanned opportunity that arises in the classroom where a teacher has an ideal chance to offer insight to his or her students.

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[2] ICE technique©: Protect Ed™ Program, Kidproof Safety Publishing, Grade 4 to Grade 12 education curriculum
[3] ACT technique©: Protect Ed™ Program, Kidproof Safety Publishing, Grade 4 to Grade 12 education curriculum

1) **Conversation starter -** *I remember one time when I was bullied… Have you ever had anything like that happen to you? Tell me about it.*

   Lesson - *Remember how it felt when you were bullied. When you see it happening to someone else, do not join in the laughter; try to be a good friend to that person.*

2) **Conversation starter -** *I remember one time when I behaved like a bully…*

   Lesson - *I am not proud of having done that. Here is what I should have done instead…*

3) **Conversation starter -** *Imagine that your friend, younger sibling, cousin or neighbor was being bullied by other kids at school. You found her/him crying after school one day and he/she told you all about it. How would that make you feel?*

   Lesson - *Remember that everyone who is being bullied is someone's brother/sister, cousin, friend etc. Try to be empathetic about how everyone feels when they are being bullied.*

You can also ask your students open questions such as….

- How can a person stand up to a bully?
- Have you ever sent a mean message because you were upset?
- What would you do if someone created a mean, fake profile of you or one of your friends?

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