

## Understanding of Cyber Bullying amongst Parents and School Counsellors

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### Abstract

The present study was undertaken with a primary objective to understand perspectives of parents and school counselors on cyber bullying. This was done by studying perceptions of parents of 10-12-year-old children and school counselors. All participants were located in Delhi. The participants were interviewed to know their understanding of cyber bullying and the ways that they used to prepare children to combat cyber bullying. Counselors were selected from four different private schools, who had at least two years of experience in counselling. Three counselors were from a psychology background and one was from Human Development and Childhood Studies. All the four counselors had an experience of more than two years.

**Keywords:** *Cyber-bullying, counselling, online behaviour*

### Introduction

Childhood, in contemporary times, has been marked as a distinct stage through various guidelines and definitions and it can be both constructed and reconstructed for and by children. The UNCRC defines 'child' as a person below the age of 18 years, thereby marking childhood as a period of life lived from birth to 18 years of age. Research in the field of or relating to children/childhood has shown significant changes about how the meaning and construct of childhood has emerged, transformed and gained new dimensions over a long stretch of time.

One of the most famous works focusing on childhood is by Aries (1960). For his research, he studied medieval art, writings, games for children, clothing worn by children as well as other norms and representations of children and concluded that children in the medieval era were 'miniature adults'. The art portrayed children as shortened bodies of adults, having adult-like features, with clothes similar to what the elders

wore. He also pointed out that the era had less emotional loading or significance for childhood/children from the parent's side. His work was his interpretation of all the existing forms that he studied, and therefore, it can have varied views along with some loopholes.

Pollock (1983) argues that in order to understand the emergence of childhood as a distinct stage, it was important to look at the first-hand experience of parent-child relationship. Further, Shahar (1992) argued that medieval-age parents invested in the emotional and physical needs of the child, displaying care and affection. Although Aries never claimed that the medieval era lacked caring on the adult's part, these researches have been used to criticise and comment on Aries and his co-thinkers.

Childhood has largely been classified in stages/periods of infancy, preschool, early childhood, middle childhood and adolescence. The transition period between middle childhood and adolescence is also referred to as 'late childhood'. During late childhood, children gain

access to new settings and encounter pressures that present them with distinctive developmental challenges. The widening world of late childhood is marked especially by the entry into school of children from all strata of society. School entry signifies a new set of social contacts with adults and other children as well as a wider variety of settings than those that characterise middle childhood. The widening social world for family relationships and their continuing functions for children in late childhood also occupied a primary role during late childhood years.

**Bullying:** Bullying can be described as the systematic abuse of power: the exact definition of 'abuse' will depend on the social and cultural context. Bullying is persistent violence, physical or psychological, conducted towards an individual who is not able to defend herself/himself in the actual situation (Roland, 1989).

Bullying may take different forms (Smith, 1994). Direct bullying includes both physical and verbal harassment: hitting, kicking, pushing, teasing, calling names, or insulting, but also damaging other's property or stealing. On the other hand, relational bullying causes harm through damaging or controlling relationships with peers, included in relational aggression forms of harassment such as "excluding a peer from one's play group, purposefully withdrawing friendships or acceptance in order to hurt or control the child, and spreading rumors about the child so that peers will reject him/her".

Bullying becomes highly prevalent during the late middle school years because children have strong social skills yet are still quite emotionally immature. The combination creates the perfect breeding ground for many forms of social aggression. Left unchecked by getting no conflict resolution skills and strategies to increase situations, they are left to experience bullying behavior much more than they should.

A bully knows how to cause pain to another person. This knowledge requires advanced

cognitive and social abilities, including the abilities to take others' perspectives and to empathise. A child, during late childhood years, gains both abilities, which is another reason why bullying in middle school is common. Middle school students are better able to understand emotional triggers and have the words to connect the dots. Significant numbers of children are bullied, and this can result in short-term and long-term negative effects for both the victims and bullies. Like adult friends, children who are friends try to be similar to each other.

Cyber bullying, or using electronic technologies in order to bully another person, or a group of people, is becoming more common today. The term "cyber bully" is used to describe the individual(s) administering bullying via electronic devices. Dehue, Bolman, and Völlink (2008) found that 22% of students were bullied either traditionally or electronically, at least once within the past school year.

