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The e-Safer Suffolk Cybersurvey 2012-2013 Summary Report

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e-Safer Suffolk

The Suffolk Cybersurvey 2012-2013

Full report

5th February 2013

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www.ucs.ac.uk/suffolkybersurvey and www.esafersuffolk.org

Summary

This research by Dr Emma Bond and Dr Pelham Carter at UCS, funded by the Suffolk Children's Trust and commissioned by Suffolk's E-Safer Strategy investigated the Cyberbullying experiences by young people in Suffolk. The study undertaken between September – November in 2012 was based on an online questionnaire, administered by Youthworks Consulting Ltd, which examined the responses of 2,838 young people in Suffolk.



There are noticeable changes in patterns of Internet access with access to an Internet enabled smartphone nearly double that of last year (71% compared to 41 % in 2011) and access to an ipad or tablet more than double from 20% in 2011 to 42% a year later. The pattern of access to social network sites has remained stable but of concern is that 50% of young people using them are under 13.



19% of the respondents identified themselves as having been cyberbullied. Whilst older age groups are more likely to experience Cyberbullying they are less likely to report it. The younger age groups are, conversely, more likely to report it although the prevalence of Cyberbullying is lower.



Girls are more likely to experience Cyberbullying than boys and are more likely to report being upset by the experience. Boys are slightly more likely than girls, however, to experience homophobic Cyberbullying. Young people with a disability are also more likely to be bullied in online environments.



73% of those cyberbullied reported being upset by the experience yet only 61% of young people told someone.



e-Safer Suffolk

E-Safer Suffolk aims to raise the awareness of children, young people, families, and those who work with them, about e-safety issues and how to safely enjoy the Internet. This report concludes that, whilst Cyberbullying in Suffolk appears slightly lower than in other counties, young people need support in reporting and dealing with Cyberbullying.

This report

This report outlines the key findings of the survey in relation to the previous Suffolk Cybersurvey 2011-2012 and the findings from the national *VIRTUAL VIOLENCE II: Progress and Challenges in the Fight against Cyberbullying 2012* undertaken by Beatbullying¹. The information about the survey itself is initially detailed and the main findings of each section are highlighted together with the more detailed findings from the survey which are presented in the following key categories:

1. Access to the Internet
2. Overall prevalence of Cyberbullying
 - 2.1. Online
 - 2.2. Mobile phone
 - 2.3. Gaming
3. Homophobic Cyberbullying
4. Indirect Cyberbullying
5. The impact of Cyberbullying
6. Reporting Cyberbullying
7. E-safety education and awareness

Finally some recommendations are made for further research and developing a tiered approach to a more targeted programme of e-safety initiatives in Suffolk.

Introduction

Children and young people are growing up living media saturated lives and there has recently been much research and academic interest in the impact that new media technologies are having on young people's everyday lives. The EU Kids online project, for example, surveyed over 25,000 children and young people across Europe and found that going online is thoroughly embedded in children's lives and how Internet access for young people is increasingly individualised, mobilised and privatised². This has implications for both the prevalence of Cyberbullying, how it can be efficiently responded to and developing effective e-safety advice. Cyberbullying is defined as 'campaigns of harassment conducted via communications technology such as the Internet and mobile phones' is consistently estimated to affect around a quarter of secondary-age young people in the UK³. The consequences of Cyberbullying are serious leading to poor self-esteem, feeling frightened and truancy. Cyberbullying is also reported to have been a significant factor in recent cases of teenage suicide. The rapidly changing landscape of social media used by young people presents challenges to educators and professionals. Suffolk needs to take Cyberbullying seriously. Dynamically responsive e-safety educational strategies are essential to ensure that young people in Suffolk know that Cyberbullying is unacceptable, understand how to keep themselves safe online, how to recognise it and how to report it.

