OVERCOMING CYBERBULLYING TOGETHER

A YOUTH INFORMED GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

BY KAYLEIGH COWDERY (2218436)

PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

- Understanding Adolescence
- Importance of Connection before Correction (Siegel, 2014).
- Definitions of Cyberbullying
- Its forms and impact
- Recognising the Signs
- Well-being, including looking after ourselves.
- Youth Work
- Support and Resources





ICEBREAKER

What did you get up to when you were a teenager?





TOXIC CHILDHOOD

Exploring the impact of modern society on young people, **Palmer (2015)** highlights the key social factors impacting young people. These include:

1. A decline in outdoor play- Linked to increased childhood obesity and reduced independence.
2. Commercialisation of childhood- Being increasingly targeted by advertisers.
3. Early ‘schoolification’- Reducing opportunities for free play and exploration.
4. Decline in communication skills- Shortened attention spans due to digital media.
5. Screen saturation- Reducing face-to-face interaction.
6. Pressure from education systems- Increased testing and targets leading to anxiety.



UNDERSTANDING ADOLESCENCE

- Adolescence is often described as a turbulent time: mood swings, emotional outbursts, and moments of defiance can leave young people and their parents trying to make sense of this massive shift (Parenting Today Staff, 2024).

- But beneath the surface, young people are undergoing profound changes: physically, emotionally, and neurologically and how we respond to them matters more than we often realise (Parenting Today Staff, 2024).



THE DEVELOPING BRAIN AND CHANGING BEHAVIOUR

- REMEMBER: A teenager's brain is still developing. Steinberg (2014) explains that the prefrontal cortex, responsible for impulse control and decision-making is still maturing.
- Meanwhile, the limbic system, which governs emotions, is highly active, leading to heightened responses to stress, excitement, and perceived threats (Steinberg, 2014). This is why adolescents may show increased impulsivity and risk-taking. These behaviours are not necessarily signs of irresponsibility; rather, they are shaped by the brain's current capacity (Parenting Today Staff, 2024).
- Emotional Flooding (Siegel, 2014) - a state of emotional overwhelm, when the brain goes into survival mode, shutting down logical thinking. Reasoning with the young person here is counterproductive.
- Connection before Correction is key (Siegel, 2014).





IDENTITY AND BELONGING

Erikson’s (1959) Psychosocial Development Theory highlights that adolescence is the critical stage for developing identity.

- Young people begin to question who they are, experiment with different roles, and seek validation from peers (Mcleod, 2025). Not being rebellious, but a natural and necessary part of their journey.
- An increased need for belonging, and feeling acceptance among peer groups becomes essential to their self-worth, shaping confidence and decision-making (Mcleod, 2025).
- They try out different personas, seeking independence from parents while still needing their support. This can sometimes lead to conflict, as they push boundaries to define themselves (Mcleod, 2025).
- Connection before correction (Siegel, 2014).

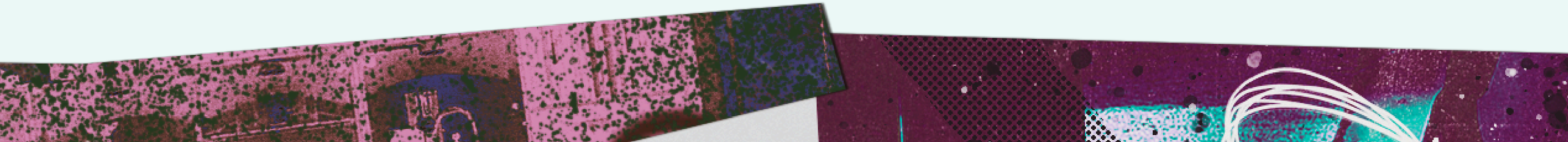






BEAN BAG ACTIVITY

ASCENT TRAINING BY HOLISTIC STEPS (2025)



CYBERBULLYING DEFINITION

Smith *et al.* (2008) defines cyberbullying as:
an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and over time against a victim who cannot easily defend themself.