Cyber bullying can be defined as an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or an individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and over time, against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself. Cyber bullying is a form of bullying which has, in recent years, become more apparent, as the use of electronic devices such as computers and mobile phones by young people has increased. Cyber bullying can take many forms. It is subdivided into seven sub-categories: Text message bullying, Picture/Video Clip bullying (via mobile phone cameras), Phone call bullying (via mobile phone), Email bullying, Chat-room bullying, Bullying through instant messaging, Bullying via websites and Video games.

Many school-aged children have experienced the unkindness of bullying. The impact and effects of bullying have been described extensively in scholarly literature. The current body of students brings an additional threat to bullying. Due to their sophisticated use of technology, today's

students are using current delivery systems to taunt, tease, and threaten their classmates. Cyber bullying is the newest form of bullying, and it brings additional challenges for school personnel. Because of the unique aspects of cyber bullying, school psychologists need strategies to guide school communities faced with this threatening behavior.

The childhood experience of bullying or being bullied has existed over many generations. However, the problem of cyber bullying has raised this issue to new dimensions because bullying through technology is not bound by physical space. Cyber bullying is the deliberate and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices, carried out as an aggressive act by a group or individual against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself. Unlike traditional bullying, which typically takes place in the schoolyard, buses, and paths to school, cyber bullying continues even when children are in their home, leaving victims feeling helpless and thinking as though they have nowhere to go. Some classic examples of what cyber bullied victims are experiencing 24 hours a day, seven days a week, are derogatory comments in the inbox of their emails, inappropriate text messages containing words and pictures, or a dedicated Facebook page containing hurtful things and images posted for the entire world to see. Cyber bullying is prevalent among young people all over the world.

### Findings

**Defining cyber bullying:** All parents were aware of the term cyber bullying. They used different terms to define cyber bullying, that were “making someone afraid of, disclosing their personal information and harassing or blackmailing someone online”, “फेसबुक पर तंग करना डराना धमकाना”, “If someone uses internet for wrong purpose including games, adult videos posting on you tube, wrong MMS sharing, uploading photos without someone’s consent”.

One parent said, “If someone makes fake ID and uploads photos and posts bad comment about others on Facebook”. “Cyber means computer and internet and bullying means to harm the person so, cyber bullying would be bullying on internet and threatening someone for money or any other purpose”. One parent related the Blue whale game to cyber bullying using examples; he said, “जैसे ब्लू व्हेल गेम में क्यूरेटर फोन करके बच्चों को डराता धमकाता है और कहता है कि जाओ छत से कूदो और अपना हाथ काट दो तो वह साइबर बुली कर रहा है”. All responses pointed towards cyber bullying that happens via internet.

**Usage of internet by children:** When asked about the usage of internet by children, parents responded that children use WhatsApp for 10- 15 minutes just for recreation and for being in touch with family friends (five), watching videos and playing games (three), and for studying purpose (two). Parents reported that the duration of use increased during vacations and weekends. Only one mother reported complete restriction on using WhatsApp as she didn’t want her daughter to see any “adult” message as she may get distracted and may lose interest in studies as reported by her.

Out of 10 parents, only one said that limited use of internet cuts down chances of cyber bullying, whereas the rest of the parents were not receptive to this idea. They felt that internet is very important, and only if it is not monitored, a child may become a victim of cyber bullying. They were of the opinion that posing more restrictions would lead to more curiosity. They also talked about its usage, highlighting that it is helpful for children in doing homework and projects as well as for remaining in touch with relatives.

Parents reported using different ways of telling their children not to waste too much time using mobile phones by taking the following actions:

locking the phone with passwords, giving strict instructions, giving reasoning and warnings,

monitoring the child, by taking away phones from them. Two parents said they beat their children and instructed them not to use mobile phones too much. Two parents said that they distract their children and give them other tasks like household chores or send them outside to play. They also instructed them use mobiles less as it can affect their eyes and may cause headache and irritation in the eyes. One parent said that, “I do not keep inappropriate content so that my children do not open and see it; I keep lock on my phone and keep another phone for my children so that they can take help for their studies”.

One parent said that, “I will try to explain the importance of time and management, I will rather advise him to go for studies and for recreation, he should go out to play and make friends face to face, not on Facebook”. Parents, thus, report strategies they use to restrict children from overusing mobile phones and some of them also reported using physical punishment for the same.

Parents further reported that they usually discuss issues related to cyber bullying by giving instructions like “do not talk to strangers, do limited chats with your friends”. They also said that they monitor by checking history and messages, instruct their children not to play video games, and tell their children that if someone sends bad messages, they must tell their parents.