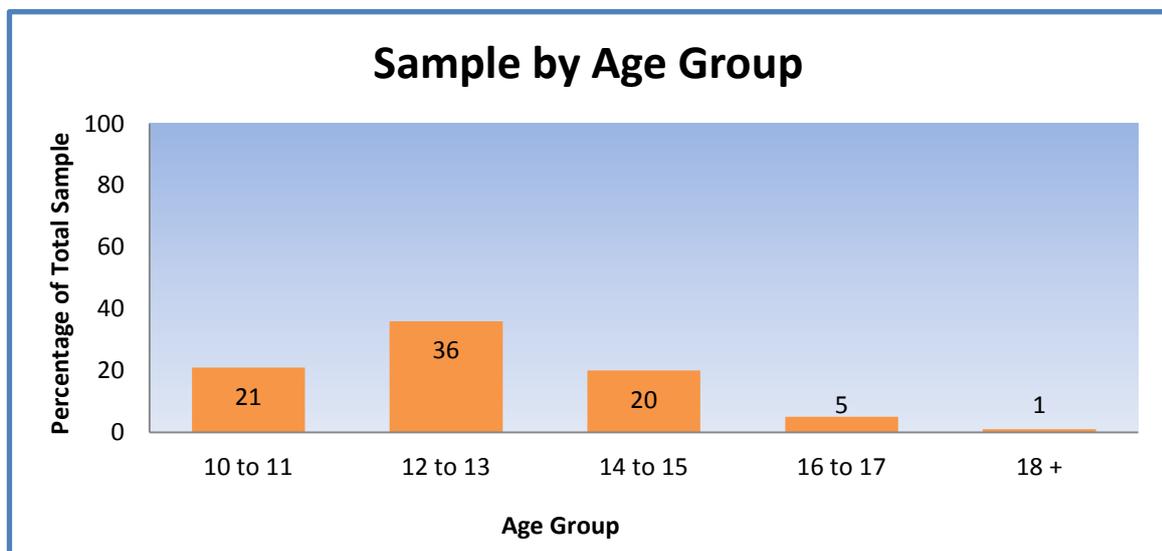
1 Beatbullying (2012) *VIRTUAL VIOLENCE II: Progress and Challenges in the Fight against Cyberbullying* available to download from <http://www.beatbullying.org/pdfs/Virtual-Violence-II.pdf>

2 Livingstone, S.; Haddon, L.; Görzig, A. and Ólafsson, K. (2011) EU Kids online Final report available online from www.eukidsonline.net

3 Beatbullying (online) <http://www.beatbullying.org/dox/resources/statistics.html>

About the survey

- 2,838 young people between 10-18 years of age and living in Suffolk responded to the survey.
- 43% of respondents were male and 41% female (some respondents chose not to say).
- 21% were 10-11 years; 36% - the largest group of respondents were 12-13 years; 20% 14-15 years and 5% aged 16-17 years. (1% aged over 18 but for the purposes of aged based analysis this category has been excluded due to relatively small number of responses).
- 12 % of the research sample identified themselves as having one or more disabilities.
- 6% as requiring extra help with English; 3% as being in care and 2% as a carer themselves.



Key findings:

1. Access to the Internet, mobile phones and social media by young people in Suffolk



Having access to an Internet enabled smart phone and a tablet like an iPad have both nearly doubled from the survey carried out last year. The percentage of children in Suffolk having access to an Internet enabled smartphone has risen from 41% in 2011 to 71% in 2012 and access to a tablet has increased from 20% in 2011 to 42% in 2012.



The use of social networking sites like Facebook remains similar to last year – 69% but what is of concern is that, of those respondents using Facebook 50% were under 13 years of age.

- Out of the respondents to the survey 83% of the young people in Suffolk have a mobile phone and 76% have access to a laptop or netbook.
- 28% have access to a computer outside their home at a club, library etc. and 37% have access to a computer they can use at a friend's house.
- 71% have access to an Internet enabled smartphone (an increase from 41% last year) and 42% have access to a tablet like an iPad (an increase from 20% last year).
- 69% of the Suffolk respondents have access to Facebook or other social networking site (50% of these are under 13 years of age⁴ and 23% have regular access to chat rooms (both these figures are similar to the previous year's survey)).
- 78% have access to a games console and 21% are exploring virtual worlds.

⁴ According to Facebook "In order to be eligible to sign up for Facebook, people must be 13 years of age or older" see www.facebook.com

2. Overall prevalence of Cyberbullying in Suffolk



Of the 2838 young people who responded to the survey 19% (539 respondents) claimed to have been cyberbullied. This percentage is similar to last year's findings and slightly lower than the national figure of 28% from Beatbullying 2012.



Of those young people who identified themselves as being cyberbullied 73 % reported that they were upset about the incident(s) and again this figure is relatively stable to the previous year (71% reported being upset).



The data suggests that Cyberbullying peaks slightly at the age of 16-17 (26%) but this age group are less likely to report it. Conversely the highest rate - 62% - for reporting Cyberbullying and seeking help was the 10 – 11 year old age group, which has the lowest level of reported (19%) Cyberbullying in the Suffolk sample.



Of those who identified themselves as being cyberbullied 60% were female and 33 % were male.



