

# overview

**the goal of the cybersafety program** is to develop strategies that will reduce the incidents of cyberbullying by creating public awareness of the issues and proactively promoting cybersafety through the establishment of key partnerships between Harford County Public Schools (HCPS), Harford County Government, local law enforcement agencies and the community.

## what is cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is intentionally embarrassing, harassing, threatening or targeting an individual or group using electronic means, such as: email, social sites (i.e. Facebook, MySpace, Twitter), blogs, cell phones and other technological methods.

## what is sexting?

Sexting is the act of sending sexually explicit photographs or text messages via electronic devices, mostly cell phones. Sending sexually explicit or being in possession of photographs of a minor is against the law. If you suspect explicit messages are being sent, take action!

## test how much you know about cybersafety...

Parents and students can take an online quiz on our website, [www.hcps.org/cybersafety](http://www.hcps.org/cybersafety), to test their cybersafety knowledge.

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tear this portion off and place next to your computer as a reference

# cybersafety

A guide for parents and students

[www.hcps.org/cybersafety](http://www.hcps.org/cybersafety)



Prepared by Harford County Public Schools in partnership with:  
Boys & Girls Clubs of Harford County  
Harford County Council Parent Teacher Association  
Harford County Office of Drug Control Policy  
Harford County Sheriff's Office  
United States Attorney's Office

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# tips for students



The internet can be a fun tool and great way to find out information. However, going online can be a potential danger. Here are some simple tips to keep in mind to stay out of trouble.

**wtgp?** (translation = want to go private?)

Think before you type and hit send. Messages can be seen by others, and emails and photos can be forwarded very easily with a click of a mouse.

**a/s/l?** (translation = what is your age, sex and location?)

Never share personal information, such as your name, address, phone number, picture, or the name of your school.

Do not make plans to meet “friends” that you have met online without checking with your parent or guardian. If your parent or guardian says yes, then plan to meet in a public place. Make sure your parent goes with you to meet them.

No matter how “fun” people may be online, when meeting them in real life, they may not be so fun.

Do not harass or bully others online with messages and photos. Do not pretend to be another person online, set up social sites or respond to messages on him/her behalf.

**tmi** (translation = too much information)

If you feel you are in danger or are receiving inappropriate messages, there is never too much information to tell an adult. If you see something online that makes you uncomfortable, you must tell an adult right away. Your parent or guardian can help you decide whether or not to report it to law enforcement.

**Remember: NEVER give away too much information online.**

# tips for parents

There are specific steps parents and guardians can take to keep children safe. Start by educating yourself on the internet, particularly social sites, and on how your children are using the computer. Here are a few simple tips to help parents.



## chat

Discuss with your child what kinds of information can be found online and be available to help them search. Remind your child that some information should not be given out, such as name, age and location. Talk with your children about their interactions online, who their friends are and what they are doing and seeing on social networking sites. Discuss what is appropriate behavior.

## protect

- Set up rules when using the home computer.
- Keep the computer in a central location in your home.
- Always supervise younger children when they are online.

Consider talking to your Internet provider about child protection software and setting up parental control features. These are often free. Please note that not all blocking features are 100% accurate.

## act

If you suspect that your child is being pursued by a predator or bullied online, do something! Call the police if your child is receiving inappropriate text messages, phone calls, violent threats or pornography online. It is helpful for authorities to physically see messages being sent; print or take a screen shot of the message. To learn how to take a screen shot, see the resources section.

Visit [www.hcps.org/cybersafety](http://www.hcps.org/cybersafety) and become familiar with the resources provided. Contact your child’s school for additional information.

# resources

## email & chat acronyms

A new language, acronyms and slang, is created all the time on the Internet. Below are a few examples:

rofl... rolling on the floor laughing  
 lmao... laughing my a\*\* off  
 idk... i don't know  
 nbd... no big deal  
 ftw... for the win  
 btw... by the way  
 ily... i love you

imy... i miss you  
 g2g... got to go  
 tgif... thank God it's Friday  
 wth... what the h\*\*\*  
 wtf... what the f\*\*\*  
 smh... shake my head  
 hmu... hit me up

For a complete list of acronyms visit <http://www.netlingo.com/acronyms.php>

## approved safe surfing sites for more information:

[www.hcps.org](http://www.hcps.org)

[www.wiredsafety.org](http://www.wiredsafety.org)

<http://www.harfordsheriff.org>

<http://stopbullying.gov>

<http://www.netsmartz.org>

[www.athinline.org](http://www.athinline.org)

## how to print a screen shot

A screen shot is a photograph or image taken of what appears on a computer monitor. Taking a screen shot can help the police visually see messages or photographs.



**PC/WINDOWS:** To take a screen shot, first the content must be clearly displayed to capture the image. Press **Print Screen** button on your keyboard located in the top right hand corner. The screen shot is temporarily saved and needs to be pasted into a document so that it can be saved to the hard drive. Open a Microsoft Word document, for example, and paste the image into the document and save or print the image.

**APPLE:** To take a screen shot, first make sure the content is displayed to capture the image. Press the Apple Command key + Shift+ 3. This captures the entire desktop to a file on the desktop as ‘picture #.’

\*This information is from the Cyberbullying Research Center; [www.cyberbullying.us](http://www.cyberbullying.us). and [http://www.safesurfingkids.com/chat\\_room\\_internet\\_acronyms.html](http://www.safesurfingkids.com/chat_room_internet_acronyms.html).