One of the parents also shared that “my children got information from school related to blue whale games and they came back and also instructed me, so likewise, children discuss issues related to cyber bullying”. One parent said her child is on Facebook and both are friends on Facebook. It was found that parents who had daughters were more restrictive towards giving mobile phones and especially mothers gave instructions such as not talking to strangers and checked history and their friends on Facebook. They also instructed their daughters that if they

see any inappropriate content on you tube, they should immediately click the back button, and if someone teases them, then they should tell them because mothers spend more time with daughters and understand them more, as said by one mother. One parent said, “By giving examples and past experiences and news related to cyber bullying, by giving warnings to children, using internet for academic purpose only and by telling them not to visit particular sites or apps”. One parent said that he sits with his children and tells them how to use apps and monitors what his children do on internet. Only one father said that he told his children about blue whale games and told them that the game should not be played.

All 10 parents said that their children’s different behaviour will tell them if something is wrong. The behaviour reported by them included actions such as hiding, not making eye contact, telling lies, confused facial expressions, shivering, being afraid, being disturbed, being quiet, being nervous or irritated, engaging less in social interaction, using phone all the time, asking more questions related to a particular app or site, not letting parents check whether the child has created some ID. Few parents also said children might share their concerns with their grandparents.

One parent said that, “he will check the child’s profile, once he will get to know that he uses some app like Facebook and Twitter”. One father said that, “he will track his son’s activities and if he gets to know that the child did it deliberately, then definitely he will be punished”.

Another parent said that, “his daughter will be quiet because she is very talkative and will become aggressive and will be in anger all the time and will not understand anything even if anybody will try to tell her right things she will show aggression”. Findings reveal that parents know of the signs that they must be careful of. Still only a few of them made it a point to do a watchful supervision of their children’s actions on the internet.

*Ways adopted to prevent cyber bullying.* Out of 10 parents, five said no and five said yes when asked if they had installed any safety software to prevent cyber bullying. Those who said no reported that they checked history and text messages and asked their children what they did during internet surfing and took counselling from teachers in school about the usage of internet. One parent had installed an App lock and another had a safety software called “I manager” that had age restrictions as it restricts unsuitable content for children.

In a study done by Levine, Emily (2013) called *A Study of Parental Understanding of and Intervention in Cyber Bullying among Children in Fourth through Eighth Grades*, the results indicated the depth of the impact of technology on children as reported by parents. Gaming, using technology as a communication tool, utilising technology for school, and the availability and accessibility of technology were seen to have the greatest impact on the lives of the children. Parents recognised that cyber bullying is taking place through cell phones, social networking, and e-mails. In order to prevent cyber bullying incidents from occurring, many parents indicated that they control their child's online activities or discuss appropriate internet use. However, almost half of the parents did not have filters and software programs installed on their child's computers. Parents also indicated that if they were to find out about participation in cyber bullying incidents, a conversation would take place between the parents and child, in addition to the taking away of technology. Results from the qualitative research indicated parent's concerns regarding cyber bullying, difficulty in supervising all use of technology by children, and lack of supervision by parents of other children. The study concluded that more attention should be given to parents in school bullying programs. There is also a need to provide education to parents on how to respond to cyber bullying. Parents need to create supervisory plans that

include conversations between themselves and their children as well as evaluate the games and websites that their children are using. The present study also reveals that only one parent out of 10 had installed a safety software, although a number of parents reported supervising their children's internet activity.

Out of 10 parents, two reported that they would try to seek information in a friendly way, whereas three said they would directly question their child and may ask for their Facebook password. A parent also said that, “if my child will not accept my friend request on Facebook, then it will mean that something is wrong and I will ask him to delete his profile”. Parents wanted to be in the know about activities their children indulged in on social media, and from children's findings, it came to the fore that children also had a clear idea of the same. Parents discussed with their children that they should not play certain games, as they are harmful. Every parent had different ways of telling their kids about the blue whale game, two parents said that their children got information about blue whale game in their schools and they told their mothers. Parents also reported that when they play games, their children play along with them so that they can monitor them at the same time and said when they play too many games, their mothers engage them in some household work or might tell them to go out and play.

One parent said, “playing a game is not a problem, but the way you don't have to play the game and get hurt is big problem. One parent said that “children should not be given mobile phones at a very early age; right age at which mobile phones should be given is above 15 years. Children should be told why using internet can at times be harmful for them”.