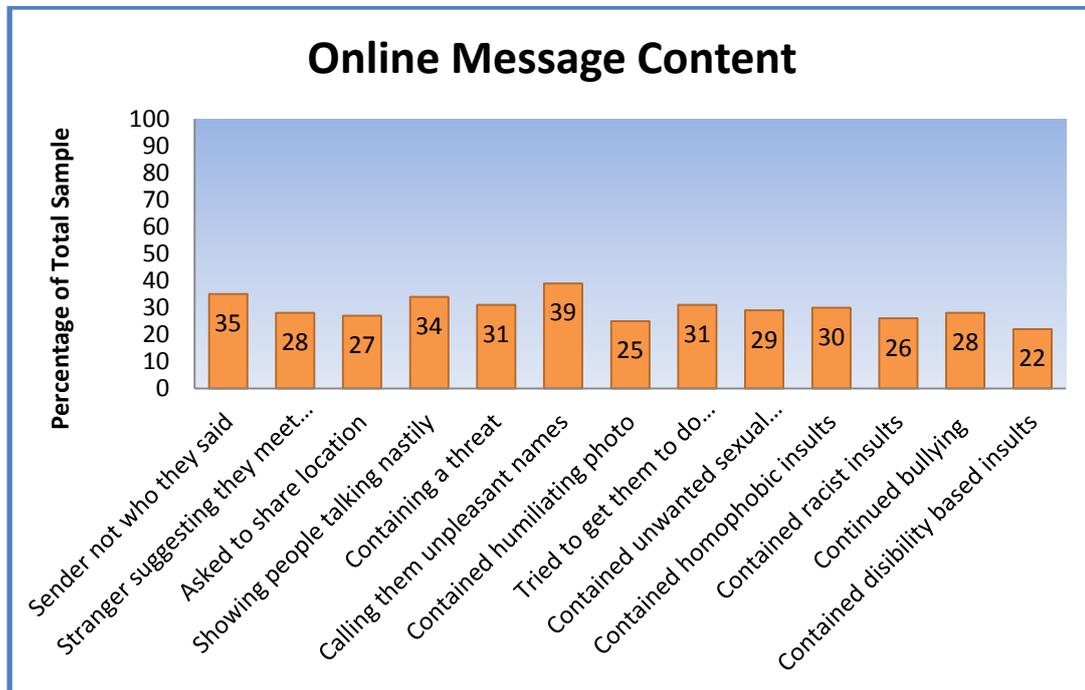
Young people with a disability were also more likely to be cyberbullied – 34% compared to 17% of young people without a disability.

2.1 Online

Prevalence of the different types of Cyberbullying online identified by all respondents:

- Of all the Suffolk respondents 35% have received a message where the sender was not who they said they were (an increase from 22% from the previous year); 28% have received a message from a stranger suggesting that they meet up (this figure has more than doubled since 2011 when it was 11%) and 27% have received a message asking them to share their location with someone they did not know.
- 34% have received a message that showed people were talking about them nastily (a significant increase from 17% last year) and 31% have received a message that contained threats (compared to 13% in 2011) and 39% have received a message calling them unpleasant names.
- 25% have received a message that contained a humiliating photo of the recipient meant to upset or embarrass and 31% have received a message that tried to make them do something that they did not want to do.
- 29% have received a message with unwanted sexual suggestions, jokes etc. (a rise from 12% from the previous year) and 30% have received a message with insults calling them gay (a significant increase from 13% in 2011).

- 26% have received a message calling them racist comments or names (again an increase from 11% in 2011) and 22% have received a message with insults because of a disability.
- 28% have received a message carrying on bullying from life in school.⁵



Prevalence of the different types of Cyberbullying identified by those who had been cyberbullied online:

