90% of Children ages 5 to 17 use computers
53% of Children ages 5-17 use the internet
80% have cell phones
Studies show that the majority (85-99%) of adolescents use the internet regularly
The world children live in today is increasingly digital

Covert psychological bullying conveyed through electronic mediums such as email, message boards, cell phones, blogs, social networking, video games, etc.
The anonymity that cyberbullying allows often takes it to a new level as the perpetrator feels like they will not be caught
Specific types of cyber-bullying:
- Flaming - A heated online exchange
- Harassment - Repeatedly sending nasty messages that cause emotional distress
- Denigration - Online postings of negative or false info, can be used to damage reputation or friendships
- Impersonation - Pretending to be someone else and posting material to get the person in trouble/danger or damage that person’s reputation
- Outing - Sharing someone’s secrets or embarrassing info, images online
- Cyber stalking - Repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear
- Happy Slapping - videotaping and electronically disseminating videos of someone being slapped on the internet

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Who are Cyber-Bullies?

Often times those who cyberbully have been or currently are victims of real-world bullying or cyberbullying
Others participate in cyberbullying because they do not see it as harmful, but rather as funny.

Who are the Victims of Cyber-Bullying?

Unlike traditional bullying, wherein the victims are commonly targeted because they are perceived to be physically inferior to the bully, the victims of cyberbullying are:
- Targeted for specific attributes such as physical appearance, weight, ethnicity, etc.
- Suffer from high levels of social anxiety

What Are the Consequences of Cyber-Bullying?

Emotional responses to cyber-bullying could precipitate into more serious behavior outcomes
Most victims didn’t feel accepted by peer group - often feel socially excluded

8% of participants have attempted suicide, run away, refused to go to school, or have been chronically ill after bullying
In study of 3,000 students, 38% of victims felt vengeful, 37% felt angry, 24% felt helpless

A study found the following reasons to be the most frequently cited for not reporting Cyber-Bullying:
- Fear of retribution (30%)
- The student’s problem and not the schools mandate (29%)
- They felt the school couldn’t stop the bullying anyways (27%)
- They could get their friends in trouble (26%)
- Their parents would restrict their access to the internet (24%)
- Others would label them as ‘informers’ or ‘rats’ (20%)

This same study found that if victims were to report Cyber-Bullying:
- 47% would report to school personnel
- 57% would tell their parents
- 74% would tell their friends
- 25% would tell no one

At Home, parents can:
- Move home computers into easily viewable areas of house
- Talk with kids regularly about online activities
- Consider installing parental control filtering software
- Encourage your child to report bullying
At School:
- Awareness raising through programs that disseminate information
- Provide opportunities to report anonymously
- Post rules and consequences in every school setting as a reminder
- Holistic school policies stressing the values of fairness and trust
- Self-esteem building programs

What Parents Can Do When Cyber-Bullying Occurs

- Contact your child’s school. Even if the cyberbullying is not occurring in school, officials might be able to assist.
- If possible, contact the bully’s parents. Send them a registered letter detailing the messages and asking them to make the bullying stop. They could be held liable for financial and emotional damages.
- Finally, if the situation is not resolved, or if physical threats are made, contact the police.

Sources for More Information About Cyber-Bullying

Cyberbully.org:  
www.cyberbully.org

Bully Online:  
www.bullyonline.org/related/cyber.htm

National Cyber Security Alliance - StaySafe Online:  
http://staysafeonline.org/

Cyberbully Research Center  
www.cyberbullying.us/

Stop Cyberbullying  
www.stopcyberbullying.org

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