

A good conversation starts with one thing –

the ability to

patiently listen



The following information is a summary of the information found in our Cyberbullying training at parentline.com.au/cyberbullying to help guide your role in supporting children and teens navigate online bullying.

Active listening is an art – and while you don't need to be a professional to employ these tactics, if you follow these simple steps you will increase the likelihood of a productive conversation:

1. **Give your full attention to the conversation.** Turn down/off noise and ignore all distractions.
2. **Turn your body towards them, if possible.**
3. **Maintain soft eye contact, even if they look away.** Demonstrate you are engaged.
4. **Don't interrupt the flow of conversation.** If you need further clarification, wait for a pause and invite them to clarify a point for you.
5. **Watch your tone.** Avoid sharp, condescending statements. Speak as through you are equals.
6. **Reserve judgement.** If your child tells you something that shocks you, reserve facial expressions or showing outward emotion.
7. **Resist the urge to dismiss the child's concerns** – what you find trivial is not important.
8. **Demonstrate you have heard their concerns** by repeating important information back to them in summary form, such as:

"Let me clarify I have heard you correctly. You say that Jessie and Andy are posting comments on your Facebook posts and you feel that they are purposely being mean. This started about two weeks ago. You said you have reported this to Facebook, but because the comments don't have rude words in them, the bullying reports were not recognised by Facebook. As a result, you feel as though no one believes you and they are getting away with bullying you online. Is that correct?"

9. **Resist the urge to 'fix' the problem** - Ask the child if they have a solution in mind. Asking for their opinion will allow them to maintain a sense of control OR open up an opportunity for them to ask for your help/give you permission to help. It is normal to want to jump in and solve the child's problem for them. But in this case, we will empower the child more by helping them take back ownership of the situation. The parent's role is to facilitate this empowerment.

If you are interested in learning more about cyberbullying behaviour, warning signs, how to start a conversation, how to increase your security and privacy setting, along with how to report cyberbullying, you can do so in the full Parentline Training. It takes approximately an hour and designed to be easily accessed from your mobile device or tablet.

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