


Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Parental Responsibility

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ABSTRACT

This paper is concerned with the social ills of bullying and cyberbullying that might lead to suicide especially when adolescents are involved. First, the author explains the two concepts. It is noted that people with monoamine oxidase-A (MAOA) have a propensity to antisocial behaviour and that they cannot relieve themselves of responsibility for their conduct. We all need to think of the consequences of our actions, and we need to ensure that internet abusers are held accountable for their wrongdoing. It is argued that parental responsibility is paramount. Parents, and society at large, need to exhibit zero tolerance to bullying and cyberbullying. Parents need to take active steps to tackle both phenomena, and, in this context, healthy communication with children and other stakeholders is key for success. Disregard for consequences of both activity and inactivity when facing all forms of bullying is immoral.

KEYWORDS

Anti-Social Aggression, Balancing, Bullying, Cyberbullying, Internet, MAOA-L, Moral and Social Responsibility, Parental Responsibility, Suicide

PRELIMINARIES

In 2020, the importance of the Internet and the vital role it is playing in our lives became acutely apparent as countries fighting the coronavirus asked people to stay at home and conduct their lives – jobs, shopping, teaching, learning, socialising among all other aspects of life, from home. The saying “My home is my castle” made more sense in many parts of the world, England included (of course).

The Internet has comprehensive and far-reaching positive effects. However, its very foundations, based on innovation, easy use, relatively cheap cost, and near-

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universal accessibility made the Internet open for use and unfortunately also abuse. The Internet contains the best, but regrettably also the worse products of humanity. We should relish the many positives and address the negatives. In order to do this, we must balance one against the other two very important values: on the one hand, freedom of expression, the *raison d'être* of the Internet until now; and, on the other hand, social responsibility that should become an essential component of this same *raison d'être*. Freedom without responsibility in this digital era might prove to be dangerous as Internet abusers exploit digital freedoms and target their victims maliciously and relentlessly, sometimes to death.

I commenced research on social responsibility on the Internet in 2006. During the first few years, the focus of my research was on ideological, violent extremism (Cohen-Almagor, 2011A, 2012, 2012A) and on child pornography (Cohen-Almagor, 2013). But as the cyberbullying phenomenon grew bigger so did my interest. Every loss of human life is sad; more so when young lives are lost; even more so when loss of life is utterly unnecessary and preventable. I became aware and increasingly troubled by tragic stories of young children who committed suicide following online harassment. Often that harassment was accompanied by offline harassment. I decided to expand my research to include cyberbullying as well.

Moral and social responsibility are required to deal with people who abuse their capabilities for vile, illegitimate and anti-social purposes. We have shared societal responsibilities to address and counter the problems of bullying and cyberbullying. This essay builds on my previous research on the subject and expands on it (Cohen-Almagor, 2011, 2015, 2015A, 2018, 2020). Virtual users abuse social platforms to harass their so-called “friends”. Virtual “Friends” might befriend others for sinister purposes, not to lend support but instead to inflict harm (McVeigh, 2011). Sometimes these people are using fake identities and accounts (Petrov, 2019). Sometimes they resort to anonymizing tools to hide their identity so they could bully others behind virtual masks. It is argued that social responsibility is no less important than freedom of expression.

In previous studies I discussed at length the responsibilities of Internet intermediaries in countering cyberbullying (Cohen-Almagor, 2015, 2018, 2020). I emphasised the need for adopting standards of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) into Internet intermediaries’ business model, explaining that CSR initiatives should include philanthropy, volunteerism, support for community, becoming a voice for disadvantaged groups, and adopting a friendly environmental policy. Such CSR initiatives are important because they evince good corporate citizenship, strong ethical practices, or sustainable business practices both on and offline (Novak, 1996; Carroll, 1999; Carroll and Shabana 2010; Brenkert and Beauchamp, 2010; Gawu and Inusah, 2019). Sacrificing ethical standards for the sake of making profit is a wrong business model (Nelson and Stout, 2021). Internet intermediaries certainly have great responsibility to shoulder. But as I discussed their responsibility in other forums, especially in my book (Cohen-Almagor, 2015), I will not address this important issue here. In this present piece I wish to provide a comprehensive review of the state-of-

the-art literature on bullying and cyberbullying and to promote parental responsibility as a mitigating factor to counter both phenomena which are currently shielded with considerable *chutzpah* by free speech arguments. The vast majority of the review is based on articles that were published during the past ten years.

