

**FLOW**

 **Scotiabank®**

**Rotary**

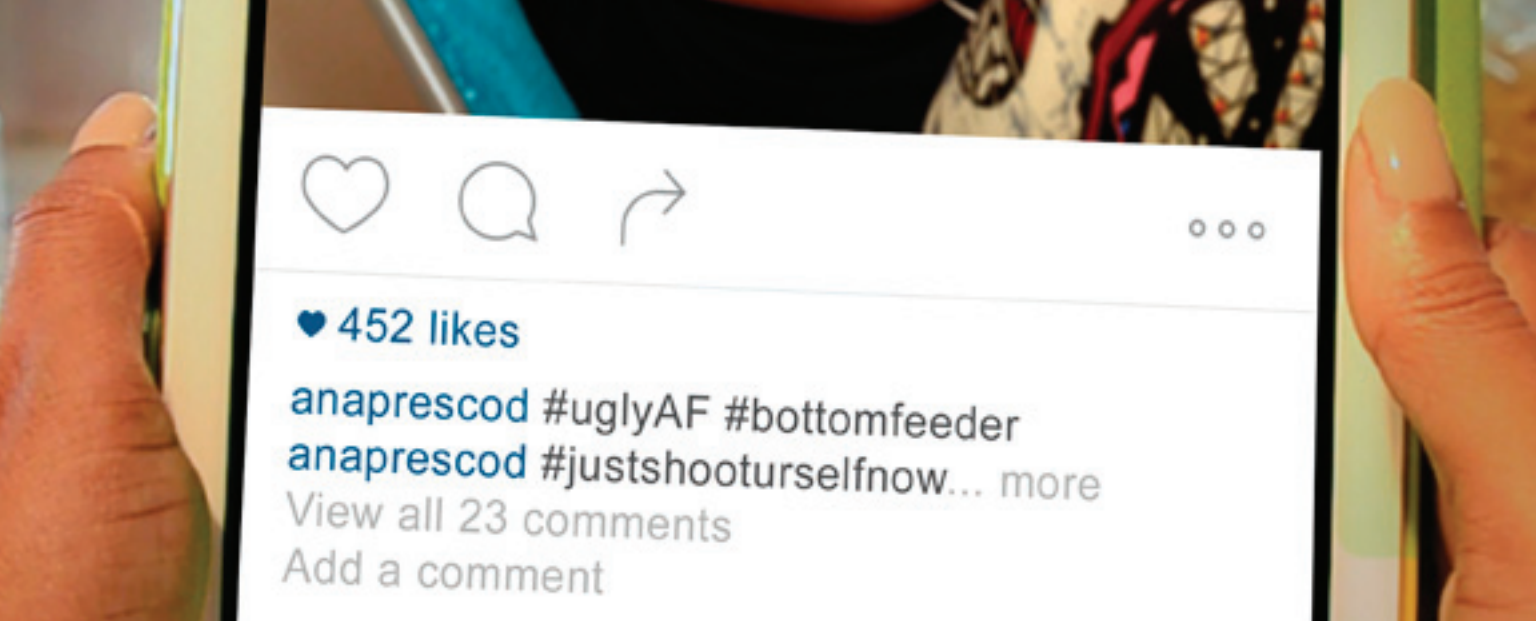


# **CYBER BULLYING**

**LET'S**

**SHUT IT DOWN!**

[www.shutdowncyberbullying.com](http://www.shutdowncyberbullying.com)



### **Cyberbullying is the use of technology to repeatedly harass, threaten and embarrass someone.**

- It is considered a crime in Barbados if it involves threats of violence, extortion, child pornography or sending unsolicited sexually explicit messages or photos to others.
- It is one of the most severe youth stressors, which cause mental illness and death in some instances.
- It instills fear and guilt and disrupts the learning environment in schools.
- Bullies are at greater risk of depression, substance abuse, and law-breaking behavior in adulthood.

### **PREVENT IT**

- Monitor your child's social interactions (online/offline) regularly. Know their passwords and read trash folders (emails, social media & cell phones).
- Check social media privacy settings to ensure that all posts and photos are hidden from the general public, and enforce the minimum age requirement (13 years old).
- Discuss cyberbullying with children so they know the signs.
- Ask schools for anti-bullying and anti-cyberbullying policies to ensure that all staff knows how to intervene when it occurs.
- Be a role model at home:
  - Ensure respect among family members.
  - Do not ridicule your children.
  - Embrace tolerance and respect for differences.
- Teenagers have an exceptional need for self-esteem. Help them build it by using ways other than by gaining popularity at the expense of others.

### **STOP IT**

- Comfort and support the victim immediately.
- Do not encourage your child to resolve problems publicly or force them to apologise or patch up relations. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power. Facing bullies may further upset children who have been bullied.
- Do not ignore the problem and think that children can work it out without adult help because bullies will continue to abuse their power.
- Get the facts from several people separately and listen without blaming.
- Since conflict resolution or peer mediation does not always work for bullying, interventions must be adapted to each situation and person involved.

### **SHUT IT DOWN!**

- Do not reply - Cyberbullies are looking for a reaction so by deciding not to reply, you are making an active choice not to give power to the bully.
- Keep the evidence - Record dates, times and descriptions. Save texts, print emails, and take screenshots of messages.
- Block the bullies - Use the built-in tools on social networks and mobile services to block anyone who is cyberbullying. E.g. remove from a "friends" list or block their calls or messages.
- Visit our website for more information on how to recognise, prevent and stop cyberbullying.

## If you suspect that your child is bullying others:

- Ask them to stop immediately and intervene.
- Try to find out why - Ask them whether there is a reason they are acting this way and try to resolve any issues to stop it happening.
- Encourage them to think about how they would feel if the comments were about them.
- Explain the severity – such unacceptable behavior can have irreversible consequences especially if reported to the school or police.
- Use consequences to teach. Consequences that involve learning or building empathy can help prevent future bullying. For example, the child who bullied can do a project about the effects of bullying, human rights, etc.
- Contact the Juvenile Liaison Scheme from the Royal Barbados Police Force, which provides individual support 430-7159/60, 430-7234, 430-7632 .
- Monitor to ensure that the behavior stops.

## If you need help to support a victim:

- When it happens at school, talk to the teachers or Principal and ask how they intend to address the situation. If the bullying does not stop, consider transferring the victim to a new environment.
- Keep the evidence (witnesses, pictures, written complaints, dates, times, locations, etc.) and contact the local police.
- Contact Supreme Counseling for Personal Development at 828-5575 or Parent Education for Development in Barbados (PAREDOS) at 427-2777.
- Access mental health services at your local polyclinic or your Pediatrician.



For more information visit:

[www.shutdowncyberbullying.com](http://www.shutdowncyberbullying.com)

[www.facebook.com/shutdowncyberbullying](https://www.facebook.com/shutdowncyberbullying)