Another parent said that he had instructed his children about the blue whale game and told them that “it is a very harmful game, so do not download it and do not try to play” and given

warnings to the child again and again. Another parent said that, “I will tell the disadvantages of the game to my children and give examples of cases that took place in various parts of India like Mumbai, Bengal cases and I had made him read all the news about blue whale game and told him about the consequences”. He also reported that once his son drew a whale on his arm and his mother got angry with him and gave him a tight slap, and after that, he told his son not to draw and told him to not to download or click the link of blue whale games. Another parent told his daughter that “this is very harmful game so do not play it or download it, if someone sends you link or post do not like or click on it. Another parent told his son that this game should not be played by him. He said, “this game is harmful and will tell you to do tasks which are very harmful, it will tell you to harm yourself as harming yourself is very bad and by doing this you are not only hurting, yourself but you hurt your parents too”. Most of the parents held discussions with their children after reading about incidences in the newspaper and instructed them to be safe and not to open unknown links on the internet.

### **Role of school counsellors**

#### ***Making students aware about cyber bullying.***

Out of four counselors, two said that they made their children in their school aware of cyber bullying by initiating discussions about related news articles. One of them said, “there is no universal age to sensitise children about cyber bullying. Children’s exposure needs to be identified first, and then appropriate sensitisation needs to be provided. We provide cyber security workshops, beginning from class four and for class three, simplified understanding on online games and safety measures”. One counselor said that through discussions in classroom, they make children aware in their school about cyber bullying.

Out of four counselors, three said that 10 years onwards is the age when children should be

sensitised about cyber bullying. One said that there is no universal age for sensitising children about cyber bullying.

#### ***Views on time children should spend on internet.***

All the counselors shared their views about how much time 10-12 years children should spend on internet. One of them said that it “depends upon individual need as some schools provide homework related to online surfing further whatever time the child is using internet the parent of a child of this age group should be around and aware”. One counselor said, “45 minutes is enough to spend on internet and surfing related to homework should be allowed under adult supervision and telling simultaneously that what is to be clicked and how search engines work and what to type and what to click”. One counselor said that, “10 to 12 year olds must only be allowed to surf the net with parental supervision, it could even be something that they do together-allowing them on social media is not advisable. Since education system encourages a lot of projects, school related work can be encouraged for the students, they can be allowed as long as it does not promote violence and objectification”. One counselor said, “an average two hours a week is sufficient for children”. All of them felt that parents must supervise the internet usage of children and that there should be a fixed time limit for its usage.

#### ***Views on impact of cyber bullying on children.***

All four counselors shared a range of outcomes that children may face when they get cyber bullied, arguing that it can lead to low self-esteem, cause chronic panic mode, can curb child’s expressive rights, cause anxiety and depression, may lead to self-harm, may lead to poor academic performance and distress. They also felt that it can impact a child’s social and emotional well-being, which can affect a child’s development across all domains. Social aloofness, emotional anxiety, extreme fear, self-harm were other effects that were reported by the school counselors. All the counselors were of the

view that limiting the use of internet does not necessarily cut down chances of cyber bullying, but telling the child about the pros and cons of using internet will be more helpful. This was in consonance with the views of most of the parents as well.

**Cases of cyber bullying.** Out of four counselors, three agreed that children come up with cases of cyber bullying, whereas only one said that “no case of cyber bullying has been reported to me so far”.

Those who said yes discussed various issues such as the multi-player games which children play, in which the opponent on losing uses extremely foul language, along with threatening to kill or harm, which according to them, is a very common affair these days as reported by children. They also reported that many girls shared their experiences with fake profiles on Facebook and bullying on WhatsApp.

All counselors said that if a case cannot be handled at the school level, then parents are involved and children are referred to a professional or a psychologist, and some even said that the help of police can be sought along with legal aid. They all said that they ask parents to take strict action against the one who bullies.

**Views on involvement of parents.** *Engaging parents and students in discussions on cyber bullying.* Every school had a different culture on engaging parents and students. One counselor said that, “through classroom workshops; an internet safety pledge is given to children to be discussed with parents at home. School also organizes a large group parents’ workshop on cyber security”. One counselor said that, “by arranging a parent orientation at school and for children classroom discussions are held. One counselor said, “for students we share news related to blue whale games and discuss with each other children come up with lot of Facebook and Instagram bullying and for parents we discuss them on parent teacher meetings.