First, the concepts of bullying and cyberbullying are explained. These are agonizing phenomena because they result each and every year with suicides of mostly young people whose death could have been avoided if only people – bullies, bystanders (Bauman, Iurino, Hackett & Yoon, 2020) and others -- were to act with greater sense of responsibility. Cyberbullying is a disease whose remedy is known. We need to work harder in employing remedies into effective use and prevent harassment and abuse. It is argued that parental responsibility in fighting against bullying and cyberbullying is essential in reducing and preventing violence and harm.

BULLYING

Bullying is defined as behaviour that is repeated, intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally, often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. Bullying can take many forms and can include physical assault, teasing, making threats, name calling and cyberbullying (Gov.uk, n/d; Smith, 2016). UNESCO characterises bullying as an “aggressive behaviour that involves unwanted, negative actions, is repeated over time, and an imbalance of power or strength between the perpetrator or perpetrators and the victim. Frequency of bullying is measured in different ways by different surveys” (UNESCO, 2019: 14). According to UNESCO, a student is considered to be a victim of bullying if s/he suffers aggression at least once a month (UNESCO, 2019).

Bullying is a well-known phenomenon. Many of us experienced or witnessed bullying at school and the workplace. In my primary school, there were two bullies and I did my best to protect myself and my friends from their venom. At high school I was unfortunate to encounter another bully who enjoyed electrifying fish, tarnishing his former girlfriend’s reputation, and throwing surprise punches at his victims. I also encountered bullying later in life at the workplace. People who are deemed to be “outsiders”, who do not belong “to the club” (whatever that is), are victimized. While young bullies may engage with inflicting physical harm, adult bullies are usually careful not to inflict such harm. Thus, while bullying and cyberbullying are prevalent within the wider population and not restricted only to victimize young people, this paper, much like most research on cyberbullying, is focused on examining this phenomenon among teens and adolescents.¹

Aggressive behaviour has a vast overlap with conduct disorder, antisocial personality disorder, alcohol use disorder, drug use disorder, depression, anxiety and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (Eisenberger, Way, Taylor, Welch & Lieberman, 2007; Nilsson, Aslund, Comasco, and Orelund, 2018; Martínez-Monteagudo, Delgado, Inglés, and Escortell, 2020). Research shows that people possess a variation in a gene called monoamine oxidase-A (MAOA), which is associated with antisocial behaviour.

People with the low-functioning variant of this gene are known as MAOA-L people, while those with the high-functioning variant are called MAOA-H people. The former people are at increased risk for aggressive behaviour and the development of antisocial personality disorder, even more so if they grow up in an abusive environment (Denson, 2014). MAOA-L people who suffered maltreatment during childhood were more likely to commit crime (Sohrabi, 2015).

While acknowledging the power of genes, there is still a lot that we can do to control aggression. People cannot invoke having MAOA-L to relieve responsibility and say that they are not responsible for their actions. People need to control their aggression. They cannot blame genes for their conduct. “Blame it on the genes” would not work as “Blame it on Hollywood violent movies” does not work (*Olivia v. NBC*, 1977; *Zamora v. Columbia*, 1979; *State of Florida v. Nelson Molina*, 1984; *Yakubowicz v. Paramount Pictures Corp*, 1989. See also Campbell, 1989; Rutherford, 2016). Similarly, it is unacceptable to relieve oneself of one’s conduct because one is unable to control one’s drives. Studies showed that improving self-control helps aggression-prone people overcome the urge to hurt others. People who showed aggressive traits significantly lowered belligerent behaviour after self-control training (Baumeister, Vohs & Tice, 2007; Denson, DeWall & Finkel, 2012). We need to invest in reducing bullying and provide protection against bullies who cannot control their aggression. And we must recognise that words can be extremely harmful, not only on a par with physical harm; certain words can incite people to inflict physical damage on themselves and on others. Research shows that cyberbullying victimization and traditional bullying are associated with deliberate self-harm (Heerde and Hemphill, 2019; Hinduja and Patchin, 2019; Meldrum, Patchin, Young, et al, 2020). Studies also show that bullying victimization is associated with depression (Takizawa, Maughan, and Arseneault, 2014; Reed, Nugent, and Lyle Cooper, 2015). Brady et al found that victims of bullying and cyberbullying were more likely to use drugs and carry weapons at school (Brady, Baker, and Pelfrey Jr., 2019).

