



# What to Do if Someone is Mean to You Online

## – tip sheet

### Don't fight back.

A lot of times a bully is looking to get a rise out of you, and fighting back just gives them what they want. Sometimes they're hoping that you'll fight back so that they can get **you** in trouble!

A lot of times people don't realize when they have hurt your feelings online. If you're not sure that somebody was being mean to you on purpose, start by talking to them in person – where you can see and hear each other – and see if you can work things out.

When something happens that gets you upset, take some time to let the first rush of anger or fear fade away. It's hard to make good decisions when you're mad, scared or embarrassed. If your heart is racing or you're feeling tense, it's time to get offline for a while. Sometimes it can be useful to go outside and do something active to help you get it out of your system.

### Save the evidence.

If somebody is being mean to you online, make sure that you have a record of it. If it's something that was sent directly to you, make sure to save it. If it's something that can be deleted (a tweet, a status update, etc.) get a screenshot (<http://www.take-a-screenshot.org/>).

If it happens more than once, start a journal that records what's happening. Include as many details as you can: where and when it happened, everything you know about the person doing it, anything you did (or didn't do) and how it made you feel.



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## Talk to somebody.

If someone is being mean to you online it's okay to talk to your friends or someone in your family about it. Kids who've been bullied say what other people did that helped the most was just to spend time with them and listen to them. If there's no one you can talk to offline, you can contact Kids Help Phone (<http://www.kidshelpphone.ca>) and talk to one of their trained counselors.

**Remind yourself that it's not your fault.** Nothing you can do makes it okay for people to be mean to you. Nothing about you gives people a reason to be mean to you. **If someone is mean to you, that's their problem – not yours.**

You should also **report** what's happening if:

- it's making you feel scared
- it's making you not want to go to school or do things you enjoy (like playing your favourite game because someone is being mean to you there)
- you can't stop thinking about it
- if the person has said they're going to hurt you or publish something that would hurt or humiliate you

You can report it to the people who run the place where it's happening (use the reporting tools on Facebook [<https://www.facebook.com/help/420576171311103/>], YouTube [[https://support.google.com/youtube/topic/2803138?hl=en&ref\\_topic=2676378](https://support.google.com/youtube/topic/2803138?hl=en&ref_topic=2676378)] or Twitter [<https://support.twitter.com/articles/15789#>].) Here [<http://cyberbullying.us/report/>] is a more complete, updated list of how you can report cyberbullying on popular sites and apps.

You can also talk to your parents, to a teacher, or to another adult you trust.

If you can't talk to an adult for any reason and the person is threatening to hurt you physically or is blackmailing you (threatening to do something like post embarrassing photos if you don't do what they say) you can also go straight to your local police.