Another counselor said that, “for students a discussion during value education class and according to the need we conduct workshop for parents”. All counselors had organised sessions, either with children or parents, or both separately, for creating awareness about cyber bullying.

**What should parents do?** All four counselors believed that “parents should first show unconditional positive regard to their child, show them their strong support and belief that they have in their child and further through a dialogue find out the bullies and act accordingly”. One of them said, “speak to the child about it first, supervise the content, if it is another student then inform the school authorities if not then inform cyber cell department”. One counselor said that, “parents should talk to the child and should tell their children how to use internet and should support the child and should consult a therapist if case is severe”. Another counselor said, “parents should file a complaint in Cyber Crime Cell and they have to provide emotional and social security and support to the child”.

The counselors were of the opinion that parents should talk to the child, set routines and supervise the child, they also said that parents should allow children to access internet, but keep an open communication with them about its pros and cons and supervise the usage. Parents should inspire confidence so that their children can report anything to them. Parents also need to listen patiently with complete understanding, according to the counselors.

**Issues that parents usually face.** All the counselors said yes, parents had approached them regarding their concerns regarding their children’s use of the internet. One such issue was primarily about children wanting to use unhindered internet and not wanting to be supervised. Also, addiction related to online games is a common issue. One of them raised the concern that, “teaching the child to draw a line between what is safe surfing and unsafe is

major issue that parents usually face". One counselor said, "time spent on mobile phones was a serious issue among teenagers and during middle school years, online gaming was a serious issue". One said, "spending most of the time using mobile phones and computer results in poor academic performance, anger, less family interactions among children". All counselors were approached by parents and the predominant issue was regarding the long hours of activity on the internet by children and its resulting impact.

**Perception about role of Schools.** *School policies on prevention of cyber bullying.* Out of four counselors, only one said that, "school condemns cyber bullying and stringent actions are taken against children involved in any incident of cyber bullying either reported or found out". Out of four counselors, two counselors said that, "there are no policies, but yes, we provide general awareness on cyber safety". One of them said that the school policy is to make children aware and to counsel those who face such kind of issues.

Three counselors reported that they had cyber safety software installed in their computer labs and children use internet and computers in adult supervision. One counselor said, "there is complete supervision done and software installed by the Computer Department. Till class five, there is no direct internet facility on computers used by children in computer labs".

Only one said, "children are not allowed to surf internet in school and all IT classes are monitored by computer teachers". One counselor also said, "computer teacher guides children what to surf on internet and also instructs what all kind of links should not be opened such as the blue whale games".

**What should educators do?** All the four counselors believed that it was very important for teachers to be on the lookout for inappropriate behaviour of children, for example, if the child misbehaves with peers, suddenly stops performing well in exams and

doesn't pay attention. These signals should be considered and teachers should have a dialogue with the child and the counselor needs to be involved. The next step could be reaching out to parents.

**Steps to follow if child is being subjected to cyber bullying.** All four counselors shared similar opinions and opined that the child needs to be taken in confidence and his/ her consent needs to be taken to involve his/ her parents and that the source of bullying has to be stopped. Then, the bully is to be approached in school by teachers or school authorities or by parents if the bully is outside of school. They also argued that continuous counseling help for the child is mandatory for him/ her to evolve out of this episode. One of the counselor added that, "if the bully belongs to the school, then first will be warning and next punishment, however all the procedures must keep the parents in the loop, parental help at home would be the best to follow up". The counselors believed that, first and foremost, the child should be comfortable and should get social and emotional security and confidence in teachers and parents, and only then the rest of the action can be taken. The counselors believed that the child can be slowly pulled out of excessive internet usage, if they are well informed of its ill effects.

**Organisation of workshops/seminar for students and parents.** All the school counselors reported that their school had organised workshops for students on safe internet usage, and only one counselor said workshops were conducted for both parents and students. All the four counselors said that their school had awareness sessions and discussions when blue whale games were more popular among children and adults. The discussions were held for classes 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>.

## Conclusion

In the current scenario, internet usage is not only helpful, but it can be serious if there is no watchful supervision and regulation. In this case,



parents, guardians, teachers and counselors need to be responsible and make children aware about cyber bullying for their protection.