Words can also cause people to lose their dignity to the extent that they might find it difficult to show their face in public. For some people, dignity is the most important thing in life, more important than certain organs or a limb. All of us, to one extent or another, are worried about our reputation. Sometimes, bullying tarnishes the self-confidence of victims to the extent that they feel devoid of dignity and self-worth.

CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying is defined as using the computer, cellphone, and other electronic devices to intimidate, threaten or humiliate another Internet user (Kowalski, Limber, and Agatston, 2008: 1; Backe, Lilleston, and McCleary-Sills, 2018). It involves the infliction of harm via digital devices. Usually this is done repeatedly. Cyberbullying includes embarrassing, offensive, degrading or threatening text messages, electronic stalking, password theft or masquerading as another person, spreading malicious rumours, sharing privileged information without consent. In addition to text,

cyberbullying may also include distributing sexual or violent photographs or videos (including sexting – sharing explicit texts, nude photos and videos via cellphone), harassment and online death threats (Gerson and Rappaport, 2011). Van Geel et al found that cyberbullying was more strongly related to suicidal ideation than bullying and therefore it is more dangerous than traditional bullying. Cyberbullying increases the risk of suicidal ideation by a factor of 3.12 versus a factor of 2.16 when bullied in person (van Geel, Vedder, and Tanilon, 2014). *Suicidal ideation* is defined as thoughts or wishes to end one's life and is seen as a precursor to suicide (van Geel, Vedder, and Tanilon, 2014).

Cyberbullying magnifies the bullying phenomenon and with it amplifies the trauma experienced by the victim. A single bullying episode can be posted on many social networks and used to harass the victim also by sending it directly to the victim's phone. Bullying cyber messages can be conveyed in various forms: text, photos and video clips. The cycle of aggression and violence can be prolonged by having a virtual life that is difficult for the victim to avoid, as most humans are curious to know what is said about them. Many people, especially young people, are constantly online. In the United States, 95% of adolescents aged 13–17 own a smartphone; of them, 45% report that they are online regularly (Buelga, Postigo, Martínez-Ferrer, et al, 2020). People find it difficult to completely shut themselves off as a defence mechanism. Most victims are simply incapable of isolating themselves from the harassment.

In the Internet age, the concepts of moral and social responsibility are becoming somewhat confused due to the Internet's disinhibition effect. Some people relish the opportunity to inflict harm on others. Some online abusers exploit social network platforms to express mean sentiments and to hurt people with total disregard for the potential consequences of their conduct. They transgress decency norms with impunity. Some other online users are oblivious to the harm they are causing. Those Internet users do not even bother to hide their identity. They find bullying acceptable, funny and even approved by bystanders.

In the digital world, one need not be physically strong to attack one's victim. Power is more about knowing how to abuse technology in an effective way while keeping one's own identity unidentified (Patchin and Hinduja, 2015; Alipan, Skues, Theiler, et al, 2020). Anonymous cyberbullying increases the cyberbullied feelings of being trapped. Cyberbullying and cyber-sexual harassment provide the bullies who are unwilling to directly harass victims with the opportunity to do so anonymously online (Walters and Espelage, 2020). Victims then persistently worry about the perpetrator's identity. Such information might ruin people's life.

