










How is Technology Used to Bully?

Technology can be used both positively and negatively. The table below explores the range of ways today's technology can be used.

| Technology: | Great for: | Examples of misuse: |
|---|---|---|
|  Mobile phones | Keeping in touch by voice or text, taking and sending pictures and film, listening to music, playing games, going online and sending emails. Useful in emergency situations and for allowing children a greater sense of independence. | Sending nasty calls or text messages, including threats, intimidation, harassment. Taking and sharing humiliating images. Videoing other people being harassed and sending these to other phones or internet sites. |
|  Instant Messenger (IM) | Text or voice chatting live with friends online. A quick and effective way of keeping in touch even while working on other things. | Sending nasty messages or content. Using someone else's account to forward rude or mean messages via their contacts list. |
|  Chatrooms and message boards | Groups of people around the world can text or voice chat live about common interests. For young people, this can be an easy way to meet new people and explore issues which they are too shy to talk about in person. | Sending nasty or threatening anonymous messages. Groups of people deciding to pick on or ignore individuals. Making friends under false pretences – people pretending to be someone they're not in order to get personal information that they can misuse in a range of ways – e.g. by spreading secrets or blackmailing. |
|  Email | Sending electronic letters, pictures and other files quickly and cheaply anywhere in the world. | Sending nasty or threatening messages. Forwarding unsuitable content including images and video clips, or sending computer viruses. Accessing someone else's account, e.g. to forward personal emails or delete emails. |
|  Webcams | Taking pictures or recording messages. Being able to see and talk to someone live on your computer screen. Bringing far-off places to life or video conferencing. | Making and sending inappropriate content. Persuading or threatening young people to act in inappropriate ways. Using inappropriate recordings to manipulate young people. |
|  Social network sites | Socialising with your friends and making new ones within online communities. Allowing young people to be creative online, even publishing online music. Personalising homepages and profiles, creating and uploading content. | Posting nasty comments, humiliating images / video. Accessing another person's account details and sending unpleasant messages, deleting information or making private information public. Groups of people picking on individuals by excluding them. Creating fake profiles to pretend to be someone else, e.g. to bully, harass or get the person into trouble. |
|  Video hosting sites | Accessing useful educational, entertaining and original creative video content and uploading your own. | Posting embarrassing, humiliating film of someone. |
|  Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) | School site, usually available from home and school, set up for tracking and recording student assignments, tests and activities, with message boards, chat and IM. | Posting inappropriate messages or images. Hacking into someone else's account to post inappropriate comments or delete schoolwork. |
|  Gaming sites, consoles and virtual worlds | Live text or voice chat during online gaming between players across the world, or on handheld consoles with people in the same local area. Virtual worlds let users design their own avatars – a figure that represents them in the virtual world. | Name-calling, making abusive / derogatory remarks. Players may pick on weaker or less experienced users, repeatedly killing their characters. Forwarding unwanted messages to other devices in the immediate vicinity. |