Findings of parents revealed that the internet was considered to be an important part of life as it connects them with their relatives, and that limiting internet does not cut down the chances of cyber bullying. It was found that parents gave instructions, checked history, shared news and discussed issues related to cyber bullying with their children. Parents reported that they were open to allowing children to use mobile phones for study purposes and for recreation. Findings revealed that children in joint families had more opportunities to use digital devices and were less likely to be supervised, whereas children in nuclear families had fewer opportunities to use digital devices and were more likely to be supervised. Mothers of 12 year old girls were more restrictive of their daughter's internet usage as they stated that girls were in the puberty phase and they might get distracted from studies if they use social networking sites. It was found that mothers sit with children and play games as well as supervise them on what to surf on the internet, whereas fathers used instructions and discussions instead of supervising. Parents reported using instructions and taking away digital devices to restrict too much use of mobile phones/ digital devices. It was found that parents who do not have cyber safety installed in their system, checked history, read text messages and asked their children what they did on the internet.

Findings of counselors revealed that making children aware about cyber bullying was mainly done through discussions. Schools engage parents to discuss about cyber bullying through workshops and discussions. Need-based sessions were organised, however continuous effort in this regard is very important in this technology-driven time and age. It was found that schools used cyber safety software in computer labs and computer teachers were always there to supervise children. Counselors were of the view

that parents should show unconditional positive regard for the child and must always talk to the child. As far as the role of teachers is concerned, they should observe the child's inappropriate behaviour (if any) and should refer them to the counselor and also share these concerns with parents. Findings from counselors revealed that the school policy on prevention of cyber bullying was to take strict action against the children involved in any incident of cyber bullying either reported or found out. Cases that could not be handled at the school level were referred first to parents and then to psychologists outside of school. Important implications that can be drawn from the present study are:

- Children, parents and school counselors were well aware of the management and impact of cyber bullying, but there seemed to be incongruence in how it can be prevented and regarding the role of parents. This issue needs to be discussed in presence of all stakeholders.
- It was found that workshops and discussions were the source through which counsellors created awareness about cyber bullying. They reported holding these sessions and workshops separately for children and parents. A common platform where voices of children are also considered along with those of adults will go a long way in making them understand the deeper issues and threats of cyber bullying. Sessions that involve both parents and children in the presence of counselors can help in ironing out any differences in opinion regarding the same. They all can be constant partners in dealing with any form of bullying encountered and that too without fear.
- Children can be well-informed about how to tackle/ handle cyber bullying without being afraid of anyone. Parent- child partnership and bonding can be further improved by involving them in discussions, role-play etc. Conducting discussions where they get to know and understand each other's perspectives is important too. Counsellors must discuss

importance of watchful freedom, regulation and monitoring with parents. Children should not have a fear of parents and should be able to share their concerns with them without the fear that their phone will be taken away from them. Parents, teachers and counselors must build a trustworthy relationship with the children, so that they can approach them without any fear. The child should not be made to feel guilty. Going by the ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), it becomes imperative that a child is able to share his/ her feelings with the persons in their closest systems, that is from family, teachers in schools and even a supportive peer group.

- Installation of safety software at home and schools would be a step towards internet safety. Keeping the computer in an open space will allow parents to keep track of children's activity.
- Sitting together and deciding the duration of internet usage along with parents is also an important step.
- Parents and teachers can keep a watchful eye on children and look for signs such as anger, guilt, fear, isolation, self-destructing behaviour etc. Along with help of counsellors, they can advise ways or strategies to ensure safe use of internet.

- Information about cyber security and steps that need to be followed, in the cases of cyber bullying, should be discussed with children and parents.
- In schools, teacher can ensure this is by keeping a box where a child can come and share their experiences. They should know whom to contact when in need.
- Parents must keep track of the duration of the usage of internet, as a sudden increase or decrease in the usage can be a sign of danger.
- Giving children alternative options of leisure time activities, outdoor play, organised sports activities, involvement in a hobby or activity.

With easy online access and gaming getting cheaper, it's easy to get hooked on to new windows to entertainment and it is equally important to know about how technology works, but there is a lack of awareness regarding how to use it so that it can benefit us rather than harming us. Children between 10- 12 years of age get into an online addiction easily because of the availability of technological devices, thus affecting their mental and physical health. Surveillance of children all the time, with helicopter parenting, is equally harmful for the families. Finally, the awareness of children on cyber bullying, training of parents, teachers and children on cyber safety is a must.

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