



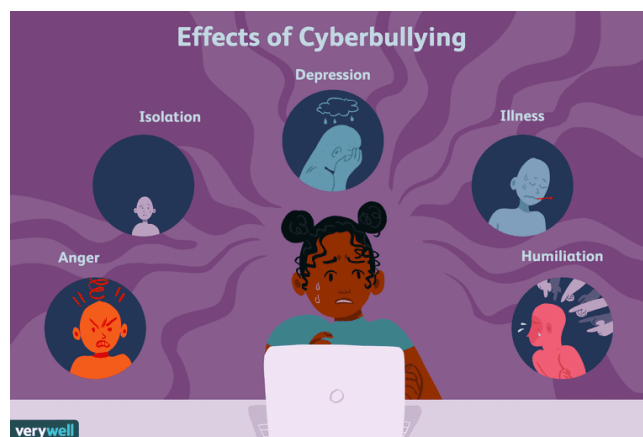
## SITAL J. SHAH

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### Cyber Crimes in the 21st Century: Cyberbullying

**With the advancement of technology in the 21st century comes the rise of cyber crimes. As we live in a world that uses the internet on a daily basis, we are constantly putting ourselves at risk to be the victim of a cyber crime. Even the youngest of Americans are becoming victims of cybercrime in the form of cyberbullying. According to the United States government's anti-bullying website, [StopBullying.gov](http://StopBullying.gov), cyberbullying is defined as "bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Just like any kind of bullying, is against the law in many jurisdictions, yet sadly often goes unnoticed by parents because of the shame the child feels. Cyberbullying has resulted in countless suicides of teens and preteens- here's some more information about this type of cyber crime that all parents should be on the lookout for.**

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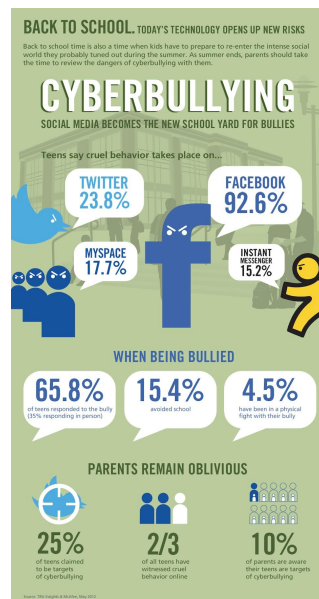


#### What If Your Child is Being Cyberbullied?

- 1) If you know the cyberbully and their parents, and believe you can have a meaningful conversation that will resolve the issue without further involvement, consider this course of action.
- 2) Make sure to know the school's cyberbullying and general bullying policies.
- 3) As discussed above, many tweens and teens are shocked to

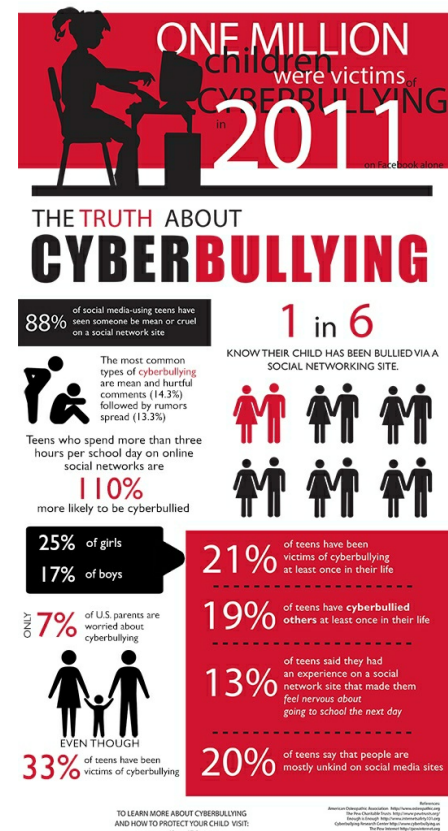
discover that their cyberbullying behavior can have criminal consequences.

4) Your child's safety and well-being should be the top priority when dealing with cyberbullying. It is important to help your child increase the strength of existing friendships. You may also want to set up an appointment for your child to speak with the school's counselor or an outside counselor to help them cope during this difficult time.



## Cyberbullying Laws in New Jersey

Cyber harassment is a relatively new criminal act in the State of New Jersey, and one could potentially be charged with a third or fourth-degree felony offense. Those charges could end up with one facing up to 18 months in prison, a fine of up to \$10,000 and, in some cases, both. More serious instances of cyber bullying can be charged as stalking. Cyber harassment could also be a third-degree crime in some situations. For instance, if the person carrying out the cyber bullying was 21-years-old or older, but pretended to be a minor just so they could harass someone, consequences are much heavier. Those charged could face a fine of up to \$15,000 as well as three to five years in prison. In 2011, New Jersey enacted the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act, which, among other things, defines bullying, requires school faculty and staff to be trained in bullying and suicide prevention and sets forth procedures for reporting, documenting, and handling instances of bullying on public school campuses. Cyber bullying brings up unique concerns because it allows harassment to occur on a 24/7 basis, is permanent as is anything posted to the internet, and can go undetected because it happens outside of the school walls.



## **We Are Here to Help!**

**Our team at the Law Office of Sital J. Shah, Esq. is extremely knowledgeable when it comes to the issue of cyberbullying and cyber crime as a whole. We are here to answer your questions and assist you with the difficult decisions involved when fighting any cyber crime!**