PHONES, TABLETS, COMPUTERS

SOCIAL MEDIA (INSTAGRAM, TIKTOK, SNAPCHAT, WHATSAPP)

GAMING PLATFORMS (ROBLOX, FORTNITE, DISCORD)

TEXTS AND ANONYMOUS APPS

(UNICEF, 2025)

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

Peer pressure
Nasty DMs (Direct Messages)
Image based bullying
Passive- aggressive comments
Fake accounts
Trolling
Social Exclusion
(ISPCC, no date)

PRESSURE TO STAY CONNECTED AND SHARE LOCATION DATA

GROOMING AND ONLINE EXPLOITATION

SCAMMING OR PHISHING

ADDICTION TO DIGITAL ACTIVITY

(YOUTHLINK SCOTLAND, 2024)

THE BIGGER PICTURE: STATISTICS (ONS, 2024)

Cyberbullying is pervasive and deeply embedded in young people’s digital experiences:

- 92.6% of children go online daily
- 58.1% spend three or more hours online on school days
- 35% accept friend requests from strangers
- 8.5% have publicly shared their location
- 19.1% have experienced cyberbullying in the past year.



EFFECTS ON YOUNG PEOPLE

Cyberbullying is a growing concern for children and teenagers, as they often struggle to express their distress and may avoid confiding in parents (Woods, 2019). Unlike traditional bullying, online harassment can be relentless, making it difficult for young people to escape its impact (Woods, 2019).





RECOGNISING THE SIGNS

(WOODS, 2019)

CHANGES IN MOOD

DISTURBED SLEEP

AVOIDING DEVICES AND SECRETIVE BEHAVIOUR

PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

LOSS OF CONFIDENCE AND WITHDRAWAL FROM SOCIAL CIRCLES

SUDDEN CHANGES IN ONLINE HABITS

STRUGGLING IN SCHOOL

EMOTIONAL OUTBURSTS

WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Talking to young people about the online world helps build trust and understanding. You could use reflective questions such as:
  - How can you show kindness online?
  - What would you do if someone was being mean?
  - What does cyberbullying mean to you?
  - How is online bullying different from in-person bullying?

(UK SAFER INTERNET CENTRE, NO DATE)

DEVELOPING EMPATHY

Helping children understand the impact of their online actions is key to building empathy. They may not always recognise bullying, mistaking it for harmless banter. Early conversations about acceptable behaviour can ensure they understand how their words can affect others.

(UK SAFER INTERNET CENTRE, NO DATE)

SUPPORTING A TEENAGER EXPERIENCING CYBERBULLYING

- Listen without interrupting
- Stay calm
- Reassure them about device access
- Discourage retaliation
- Keep records
- Inform their school/ college
- Contact the police if necessary

(UK SAFER INTERNET CENTRE, NO DATE)



CONNECT BEFORE CORRECT



SUPPORTING TEENAGERS AT HOME

- Foster Open Communication- Creating a safe and welcoming space encourages teenagers to express their thoughts and emotions without fear of judgment.
- Offer Emotional Support- Being present and understanding during moments of distress helps them feel valued and reassured.
- Listen with Empathy- Active listening, without criticism, and validating their emotions ensures they feel heard and respected.
- Promote Healthy Coping Strategies- Encouraging activities like exercise, mindfulness, and creative expression can help teenagers manage their emotions in positive ways.

(PARENTING TODAY STAFF, 2024)



Five ways to wellbeing

(CHANGE, GROW, LIVE, NO DATE).

YOUTH WORK

‘Every day, youth workers across the country transform the lives of hundreds of thousands of young people’

(NYA, 2025, np).