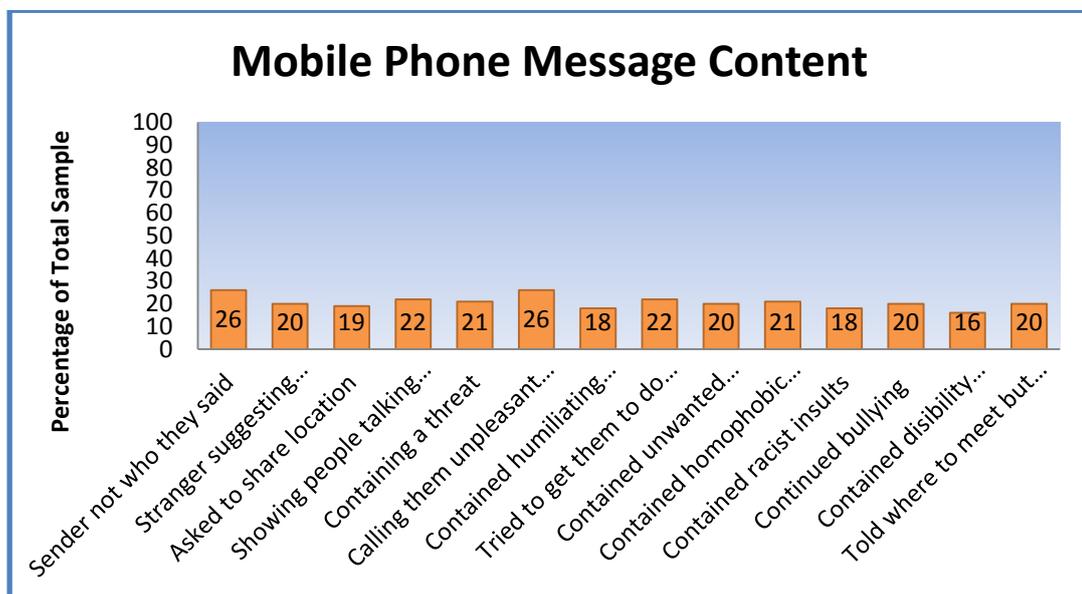
- 57% have received a message where the sender was not who they said they were; 46% have received a message from a stranger suggesting that they meet up (this is an increase from 26% last year) and 49% have received a message asking them to share their location with someone they did not know.
- 65% have received a message that showed people were talking about them nastily (compared to 42% in 2011); 58% have received a message that contained threats (a rise from 32%) and 52% have received a message calling them unpleasant names.
- 44% have received a message that contained a humiliating photo of the recipient meant to upset or embarrass and 54% have received a message that tried to make them do something that they did not want to do (an increase from 29% last year).
- 73% have received a message with unwanted sexual suggestions; jokes etc. (in 2011 this figure was 30%) and 54% have received a message with insults calling them gay (in 2011 this was 32%).
- 45% have received a message calling them racist comments or names (an increase from 26%) and 39% have received a message with insults because of a disability.
- 57% have received a message carrying on bullying from life in school.

⁵ This reflects the national picture on the relationship between face-to-face bullying at school and being bullied online.

2.2 Mobile phone

Prevalence of the different types of Cyberbullying via a mobile phone identified by all respondents:

- 26% have received a message where the sender was not who they said they were; 20% have received a message from a stranger suggesting that they meet up and 19% have received a message asking them to share their location with someone they did not know.
- 22% have received a message that showed people were talking about them nastily; 21% have received a message that contained threats and 26% have received a message calling them unpleasant names.
- 18% have received a message that contained a humiliating photo of the recipient meant to upset or embarrass (an increase from 5% year) and 22% have received a message that tried to make them do something that they did not want to do.
- 20% have received a message with unwanted sexual suggestions, jokes etc. (an increase from 7% last year) and 21% have received a message with insults calling them gay.
- 18% have received a message calling them names or making racist comments (a rise from 5% in 2011) and 16% have received a message with insults because of a disability (a rise from 3% last year).
- 20% have received a message carrying on bullying from life in school (compared to 8% last year).
- 20% have received texts telling them about where to meet but have then had the place changed on purpose without telling them (an increase from 9% last year).



Prevalence of the different types of Cyberbullying via a mobile phone identified by those who had been cyberbullied:

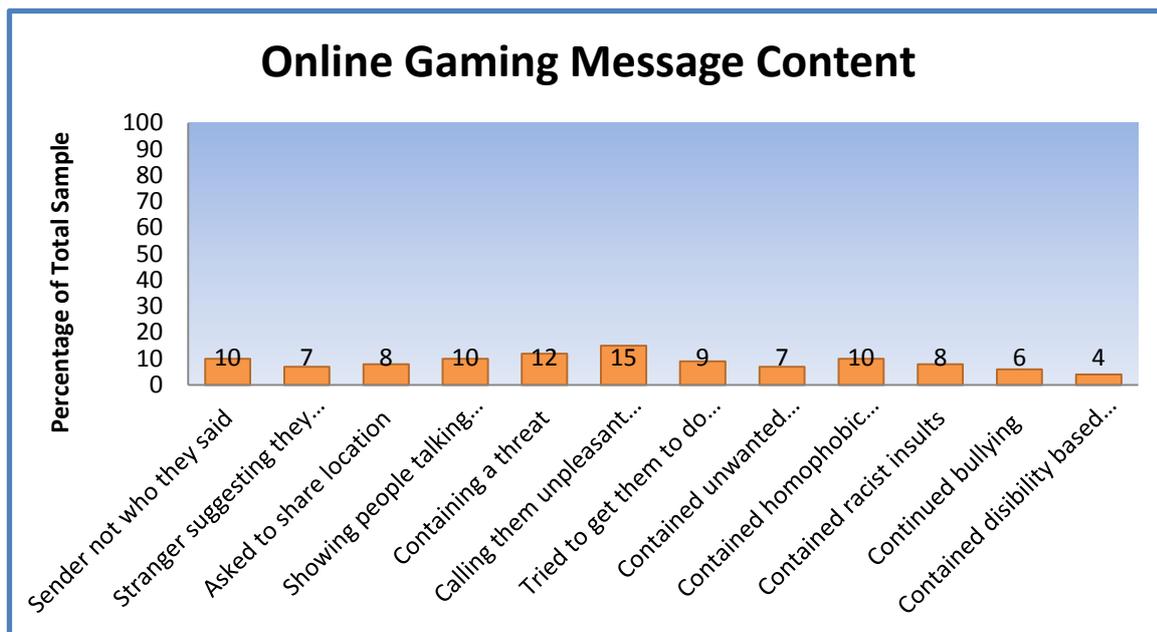
- 45% have received a message where the sender was not who they said they were; 35% have received a message from a stranger suggesting that they meet up and

