

HOW TO STRENGTHEN STUDENTS TO AVOID BECOMING VICTIMS OF CYBERBULLYING

by:

Marlon D. Pizarro

Teacher III, Nagwaling Elementary School

The rise of social media has many advantages, but it also has disadvantages. One of these is cyberbullying. Here is how to avoid being a target or victim of cyberbullying.

Unlike traditional bullying, cyberbullying happens in the digital space, including social media platforms. Social media is as vast as ocean, hence the risk of being a victim of cyberbullying is high, particularly when you are famous.

Netizens or individuals using social media can easily bash other people for something that is not aligned with their own values. They will say hateful words that can cause pain and anxiety to those receiving them.

Although the digital world is something outside the control of the teachers, still schools can play an important role in providing learners with the knowledge and resilience to avoid becoming victims of online harassment.

One strategy to implement is digital literacy education. Learners should be taught how to use social media responsibly, hence they themselves would not become cyberbullies.

They must also learn how to recognize harmful behavior and protect their personal information so they will not easily provide information to strangers. Sensitive personal information can later be used against them to exploit them.

Hinduja and Patchin (2019) explained that students who know online risks are possible to have less engagement in unsafe digital practices.

Another strategy is building emotional resilience and self-confidence. When students have strong self-esteem, they are less vulnerable to the effects of bullying. Teachers can do this through fostering self-expression, empathy and peer support. Cross et al. (2015) expounded that students with strong social-emotional skills are better at coping with cyberbullying and less likely to internalize negative encounters.

Strengthening students against cyberbullying cannot be done by a single strategy or one teacher. Digital literacy culture must be put in place and sustained so that all members of the school community will foster an ecosystem that would not allow harm to anyone, either in physical or digital space.

References:

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