

Disclaimer: The material in this fact sheet is intended as a general guide only. You should not act on the basis of this information in this fact sheet without first getting legal advice about your own particular situation.

This information sheet details laws in Victoria as at November 2017.

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying can be very harmful. If you are experiencing bullying, speak to a parent, someone you trust, or contact one of the services listed below.

What is cyber-bullying?

Cyber-bullying is when a person uses websites, emails or social networks like Facebook to humiliate you or make you feel afraid.

When is cyber-bullying illegal?

Cyber-bullying can be a criminal offence if it involves behaviour like:

- stalking;
- doing or saying things likely to cause someone physical or mental harm (including self-harm)
- threats to kill or harm someone;
- breach of an intervention order;
- sharing or threatening to share a naked or sexual photo or video of someone else, unless they are 18 or over and they consent (see Sexting fact sheet); or
- making, sharing or possessing child pornography (see Sexting fact sheet)

What can I do if I am being cyber-bullied?

- block the person;
- keep a copy of emails, messages or posts;
- report it to your school, education provider or workplace (if relevant);
- report it to your ISP and/or phone provider or website administrator
- report any illegal activity or threats to your safety to police; or
- apply for an intervention order if you are concerned for your safety

Applying for an Intervention Order

If someone is making you feel threatened, harassed or unsafe, you can apply for an intervention order at court to protect you. If you want to take this option, you should speak to a lawyer first (see below).

Is an intervention order the best way of dealing with the problem?

If the behaviour is less serious, the courts encourage people to try mediation as a way of solving the problem before applying for an intervention order. If you feel safe enough, you can contact a mediation service who will then invite the other person involved to come to a

session.

To find out more about mediation, contact the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria on 1300 372 888 or go to www.disputes.vic.gov.au

Information and Support

For more information about cyber-bullying or how to get help dealing with the problem, go to:

Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner

Investigates complaints about cyber-bullying against children

Ph: 1800 880 176

www.esafety.gov.au

Kids Helpline

A free and confidential counselling service for young people age 5-25

Ph: 1800 551 800

www.kidshelpline.com.au

Lifeline

Crisis support and suicide prevention service

Ph: 13 11 14

www.lifeline.org.au

Getting legal help

Youthlaw

If you are under 25, you can get free and confidential legal advice.

Phone: (03) 9611 2412 (9am-5pm, Mon-Fri) ☐

Website: www.youthlaw.asn.au

Victoria Legal Aid - Legal Help

For legal information, referrals or appointments

Phone: (03) 9269 0120 or 1800 677 402 (country callers)

Website: www.legalaid.vic.gov.au

This page was last updated 17/01/2018