- 42% have received a message that showed people were talking about them nastily; 42% have received a message that contained threats and 50% have received a message calling them unpleasant names.
- 31% have received a message that contained a humiliating photo of the recipient meant to upset or embarrass (an increase from 10% last year) and 38% have received a message that tried to make them do something that they did not want to do.
- 38% have received a message with unwanted sexual suggestions, jokes etc. and 38% have received a message with insults calling them gay (compared to 24% in 2011).
- 32% have received a message calling them racist comments or names (in 2011 this was 17%) and 28% have received a message with insults because of a disability (similar to 30% in 2011).
- 41% have received a message carrying on bullying from life in school (an increase from 29% last year).
- 37% have received texts telling them about where to meet but have then had the place changed on purpose without telling them (a slight increase on 31% last year).

2.3 Online Gaming

Online Gaming experiences of all respondents:

- 10% have received a message where the sender was not who they said they were; 7% have received a message from a stranger suggesting that they meet up and 8% have received a message asking them to share their location with someone they did not know.
- 10% have received a message that showed people were talking about them nastily; 12% have received a message that contained threats; 15% have received a message calling them unpleasant names and 9% have received a message that tried to make them do something that they did not want to do.
- 7% have received a message with unwanted sexual suggestions; jokes etc. and 10% have received a message with insults calling them gay.
- 8% have received a message calling them racist comments or names and 4% have received a message with insults because of a disability.
- 6% have received a message carrying on bullying from life in school.



Online Gaming experiences of those who had been cyberbullied:

- 21% have received a message where the sender was not who they said they were; 16% have received a message from a stranger suggesting that they meet up and 20% have received a message asking them to share their location with someone they did not know.
- 23% have received a message that showed people were talking about them nastily; 25% have received a message that contained threats; 30% have received a message calling them unpleasant names and 17% have received a message that tried to make them do something that they did not want to do.
- 17% have received a message with unwanted sexual suggestions; jokes etc. and 20% have received a message with insults calling them gay.
- 16% have received a message calling them racist comments or names and 9% have received a message with insults because of a disability.
- 20% have received a message carrying on bullying from life in school.

3. Homophobic Bullying

7% of the total sample considered themselves to have been homophobically bullied (207 respondents).

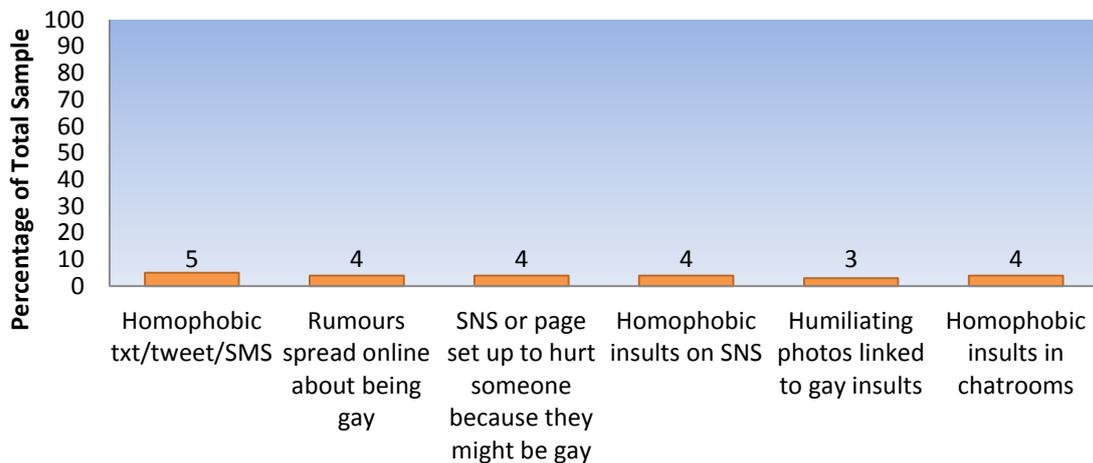
Overall males are more likely than females to experience online homophobic bullying, this difference is small (3% difference).