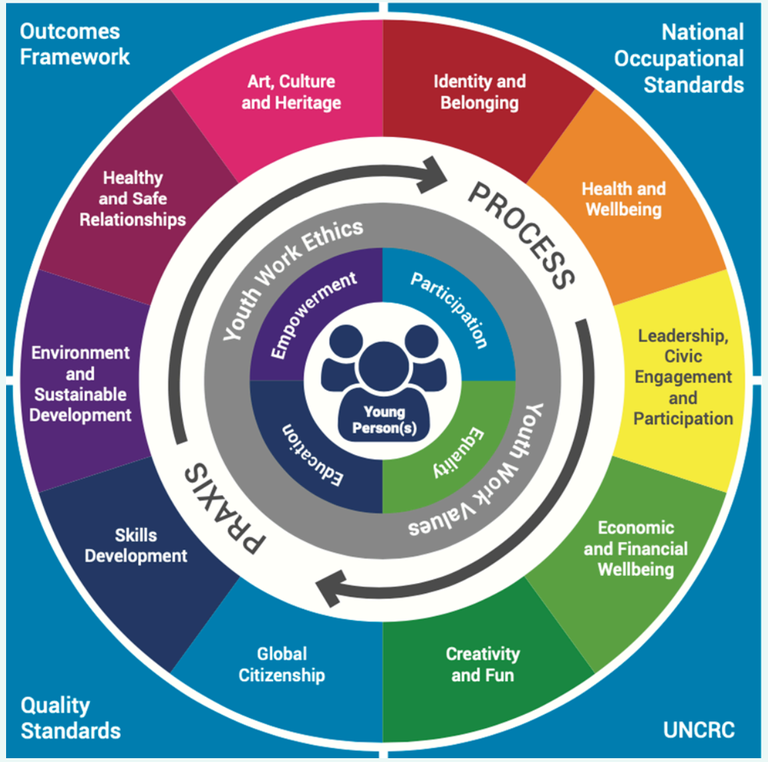
... places and relationships where young people can have fun, feel safe, supported and valued, learn to take greater control of their lives, and recognise and resist the harmful influences around them.

(Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2022, p.2)

To develop a young person holistically, facilitating their personal, social and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential'

(Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2022, p.2)

YOUTH WORK



NYA
National Youth Agency

YOUTH WORK IN BRIDGEND

bgc Boys and Girls Clubs of Wales
Clybiau Bechgyn a Merched Cymru



BRIDGEND YOUTH COUNCIL

YMCA

Gwirfoddolwyr leuenctid yr
HEDDLU POLICE
Youth Volunteer

YPOP
YOUNG PEOPLE OF PRIDE

SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

YOUNGMiNDS

meic
Rhywun ar dy ochr di
Someone on your side

InclusAbility

mind

NATIONAL BULLYING HELPLINE

THE MIX
Essential support for under 25s

CHILL PANDA





THANK YOU!

Any Questions?





References

Anti- Bullying Alliance (no date) United against bullying. Available at: https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/ (Accessed: 20 May 2025).

BAVO (no date) Children, Young People & Families. Available at: https://www.bavo.org.uk/help-for-people/bridgend-youth-matters/ (Accessed: 21 May 2025).

Botaro, A. (2023) Cyberbullying: Everything you need to know. Available at: https://www.verywellhealth.com/cyberbullying-effects-and-what-to-do-5220584 (Accessed: 20 May 2025).

Bowlby, J. (1958) ‘The Nature of the Child’s Tie to His Mother’, International Journal of Psychoanalysis, 39, pp. 350–373.

Boys' and Girls' Clubs of Wales (no date) Supporting young people in Wales. Available at: https://www.bgc.wales/ (Accessed: 22 May 2025).

Bridgend Youth Council (no date) Giving young people a voice in Bridgend County Borough. Available at: https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/children-and-young-people/bridgend-youth-support/bridgend-youth-council/ (Accessed: 22 May 2025).

CEOP (no date) Are you worried about online sexual abuse or the way someone has been communicating with you online? Available at: https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/ (Accessed: 20 May 2025).

Change, Grow, Live (no date) Health and wellbeing advice for young people. Available at: https://www.changegrowlive.org/advice-info/young-people/health-wellbeing (Accessed: 21 May 2025).

Chill Panda (no date) Chill Panda. Available at: http://chillpanda.co.uk/ (Accessed: 21 May 2025).

CLD Standards Council Scotland (2019) Youth Work National Occupational Standards Introduction. Available at: https://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/YouthWorkNOS2019Intro.pdf (Accessed: 21 May 2025).

Erikson, E.H. (1959) Identity and the Life Cycle. New York: International Universities Press.

