Cyberbullying Proposals

Cyberbullying is on the rise. A recent study found that over 15% of high school students reported being bullied (CDC, 2019) across all versions of social media and texting, etc. As Barbara noted in our last meeting, our document is ready for revision. Due to the increase of remote learning and the statewide push to close the digital divide, a renewed focus on cyberbullying and digital citizenship could be an important focus. We believe that by both updating our document and engaging schools to produce PSAs about cyberbullying and digital citizenship will do two things: First, it will provide a replicable roadmap to reproduce for school systems throughout the state, and second it will be a highly visible reminder to students, educators, parents and the community of the importance of the "soft skills" of technology education.

1. Update DC, IS, ML Guidelines doc to include specific language on cyberbullying.

    The current document only specifically mentions cyberbullying in one place: Page 4/5 under definition of "Internet Safety" e.g. "recognize warning signs of cyberbullying" (This is where we think we should add info)

    Other places in our document that directly address cyberbullying through links:
    Page 7:
    Cyberpatriot link directly addresses cyberbullying
    Digizen link directly addresses cyberbullying (has a great video)

    Page 9:
    Commonsense education link directly addresses cyberbullying
    Netsmartz link directly addresses cyberbullying with videos

    Page 12:
    National PTA directly addresses cyberbullying w/ resources for parents
    Connect Safely link directly addresses cyberbullying for parents

    Page 13:
    Welcome2reality link directly addresses cyberbullying for parents, teachers and students

We propose that we include in our document both a specific definition of cyberbullying from Public Act 11-232 and give specifics as to the myriad of ways in which it can occur.

Public Act 11-232 is the strengthening of school bullying laws. It specifically defines cyberbullying and includes when it occurs off school grounds. https://cga.ct.gov/2011/ACT/PA/2011PA-00232-R00SB-01138-PA.htm

Other Cyberbullying definitions and explanations. Teacher resource-focused:
https://www.commonsense.org/education/articles/teachers-essential-guide-to-cyberbullying-prevention

Ways of Cyberbullying (Adapted from Notar, Padgett & Roden, 2013):
Imping (impersonation)
Flaming (arguing online)
Exclusion
Harassment
E-mail threats
Outing
Phishing
Image dissemination
Happy-Slapping (publication of images and videos to embarrass someone

Methods of Cyberbullying:
Social Media
Texting/IM
Chat Rooms
Gaming devices
Email
Smart Phones
Message Boards
Podcast
Profile Sites
Skype, Zoom etc.
Virtual Worlds
YouTube
Sharing images

2. The creation of a PSA campaign to address particulars of cyberbullying. During the summer's cyberbullying subgroup meeting, we brainstormed particulars of how the PSAs could be produced, what content should be included and source of funds for production. the PSAs could be the critical link between our document and students' technological lives. Currently, we are in an unprecedented educational environment, where students are interacting online more than ever. 95% of U.S. teens own a smartphone and nearly 90% of teens go online more than once a day (Pew Research Center, 2018). Schools, due to the Covid pandemic (and more extreme weather events) will continue to engage in remote learning.

Ideas included:

Content of PSAs should include the definition of cyberbullying, what it looks like (from young children to adults), where it occurs (the modes e.g., texting, social media, gaming etc.), visible modeling of negative and positive digital citizenship practices.

Members of our council have strong ties within a variety of school districts and higher education, specifically teacher education programs. Involving preservice teachers and students in schools to produce the cyberbullying PSAs will provide both real world technology and digital citizenship

instruction for PSTs and students (Marcus, for example teaches courses at WCSU and SCSU) and suggested he could revise his syllabi to incorporate this type of project, connecting university requirements with current needs. Many high schools have technology studios where the PSAs could be produced (incorporated a number of IS, ML, DC skills).

Clearly, our biggest hurdle to our recommendation is funding. We offer three suggestions:

- Recently, Governor Lamont signed House Bill 6442: An Act Concerning Equitable Access to Broadband. In addition, the state has been the recipient of 520+ million in Covid Relief Education Funding. Applying for a small stipend from this fund could provide wide understanding of a growing concern.

- The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the Dalio Foundation and the city of Hartford recently partnered together to provide a free wifi network for the entire city. Connecting with one or both organizations may provide us with the funds as a necessary wrap-around service linked to their projects. (https://www.commfoundations.com/blog/2020/8/4/hartford-foundation-for-public-giving-joins-partnership-to-bring-free-wifi-to-an-entire-city)

- Our own state department of education (CSDE) provides the funds (Yeah Melissa!)

3. Deeper inclusion of Welcome to Reality within our recommendations. There are clear integration points where Marcus' work and our group's work aligns.

References:
https://nccd.cdc.gov/YouthOnline/App/Results.aspx?TT=B&OUT=0&SID=HS&QID=H24&LID=LL&YID=RY&LID2=&YID2=&COL=&ROW1=&ROW2=&HT=&LCT=&FS=&FR=&FG=&FA=&FI=&FP=&FSL=&FRL=&FGL=&FAL=&FIL=&FPL=&PV=&TST=&C1=&C2=&QP=&DP=&VA=CI&CS=Y&SYID=&EYID=&SC=&SO=

https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2018/05/31/teens-social-media-technology-2018/

Thanks,
Marcus and Jen