- It is also worth noting that 7% of the total sample considered themselves to have been homophobically bullied (207 respondents). Of those homophobically bullied 57% were

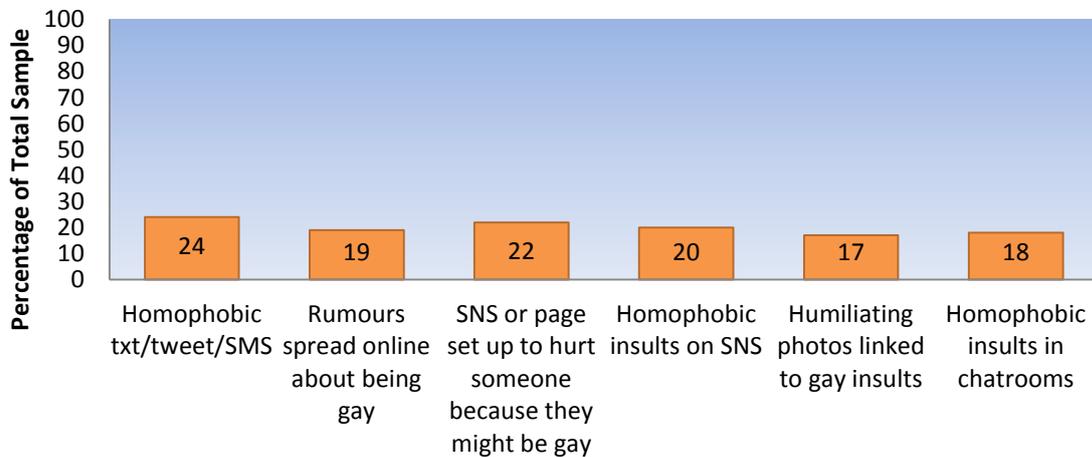
male (10% of males overall) and 38% female (7% of females overall). The data from the survey suggests homophobic bullying peaks slightly at the age of 10 – 11 (10%), though for most age groups the rate of homophobic bullying remains close (7-9%).

- 24% of respondents have seen insulting homophobic texts/SMS/Tweets sent to others, and 5% have had it happen to them (a slight drop from 10% in the previous year).
- 19% of respondents have seen rumours that someone is gay be spread in cyberspace, and 4% have had it happen to them.
- 22% of respondents have seen web or Facebook pages set up to hurt someone because they might be gay, and 4% have had it happen to them.
- 20% of respondents have seen homophobic insults on social network sites directed at others, and 4% have had it happen to them.
- 17% of respondents have seen humiliating photos of others linked to gay insults, and 3% have had it happen to them.
- 18% of respondents have seen homophobic insults in chat rooms directed at others, and 4% have had it happen to them.
- 14% of respondents have seen people use social media to make plans to isolate someone because they are thought to be gay, and 3% have had it happen to them.
- 15% of respondents have seen threatening texts or messages sent to others because they are gay, and 3% have had it happen to them.
- 14% of respondents have seen homophobic incidents in cyberspace linked to bullying in school or college directed at others, and 3% have had it happen to them.

Personal Experience of Homophobic Behaviour



Witnessed Experience of Homophobic Behaviour by Others



4. Indirect bullying

Cyberbullying messages do not have to be personally received by a young person in order to hurt or create a climate of fear.

➔ 16% of all males and 24% of all females have had deliberate rumours spread about themselves.

➔ 8% of all males and 11% of all females have deliberately had humiliating photos of them sent around.

- 9% of respondents were aware of humiliating photos sent about themselves, 18% were aware of deliberate messages spreading rumours about them.
- 17% were aware of messages being sent to encourage others to stop being friends with them and 29% were aware of photo and rumour spreading happening to others.
- 5% admitted to sending photo's or messages about others.
- 16% of all males and 24% of all females have had deliberate rumours spread about themselves and 8% of all males, and 11% of all females have deliberately had humiliating photo's of them sent around.
- 13% of all males and 25% of all females were aware of messages being sent to encourage others to stop being friends with them and 25% of all males, and 40% of all females were aware of photo and rumour spreading happening to others.

- 6% of all males, and 5% of all females admitted to sending photos or messages about others.

5. The Impact of Cyberbullying



73% of those cyberbullied reported being upset to some extent - 44% were upset and angry and 29% reported being a little upset.