Holistic Steps (2025) Ascent Training, 12 May.
Inclusability (no date) Inclusibility- Disabilities. Charity. Nonprofit. Available at: https://inclusability.org/ (Accessed: 21 May 2025).
ISPCC (no date) What does cyberbullying look like? Available at: https://www.ispcc.ie/what-does-cyberbullying-behaviour-look-like/ (Accessed: 25 May 2025).
Maslow, A.H. (1943) ‘A Theory of Human Motivation’, Psychological Review, 50(4), pp. 370–396.
McLeod (2025) Erik Erikson’s Stages of Psychosocial Development. Available at: https://www.simplypsychology.org/erik-erikson.html (Accessed: 21 May 2025).
National Bullying Helpline (no date) Information and advice about all forms of bullying. Available at: https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/ (Accessed: 22 May 2025).
National Youth Agency (no date) NYA Home- National Youth Agency. Available at: https://nya.org.uk/ (Accessed: 21 May 2025).
Office for National Statistics (2024) Bullying and online experiences among children in England and Wales: year ending March 2023. Available at:https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/bullyingandonlineexperiencesamongchildreninenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2023 (Accessed: 20 May 2025).
Palmer, S. (2015) Toxic Childhood: How the Modern World is Damaging Our Children and What We Can Do About It. London: Orion.
Parenting Today Staff (2024) Teenage Turbulence: Navigating emotions and mental health in adolescence. Available at: https://childdevelopmentinfo.com/behavior/teenage-turbulence-navigating-emotions-and-mental-health-in-adolescence/ (Accessed: 21 May 2025).
PenYBont Health (2021) The Pandemic’s Impact on Young People in Wales. Available at: https://pybhealth.com/the-pandemics-impact-on-young-people-in-wales/ (Accessed: 21 May 2025).
Piaget, J. (1952) The Origins of Intelligence in Children. New York: W.W. Norton and Co.

Siegel, D.J. (2014) Brainstorm: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain. New York: Tarcher/Penguin.

Smith, P, et al. (2008) ‘Cyberbullying: Its nature and impact in secondary school pupils’, Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 49(4), pp. 376–385.

Smith, M. (2009) Youth Work Practice (3rd ed.) Sage Publications.

South Wales Police Youth Volunteer Scheme (no date) Developing young leaders through volunteering. Available at:_https://www.south-wales.police.uk/police-forces/south-wales-police/areas/careers/careers/volunteers-and-special-constables/police-youth-volunteers/ (Accessed: 22 May 2025).

Steinberg, L. (2014) Age of Opportunity: Lessons from the New Science of Adolescence. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

The Mix (no date) About Us. Available at: https://www.themix.org.uk/about-us/ (Accessed: 21 May 2025).

UNICEF (1989) Convention on the Rights of the Child. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text (Accessed: 22 May 2025).

UNICEF (2025) Cyberbullying: What is it and how to stop it. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/stories/how-to-stop-cyberbullying (Accessed: 21 May 2025).

UK Safer Internet Centre (no date) *Discussing online bullying with your child.* Available at: https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/cyberbullying-advice-for-parents-and-carers#:~:text=We%20give%20advice%20for%20parents%20and%20carers%20concerned,about%20the%20online%20world%2C%20including%20issues%20like%20cyberbullying (Accessed: 20 May 2025).

Welsh Assembly Government (2007) National Youth Service Strategy for Wales. Cardiff: Welsh Government

Welsh Government (2015) Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2015/2 (Accessed: 22 May 2025).

Welsh Government (2019) Youth Work Strategy for Wales. Available at:_https://www.gov.wales/youth-work-strategy-2019 (Accessed: 22 May 2025).

Woods, S. (2019) 10 Signs Your Child is a Cyberbullying Victim. Available at: https://resources.uknowkids.com/blog/bid/173713/10-signs-your-child-is-a-cyberbullying-victim (Accessed: 20 May 2025).

YMCA Bridgend (no date) Empowering young people in Bridgend. Available at:_https://www.ymcabridgend.org.uk/ (Accessed: 22 May 2025).

Young Minds (no date) YoungMinds. Available at: https://www.youngminds.org.uk/ (Accessed: 21 May 2025).

YouthLink Scotland (2024) Youth Work and Cyber Resilience What Young People Said. Available at: https://www.youthlink.scot/wp-content/uploads/DYW_and_CR_Report_2024.pdf (Accessed: 21 May 2025).

Youth Work in Wales Review Group (2022) Youth Work in Wales: Principles and Purposes. Available at: https://www.cwvys.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/YOUTH-WORK-IN-WALES-PRINCIPLES-AND-PURPOSES.pdf (Accessed: 21 May 2025).

YPOP (no date) Youth Centres. Available at: https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/children-and-young-people/bridgend-youth-support/youth-centres/ (Accessed: 21 May 2025).