

The Internet A New School Yard For Bullies?

One In Five (21%) Canadian Teens Online Have Witnessed Cyber Bullying



Ipsos Reid

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Vancouver, B.C. – Social networking websites are creating negatives experiences for some Canadian teens in the form of cyber bullying. According to a recent issue of the *Ipsos Canadian Inter@ctive Reid Report*, one in five (21%) online Canadian teens aged 12-17 have witnessed someone they know being bullied through a social networking site.

“Cyber bullying” is defined as the use of Internet services to deliberately and repeatedly post information about an individual that is intended to harm them.

Among those surveyed, younger teens and girls are the most likely to witness cyber bullying. One quarter (25%) of teens aged 12-15 years old have witnessed online bullying, compared to 14% of those aged 16-17 years old. In addition, 25% of online teens girls have witnessed this type of bullying in comparison to 17% of boys.

“While social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter have many positive benefits, they also create new opportunities for bullies,” says Catherine Dawson, Senior Vice President with Ipsos Reid in Vancouver. “Teens who fall victim to bullying at school or at work are no longer able to escape when they come home because of this online vector for harassment.”

More generally, half (51%) of teens with a social networking profile have had negative experiences with some aspect of social networking. These experiences include someone else posting an embarrassing photo of them (16%), someone hacking their social network account pretending to be them (12%), and someone using information they found about them online to harass them at school, home, or work (6%).

"Cyber bullying is something we take very seriously," says Inspector Ralph Pauw, the commander of the Youth Services Section of the Vancouver Police Department. "It would be a mistake to underestimate the scope of this problem and the potential for tragedy that always lingers."

This release is based on the findings of an Ipsos Reid syndicated study, The Ipsos Canadian Inter@ctive Reid Report, fielded December 14th to 20th, 2011 and released in 2011-Issue 5. This online survey of 416 Canadian teens was conducted via the Ipsos Online Panel. The results are based on a sample where quota sampling and weighting are employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data. Quota samples with weighting from the Ipsos online panel provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample. An unweighted probability sample of this size, with a 100% response rate, would have an estimated margin of error of +/- 4.8 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

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