81% of girls reported being upset to some extent compared to 57% of boys.

- Of those in the Suffolk Cybersurvey 73% of those cyberbullied reported being upset to some extent, with only 27% seemingly not affected.
- 44% reported being very upset and angry and 29% reported being a little upset and down. 14% reported not being bothered; 2% reported Cyberbullying as being mostly okay with their friends and very worryingly 11% reported taking it as a joke.
- There was a clear difference between how males and females felt about being cyberbullied as 81% of girls reported being upset to some extent compared to 57% of boys.

6. Reporting and getting help



Of those who identified as being Cyberbullied in the research only 61% had told someone and 52% got help to stop it.

Although many people had some sort of unpleasant experience, they did not necessarily all classify this as bullying.

- 19% of all the respondents identified themselves as having been Cyberbullied and, of those who identified as being Cyberbullied, 61% had told someone and 52% got help to stop it.

Therefore, what is alarming is that only just over half the young people in Suffolk who have been cyberbullied got help to stop it.

- The findings presented here mirror the national picture. According to BeatBullying there are significant numbers of young people nationally who do not take sufficient action when responding to, or dealing with, incidents of Cyberbullying. Despite much publicised efforts from Internet service providers and mobile phone providers amongst others, promoting advice to users on how to protect themselves from Cyberbullying, the messaging does not appear to have had significant impact⁶.
- Of those who identified themselves as being Cyberbullied in Suffolk in 56% of cases the bullying stopped, in 26% it happened a bit less, in 8% it stayed the same but in 11% it actually got worse.

8. E-safety education



90% respondents had been taught e-safety in school.



Most young people in Suffolk follow the e-safety guidance they have been given.



21% of respondents have filters/blocks set up at home by adults to stop them visiting some websites and 6% of respondents have filters/blocks set

- It is noteworthy that 90% of respondents had been taught e-safety in school (this is an increase from 79% last year) and that 55% of respondents had been taught e-safety by their parents (a slight decrease from the previous year) and 13% of respondents had been taught e-safety by a sibling.
- 17% of respondents had been taught e-safety on a website and 4% of respondents had been taught e-safety at their youth club.
- 5% of respondents had not been taught e-safety at all.
- It was also interesting that for the majority of e-safety teaching there is little if any gender difference (1– 3%) but there is a large disparity between gender is when e-safety is taught by parents as 50% of males are taught e-safety by their parents in comparison with 64% of females. Again this replicates findings from the 2011 Suffolk Cybersurvey.
- The mean age respondents were first taught about safety online was 8.75 years but the mean age respondents thought young people should be taught about safety online actually was 8.03. Though the difference is small it is (at this stage) significant. This suggests that

the respondents thought young people should be taught at a younger age than they themselves were taught.

- Despite this difference 70% of the sample reported that they had been taught about e-safety at the right time and even for those who identified as cyberbullied 69% reported being taught about e-safety at the right time.
- Similar to last year of those taught e-safety 37% reported it as being very good, by 55% as quite good, 4% not good enough and by 5% as useless. Overall 92% of those taught e-safety reported it as being good to some extent.
- Most young people in Suffolk follow the e-safety guidance they have been given. 39% of those taught e-safety always follow the guidelines; 46% follow them sometimes; 11% do not really/often follow them and 4% never follow them (these figures are again very similar to last year).
- 57% of respondents have filters/blocks set up at school by adults to stop them visiting some websites; 21% of respondents have filters/blocks set up at home by adults to stop them visiting some websites – this is more common for lower age groups - and 6% of respondents have filters/blocks set up on their mobile by adults to stop them visiting some websites.
- Of those who have filters/blocks set up for them 9% often try to get round them, 18% sometimes try and 67% do not try. 3% report having siblings who get past these blocks, and 5% have friends who get past these blocks.
- 14% of respondents don't know whether filters/blocks have been set up by adults to stop them visiting some websites.

Summary and Recommendations

- National research suggests that bullying is becoming an increasingly more common phenomenon that starts online, paving the way for more relentless attacks and that “recurring attacks can easily overwhelm a young person being cyberbullied, leaving them feeling anxious, tormented and increasingly marginalised. Whilst one-off incidents can undoubtedly cause damage at the time”... “victims of such incidents are less inclined to follow the paths of self-harming or self-destructive behaviour than are those who are more persistently bullied.”⁷
- Whilst the prevalence of Cyberbullying in Suffolk is slightly lower than the national average it is very concerning that only 62 % of young people in Suffolk who have been cyberbullied are reporting it. This figure is even lower in the older age group even though they report a higher level of Cyberbullying. More local research is required to find out why this is the case in Suffolk and if this compares to what other young people are saying nationally. There is also a need for targeted e-safety initiatives aimed at encouraging the older age group to report Cyberbullying⁸.