Anonymity is a double-edge sword. It can protect human rights activists who operate discretely in oppressive societies and it can be abused for anti-social purposes. In 2013, Yik Yak, an anonymous gossip app invented by Tyler Droll and Brooks Buffington served as a platform for people who wished to anonymously inflict pain on others. Hate speech and death threats plagued the app across the United States (Larimer, 2015; Diehl, 2015). 19-year-old Elizabeth Long started a petition for banning Yik Yak after she saw messages that told her to kill herself when she was recovering

from attempted suicide. 83,245 people supported her petition.² In 2017, after four years of scandals, Yik Yak had shut down for good (Kircher, 2017). The question we must ask ourselves is whether, as technology develops, we are content to provide a space for bullies to communicate with their victims. Do we, as a society, do we as business, have a duty of care to vulnerable third parties?

Bullies and Cyberbullies are often motivated by rage, revenge, frustration or simple boredom. Some think bullying is funny or wish to receive some sort of recognition from their peers (Salmivalli, Huttunen and Lagerspetz, 1997; Perren and Alsaker, 2005; Duffy, and Nesdale, 2009; Salmivalli, 2010; Hinduja and Patchin, 2014; Doehne, von Grundherr, and Schafer, 2018). Some do it by accident, or did not think carefully about the consequences of their conduct. The Power-hungry get perverse satisfaction from the act of tormenting others. Mean girls do it to improve their social standing, while others see some merit in such behaviour (Stop Cyberbullying, n/d). Studies estimated that between 13% and 46% of young victims of cyberbullying did not know their harasser's identity. 22% of the bullies did not know their victim's identity (Kowalski and Limber, 2007; Wolak, Mitchell and Finkelhor, 2007; Vranjes, 2018).³

Commonly, children with disabilities and special needs attract the bullies' attention (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2007; 2009; Sellgren, 2014; stopbullying, n/d). Ethnic minorities are disproportionately targeted (Beaty and Alexeyev, 2008; Berlan, Corliss, Field, Goodman and Austin, 2010; Colby, 2016; Petrov, 2019). In a study among American adolescents who self-identified as White, Black, or biracial the latter group reported more bullying victimization than White and Black students (Hong, Yan, Gonzales-Prendes et al, 2021). Non-heterosexual youth are also targeted (Beaty and Alexeyev, 2008; Berlan, Corliss, Field, Goodman and Austin, 2010; Colby, 2016; Abreu & Kenny, 2018). Refugee children and people with non-traditional sexual orientation were frequently victimized (*Human Rights Watch*, 2000; Psych Central News Editor, 2010). Often, atmosphere of discrimination perpetuates silence and impunity as children endure more violence and harassment. Failing relationships might result in cyberbullying, using technologies to perpetrate dating violence (Cava, Tomás, Buelga, et al, 2020). Technology facilitates bullying because perpetrators feel that they will be able to get off scot free in the virtual world.

Research shows that greater time spent on online social networking promotes self-harm behaviour and suicidal ideation in vulnerable adolescents (Memon, Sharma, Mohite, et al, 2018). Research also shows that when children receive derogatory messages, they are generally ill-equipped to cope well with the emotional upset this causes (Sedghi, 2013). Cyberbullying is emotionally and psychologically damaging because it is repetitive and relentless (Lenhart, 2007; Hinduja and Patchin, 2014; *Safety Net*, 2018). Technology can be abused to amplify bullying. Bullying can take place around the clock, 24/7, without refuge.

Cyberbullying has desensitizing effect on both bullies and bystanders (Roessler, Hoffner & van Zoonen, 2017; Kim, Rosen, Scott, and Paulman, 2020). Hiding behind the keyboard and a false screen name provides the bully with protection to launch attacks against the victim whose only salvation might be closing the computer or the

cell phone. Because the bully does not see the emotional reaction of the victim, such as crying and shaking, s/he is not fully aware of the consequences of cyberbullying. The online bullies remain oblivious to what they do. Furthermore, exposure to cyberbullying also has a desensitizing effect on early adolescent bystanders. A 2016 study shows that one of four adolescents witness cyberbullying at least once in six months (Pabian, Vanderbosch, Poels, et al, 2016). Studies also show that passivity of bystanders is detrimental to the well-being and safety of victims. Studies indicate that moral disengagement is related to higher levels of aggressive conduct, and that positive associations between cyberbullying perpetrating and passive bystanding behaviours are significant (Lo Cricchio, García-Poole, Willemijn te Brinke, et al, 2021).⁴

Teens who share their identities and thoughts on social networking sites, such as Instagram and Facebook, are more likely to be targets than are those who do not use social networking sites (Lorenz, 2018; Cyberbullying Research Center, n/d). Managers of these platforms should be champions of social responsibility and care to the same extent that they champion freedom of expression (Cohen-Almagor, 2005: 105-123; Cohen-Almagor, 2015). Sites like www.netsmartz.org are instrumental in providing information and promoting awareness regarding the possible harms of social networking forums on the Net.

