8 Reasons Kids CyberBully

Every day kids are impacted by cyberbullying. But to put an end to online bullying we have to first understand why kids are doing it. The reasons can run the gamut from anger and revenge to a longing to fit in. Here is an overview of the top eight reasons why kids cyberbully others.

Are motivated by revenge. Some kids who are victims of bullying want to find a way to retaliate for the pain they have experienced. These kids are often referred to as bully-victims. And they feel justified in their actions because they, too, have been harassed and tormented. By cyberbullying others, they may feel a sense of relief and vindication for what they experienced. Sometimes these kids will even go after the bully directly. Other times, they will target someone whom they perceive to be weaker or more vulnerable than them.

Believe the victim deserves it. Bullying often revolves around a person's social status at school. And some kids will cyberbully others based on the school's perceived social ladder.

For instance, a mean girl might get cyberbullied by an anonymous group of girls who are hoping to bring her down a notch or two. Or, by contrast, a mean girl might cyberbully a girl who excels academically because she is jealous about her success. Other times, one girl might cyberbully another girl because she believes she stole her boyfriend. Whatever the reason, kids sometimes feel their cyberbullying behaviors are warranted and deserved. Consequently, they usually do not feel remorse or guilt for cyberbullying.

Want to alleviate boredom. Kids who are bored and looking for entertainment will sometimes resort to cyberbullying to add some excitement and drama to their lives. They also might choose to cyberbully because they lack attention and supervision from parents. As a result, the Internet becomes their only source of entertainment and an outlet for getting attention.

Give in to peer pressure. Sometimes kids will cyberbully to fit in with a group of friends or a clique. As a result, these kids succumb to peer pressure in order to be accepted by a group at school, even if it means going against their better judgment. They are more concerned with fitting in than they are worried about the consequences of cyberbullying. Other times, groups of friends will cyberbully because there is a false sense of security in numbers.

Think everyone cyberbullies. When young people believe lots of people are bullying online, they are more likely to engage in the behavior themselves. In their minds, it doesn't seem like a significant problem because their peer group accepts the behavior. What's more, kids will cyberbully others to fit in with a group that regularly harasses people online.

Are hungry for power. Cyberbullying can be a manifestation of social status. Kids who are popular often make fun of kids who are less popular. They use the Internet to perpetuate relational aggression and mean girl behavior. They also will spread rumors and gossip and may even ostracize others through cyberbullying. Meanwhile, kids who are trying to climb the social ladder at school or gain some social power will resort to cyberbullying to get attention. They also might cyberbully to diminish the social status of another person.

Believe they won't get caught. The anonymity of the Internet gives kids a false sense of security. They believe if they post things anonymously that they won't get caught. What's more, kids who cyberbully do not necessarily see the reaction of the victim, which makes it extremely easy to say and do things they would not otherwise do. In fact, a significant number of kids who do not bully face-to-face will still engage in cyberbullying.

Are lacking empathy. Most kids who cyberbully believe it isn't a big deal. Because they do not see the pain that they cause, they feel little to no remorse for their actions. In fact, several studies have found that as many as 40% of students who engaged in online bullying reported not feeling anything for the victims after bullying online. Instead, many kids reported that online bullying made them feel funny, popular and powerful.