



## Cyberbullying and abuse



***Nā to rourou, nā taku rourou ka ora ai te iwi. Me mahi tahi tātou mō te oranga o te katoa.***

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### Intent

Cyberbullying and harassment is an issue of growing concern. It particularly impacts on rangatahi causing detriment to self-esteem and confidence and can lead to fear and significant mental distress.

If cyberbullying occurs in our service/programme, it will be responded to promptly and appropriately. People are encouraged to speak up early and report it.

### Definitions

"Cyberbullying" involves using digital technologies in a direct, repeated, and hostile way to harm a person, whānau, or group. Examples include:

- texting or sending derogatory or threatening comments or pictures
- posting rude, explicit, or embarrassing messages or pictures about a person
- pressurising a person to send revealing or compromising pictures of themselves
- sexting – sharing explicit material by text without the consent of the person concerned
- covertly filming, recording, or taking a picture of someone and posting the images to cause hurt
- referring to a whānau in a negative or disparaging way.



## Prevention

Participants in any group or service activity we run will be informed at the start of it about:

- behavioural expectations/rules for the programme that include a prohibition against cyberbullying and abuse of any other participant
- their right to complain, and the process for complaining about cyberbullying and any other offensive behaviour from participants or staff
- the consequences of engaging in cyberbullying.

The Behaviour Support policy will be applied through the programme.

Staff will be trained to recognise bullying in all its forms and respond to bullying complaints.

Staff will model positive and respectful behaviour as programme facilitators.

## Complaint

A complaint about bullying by a programme participant (eg staff; another rangatahi), must be forwarded to management/their delegate.

The complaint will be investigated and followed up appropriately with the complainant, perpetrator and if they are under 18 years, their guardians. The complaints process will be applied.

Measures must be agreed to prevent further cyberbullying if the perpetrator of bullying is to continue in the programme.

## Reporting

Where a rangatahi discloses that they are being cyberbullied or harassed, they will be advised and assisted to:

- keep a record of everything eg inappropriate text messages, images, e-mails, blogs, chat entries, etc including the date, time, names, and other relevant information
- save abusive messages/images



- take action such as:
  - block the sender of the messages etc on the relevant site (eg Facebook)
  - for abusive texts, contact the mobile phone company to ask for the number or account sending the texts to be blocked or disabled
  - report it to the Police if messages etc involve criminal acts
  - report it to the relevant authorities eg school principal if bullying involves another student
  - report the abuse to [NetSafe](#).

## Compliance

Social Sector Accreditation Standards, Level 2, Community Wellbeing.

## Helpful links

See [Bullyingfree NZ Cyber-bullying. When bullying goes online](#)

[Abuse and protection](#) suite / [Child protection](#) policy suite

## Review

Date: March 2021

Next review: February 2023