

Website offers resources to tackle bullying

By KOK XING HUI

IF A classmate posts something on Facebook that you find offensive, you may delete it, untag yourself or report the content to Facebook. But first, take a screenshot just in case you need to share it with an adult.

That's the advice given on the Bullying Prevention Centre website, launched yesterday by Facebook and the Media Literacy Council in Singapore.

The site has resources for teens, parents and educators, including content that relates specifically to Facebook. For example, someone who is the target of a bullying post can ask for the post to be removed. But if the bullying extends to stalking, posting of explicit photos, threats, extortion or sexual harassment, he should alert an adult or the authorities. Facebook will also direct anyone who reports bullying via its reporting tools to the website.

"It is helpful to have a page so that users who face cyber-bullying will know what to do when it happens to them on Facebook," said Miss Rachel Tan, director of the Student Service Hub (Bukit Merah) at the Singapore Children's Society.

Mr Chong Ee Jay, assistant manager of Touch Cyber Wellness, a voluntary welfare organisation that teaches Internet safety, said it was good to have resources for parents and teachers. According to a Touch Cyber Wellness survey last July, one in three secondary school students and one in five primary school pupils report being victims of cyberbullying.

"We worked with the Ministry of Education (MOE) to localise the resource guide for teachers by making specific references to Singapore's school framework," said the Media Literacy Council.

MOE has a cyber wellness module under the Citizenship and Character Education framework. It is incorporated into the curriculum for subjects such as civics and moral education, English and mother tongue languages.

Taxi driver Terry Tan, 44, who has children aged seven, 10 and 15, felt the advice on blocking or unfriending someone was most useful for him, but said parents needed to be Internet-savvy to access the online resource centre.

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