

David Tilson MP ? Cyberbullying can have tragic consequences, so the government is cracking down



With today's technological advances, cyberbullying is unfortunately becoming increasingly prevalent in Canadian society. Cyberbullying is a form of bullying, in which aggression toward another is done through electronic means. A form of cyberbullying that uses new communication technologies to distribute intimate images without the consent of the person depicted is taking bullying way beyond the school yard. Once in cyberspace, an image or information can spread quickly and often uncontrollably, as it may also be permanently available on the Internet.

We have seen far too many instances where such conduct has victimized a young Canadian before the entire world. It can destroy lives. The impact of cyberbullying is far reaching and has even been a factor in the tragic suicide of several Canadian teenagers. In order to help protect the most vulnerable in society, we need a stronger criminal justice response.

In the 2013 Speech from the Throne, our government committed to better protecting children from all forms of bullying and we are delivering on our commitment with the introduction of legislation that specifically addresses this form of cyberbullying. Our government is introducing legislation that will:

- ? prohibit the non-consensual distribution of intimate images;
- ? empower a court to order the removal of intimate images from the Internet;
- ? permit the court to order forfeiture of the computer, cell phone or other device used in the offence;
- ? provide for reimbursement to victims for costs incurred in removing the intimate image from the Internet or elsewhere; and
- ? empower the court to make an order to prevent someone from distributing intimate images.

This legislation will also modernize existing investigative powers to enable police to more efficiently and effectively obtain electronic evidence that exists on the Internet or other technologies. This legislation is essential in addressing cyberbullying and holding cyberbullies accountable for their actions.

Our government also remains committed to putting the needs of victims first. This is why we are continuing to work with partners in the public and private sectors to address all forms of bullying through education, awareness and prevention activities. As part of our crime prevention projects, we are supporting the development of school-based projects to prevent bullying. Our government also supports the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, which operates [Cybertip.ca](#) and [NeedHelpNow.ca](#), websites that Canadians can use to report online sexual exploitation of children. They provide important resources for those seeking help. We are also helping ensure that Canadians have access to information they need to protect themselves and their families against online threats through the [GetCyberSafe.gc.ca](#) campaign.

Through this new legislation and our continued efforts to promote education, awareness, and prevention, we will help better protect our children from all forms of bullying. Our government remains committed to keeping Canada's streets and communities safe for all Canadians, particularly for our children.