**Reasons For Cyber Bullying**

Research shows that many bullies who choose to use the Internet as their “weapon of choice” are doing it because the can hide behind the computer. Think about it; what is the easiest way to say something hurtful to someone else. To the persons face, or over the computer? Most likely, the answer will be saying it online. When you say mean or hurtful things to people online, they never see your face, and sometimes, won’t even know who you are.

**What Is Cyber Bullying**

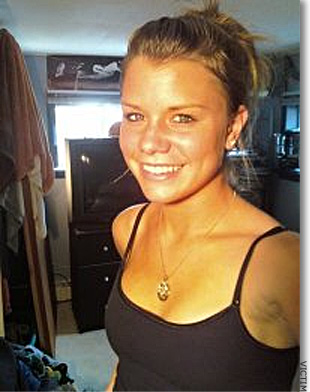
Because the Internet has grown so largely over the years, cyber bullying has grown to be a big problem. People may bully others on Facebook, MySpace, Formspring, AIM, or any other Internet source where you are in direct contact with a person. Cyber bullies tend to:

* Leave mean or hurtful messages, where no one but the user can see them.
* Write or post mean or hurtful words on ones profile, in which everyone on the site can see, potentially causing more than one bully to attack.
* Post pictures of someone else to their profile, pretending to be s/he.
* Anonymously leave messages to an Internet site, so the person receiving them will not even know who is bullying them.

**How To Reduce Cyber Bullying**

Cyber bullying is in no way stoppable, but it is preventable. As parents, you should check your child’s social networks to make sure that everyone on their “Friends List” is actually their friend. Talk to your child about the risks of adding strangers, and how it may affect them in a negative way. Make sure they have privacy settings up, and only post pictures or words that they wouldn’t mind *everyone* seeing. No matter what privacy setting you are on, people may still be able to see your profile, so make sure that everything is appropriate. As a young adult using a social network, make sure you keep your guard up. Some people hack into others profiles and will “act” as someone else, perhaps a friend of yours. Make sure you are being safe online. Also, if someone messages you a mean or nasty comment, don’t write back and play games with him or her. Be mature and delete the comment, or tell an adult about it. There is no way to completely end cyber bullying. The Internet has grown largely to be able to catch every case of cyber bullying. The only way to reduce it is to be smart and safe when using the Internet.

**Alexis Pilkington, 17**



These two girls were also victims on cyber bullying.

**Phoebe Prince, 15**