TOP 5 QUESTIONS ABOUT LGBTQ CYBERBULLYING

A roundup of some common questions we get from parents and educators.

1 **What can a parent or guardian of an LGBTQ student do to support their child or student who is being cyberbullied?**

As simple as this seems, just be supportive. Listen to them and find out what, if anything, they need from you. As a parent, you mostly just need to love, respect and honor your child and his or her choices.

2 **What can parents or educators do if they are personally or religiously opposed to homosexuality or gender nonconformity yet have an LGBTQ student or child?**

Be respectful and supportive. It's possible and even healthy to have attitudes, religious views and values that are different from your students' or children's. You can still respect people for their developing identities while maintaining your own values. All major religions advocate treating others as one would want to be treated.

3 **What can students and friends do to support their LGBTQ peers?**

Like parents and guardians, students and friends can be open to listening compassionately to their LGBTQ peers and respect their needs without resistance or debate.

4 **Are there laws and precedent-setting court decisions that prevent discrimination against LGBTQ students or otherwise protect them?**

There are several federal and state laws and precedent-setting court decisions that protect the rights of students on the basis of sex, sexual identity, and gender identity and expression. You'll find information about some of these laws at the end of this guide. Check with your local and school authorities for additional protections. Also, most online services have rules or terms of service that prohibit any type of hate speech directed at LGBTQ individuals and others.

5 **What are the pros and cons of connected technology for LGBTQ youth?**

For many LGBTQ youth, the internet, social media and messaging apps provide a lifeline for information, companionship and support. Online connections enable them to reach beyond the confines of their local school, family and community to interact with people in similar situations. They can learn from others and seek advice and support, especially when they're going through hard times. Still, being online has its risks, especially if you're subject to bullying or harassment. That's why it's so important for youth to know how to protect their privacy and identity (perhaps by remaining anonymous) and to have control over who sees their posts.

For more information, visit connectsafely.org/lgbtq.