7 Beatbullying (2012: 7) VIRTUAL VIOLENCE II: Progress and Challenges in the Fight against Cyberbullying available to download from <http://www.beatbullying.org/pdfs/Virtual-Violence-II.pdf>

8 This is discussed by Katz, A. Katz, A. (2012) Cyberbullying and e-safety: What educators and other professionals need to know London: Jessica Kingsley.

- The impact of Cyberbullying can have very serious consequences not just on self-esteem and emotional wellbeing but also on educational and academic attainment. The findings from the national Beatbullying research highlight the other consequences of Cyberbullying as 20% of young people from the national study indicated that fear of the bullies made them reluctant to go to school, 19% experienced reduced confidence and self-esteem and 14% did not feel safe. 5% self-harmed and 3% reported attempting suicide as a result of their experience of Cyberbullying. These emotional and behavioural consequences were amplified among children who reported persistent and intentional Cyberbullying. Little other research to date, however, has investigated the effects of Cyberbullying⁹.
- This diagram below illustrates the impact that Cyberbullying could have on just one school environment if these percentages are applied hypothetically to an average small high school in Suffolk with 680 students :

Hypothetical Suffolk High School Analysis

- **136 students reluctant to go to school**
- **129 students suffering from a low self-esteem**
- **95 students fearing for their safety**
- **34 students potentially self-harming**
- **20 students potential suicide attempts**

- Cyberbullying is bullying and is often related to other bullying behaviours. Research from Europe and the UK highlight the relationship between online and offline bullying and half of online bullies say they have also bullied people face- to-face, and half of online bullying victims have been bullied face-to-face; also, among those who have bullied others online, nearly half have themselves been bullied online¹⁰.
- Most recent recommendations for responding to Cyberbullying advocate a 3 tier delivery approach: universal, targeted and intensive offering extra support to bullying victims and certain groups of vulnerable people¹¹.
- Of significant concern from this report is 34% of young people with a disability identified themselves as being cyberbullied compared to 17% of young people without a disability.
- There are, therefore, implications to address regarding protected characteristics in relation to cyberbullying, particularly as there are some rises seen in these types of bullying in the

⁹ Stewart, D. M. and Fritsch, E. J. (2011) School and Law Enforcement Efforts to Combat Cyber bullying. Preventing School failure. 55 (2) pp. 70 – 87.

¹⁰ Livingstone, S.; Haddon, L.; Görzig, A. and Ólafsson, K. (2011) EU Kids online Final report available online from www.eukidsonline.net

¹¹ See Katz, A. (2012) Cyberbullying and e-safety: What educators and other professionals need to know London: Jessica Kingsley.

year on year comparison – racist and homophobic bullying and bullying of people due to disability¹².

- Empowering vulnerable young people to overcome the challenges and risks they face online takes enormous expertise, resources and ultimately a whole-community commitment¹³. Suffolk needs to continue the progress made to date in raising the awareness of children, young people, families, vulnerable adults and those who work with them, about e-safety issues and how to safely enjoy the Internet¹⁴.
- Cyberbullying and e-safety are also key aspects of the new Ofsted inspection framework for Safeguarding¹⁵ and organisations in Suffolk need to ensure that they have an e-safety lead and know how to access up-to-date e-safety guidance and model policies for school/colleges and multi-agency organisations.
- It is worth noting from *The safe use of technologies* report which Ofsted published in February 2010, “pupils who are given greater freedom at school to use new technologies have a better knowledge and understanding of how to stay safe online. Schools where provision for e-safety was outstanding ran ‘managed systems’, helping students to become safe and responsible users of technology by allowing them to take more responsibility and manage their own risk. Pupils were more vulnerable overall when schools with ‘locked systems’ restricted access to almost every site; they were not given enough opportunity to learn how to assess and deal with online risk for themselves”¹⁶.
- The importance of having a having a robust PHSE curriculum cannot be overemphasised, one which includes up to date and relevant e-responsibly awareness and e-Safety training of all teaching and support staff, not just those delivering the ICT curriculum, is essential.

12 See The Equality Act (2010) available online from <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

13 Carrick-Davies, S. (2011) Munch Poke Ping Vulnerable Young People Social Media and e-safety available to download from <http://www.carrick-davies.com>

14 see <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/your-community/e-safer-suffolk/>

15 Ofsted (2013) Inspecting safeguarding Briefing for Section 5 inspection available to download from www.ofsted.gov.uk

16 Ofsted (2102) *The Safe use of New Technologies* available to download from <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/safe-use-of-new-technologies>

