

Artifact

Cyber-Bullying - Tony

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Being a technology teacher, this hits close to home.

As part of my initial "rules of the classroom" speech at the beginning of the year, I would talk about respect, and emphasize that we need to treat everyone with respect, both in person and online. I would emphasize that if anyone has any problems or issues, especially with bullying, that they can talk about it with me. And if it comes to cyber-bullies, if confronting the bully doesn't resolve the issue (or if the bully is not from the same area), I would try to work with the students to block the person doing the online bullying. Also, I would help the student collect whatever documentation they have on the bullying, and ensure it gets routed to the proper authorities or administrative personnel.

Most importantly, if I found out someone was being bullied (cyber or otherwise), I would be there as a person to give encouragement to, and someone they could come to for venting or crying. I've known people who have been pushed to the point of contemplating suicide, and it can be rough...

On a less-dark note, with a strictly cyber-bullying case, there is always the option of just turning off the smartphone, or canceling the Facebook account. Some people may think of this as akin to dying, but that's when counseling and encouragement come in. These social networks have only been around for a handful of years, so what's the point in committing suicide over what somewhat said? Worst case; give up those online services until you start college, at which point you should hopefully be around more like-minded people, and maybe a bit more mature too!

- Tony

P.S.

I read a book a while back that discussed similar themes. The author was a YouTube "star" who dealt with some similar bullying and other negative attitudes from her actual high school classmates, but experienced a very supportive network of people from the online community, so much so that her YouTube "friends" were closer to her than "friends" she had in her high school. She also talks about how high school is only temporary, and the demographics of high school life aren't very indicative of what real life is going to be like when you graduate, so you really should do your best to stick with it until graduation, since after that point, you probably won't see any of the bullies again.

If anyone is looking for something motivational to lend to someone suffering from cyber-bullying, this book might be a good choice:

https://www.amazon.com/Really-Professional-Internet-Person-McAllister-ebook/dp/B00UXO44T6/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1478012795&sr=1-1&keywords=really+professional+internet+person