

# How to Deal with MALICIOUS ATTACKS

## (CYBERBULLIES ETC)



In this latest study, 26.5% of students said they had experienced cyberbullying within the 30 days prior to taking the survey. In 2023, the most common forms of cyberbullying experienced (among those who were cyberbullied) included:

- Someone posted mean or hurtful comments about me online (77.5%)
- Someone spread rumors about me online (70.4%)
- Someone embarrassed or humiliate me online (69.1%)
- Someone intentionally excluded me from a group text or group chat (66.4%)
- Someone repeatedly contacted me via text or online after I told them to stop (55.5%)

Source: cyberbullying research center website



### Don't retaliate:

Proverbs 15:1-2: A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger. 2 The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness. 3 The eyes of the Lord are in every place, Keeping watch on the evil and the good. Proverbs 15:1-2

James 1:19-20: My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, 20 because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

Romans 12:17-21: "Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord. On the contrary: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (Do not stoop to their level and attack. Do not treat them the way they treat you. Let them be embarrassed by treating you wrong when you don't attack back and treat them with grace.)

### Let God give you peace in the situation:

Talk to the Lord when you get malicious criticism. "God I am open to you, but to them I will not listen. I am totally going to tune out this malicious criticism and I will not listen. I trust you to show me and lead me in the right way".



1 Peter 2:22-23: He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth. When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to Him who judges justly.

Prov 26:2: Like a fluttering sparrow or a darting swallow, an undeserved curse does not come to rest.

Romans 12:19 - Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord.

## **Practical Steps for Dealing with malicious attacks (cyberbully) online:**

### **Pray**

- Remember the biblical wisdom that applies to this situation.
- Don't respond or retaliate – cyberbullies want to get a reaction out of you. They have fun with it. Most bullies often stop when they don't get a reaction.
- Tell them to stop messaging you.
- Block the bully – take the person off your friends list or block them.



### **If it continues:**

- Tell your parents.
- Save and print the messages – if the harassment continues you need evidence.
- Report it to the app or website or to your phone service provider to block them or ban them.
- Talk to a friend - get good input when you are feeling bad so you are not isolated. Bullies often want to isolate you from your parents and friends and may try to embarrass you, so you don't get support.
- If harassment continues or there are threats – you can report it to law enforcement.

### **Other things to know:**



Realize that malicious attacks are really NOT about you. The problem is with the OTHER PERSON and that they have fun attacking other people! They enjoy hurting people! They feel they can get away with it online. Hurting people often hurt people. Wounded people often wound people. This is not to make excuses for wrong behavior but to help you consider the big picture and that the problem is not with you but with the other person.

Support for others: “Research indicates that peers sticking up for each other is a very effective defense against bullies. Bullies work by trying to isolate their victims. When kids rally around the target, it thwarts the bully.”

### **It's a growing problem:**



In 2016, 10.3% of students told us that they had stayed home from school because of cyberbullying. In 2023, that number nearly doubled to 19.2%. Finally, in 2016, about 43% of students said that bullying and cyberbullying were “a big problem” in their schools while in 2023 54% of students said that was the case. Source: cyberbullying research center website