Melissa Holt analysed 47 studies on bullying and suicide among students in K-12 settings. The studies were from the United States, China, Australia, the U.K., Finland and several other countries. She found that youth involved in bullying in any capacity – both bullies and victims of bullying – were more likely to think about and attempt suicide than youth who were not involved in bullying (Holt, 2017; Memon, Sharma, Mohite, et al 2018; Kwan, Dickson, Richardson, et al, 2020. See also Hamm, Newton, Chisholm, et al, 2015). Furthermore, a more recent research shows that victims might develop multi-dimensional fears: of public humiliation; of missing out social experiences and, in turn, of social exclusion and isolation; of possible negative costs if one reports cyberbullying. Such a multi-dimensional fear might leave psychological scars on adolescents during a major developmental phase of their lives (Dennehy, Meaney, Walsh, et al, 2020).

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Parents need to be aware that in the Internet age, people's cyber life might be different from their offline life. Cyber life and offline life are often not one and the same. Many people have active life on social networking platforms and have far more virtual "friends" than genuine, true friends on which they could rely at challenging times. Facebook alone has a staggering number of over 2.5 billion monthly active users (*Statista*, 2020). This is about a third of the world's population. Many of the Facebook accounts are fake. Facebook had traced 583 million fake accounts in the first quarter of 2018 and 800 million the next quarter (Nicas, 2019). Between October 2018 and March 2019, during a relatively short period of six months, Facebook had removed more than three billion fake accounts (BBC, 2019).

Parents need to have conversation with their children about how to use the Internet in a safe and secure way, given that many people present themselves in a false way. They should explain to them the difference between true life friends and virtual “friends”, between peers and friends, and between adults and children. Parents should explain the suitable levels of expectation that children should develop and have regarding virtual “friends” and people who contact them, and also invoke concern about the way that individuals communicate with them. Research suggests that open dialogue around Internet use and collaborative creation of rules between parents and children is effective in reducing online bullying and victimization (Hasse, Cortesi, Lombana-Bermudez, and Gasser, 2019; Navarro, Ortega, Buelga, et al, 2019). Spying on children and invading their privacy should only be done as a last resort after exhausting all other means as those acts convey distrust and might encourage youth to operate underground (Hinduja and Patchin, 2019).

Responsible parents should discuss with their children, in a language that they understand, the concepts of freedom of expression, abuse of expression, and how to use the Internet responsibly. They need to familiarise themselves with the digital applications that their children use, and with the websites that they frequent. Responsible parents need to advise their children on appropriate use of the Internet, appropriate use of language, appropriate responses to diverse communications, and how they can guard themselves against Internet users who abuse freedom. Parents should delineate language red lines that children and others should not pass. They should define for their children the appropriate code of conduct and the scope of legitimate conversation: the topics and the language used to discuss those topics. Parents need to explain to their children the concepts of moral responsibility and social responsibility. *Moral responsibility* refers to the duty that individuals and groups have to act in accordance with the principles that guide our lives concerning right and wrong behaviour. These principles are the compass that guides human conduct in society (Talbert, 2015). *Social responsibility* refers to the conduct of individuals, groups, corporations and governments in society. Responsible agents take active steps to do good and to avoid harm (Kaliski, 2001; Cohen-Almagor, Arbel-Ganz and Kasher, 2012; Cohen-Almagor, 2015A; Kolb, 2018).

Responsibility requires attentiveness, care and concern. Responsible parents are involved in the lives of their children. They are required to know what their children do online. Parents of young children should set ground rules on digital use: the amount of time they are allowed to spend on the computer, what they are allowed to do on the Internet, what sites they are allowed to visit, with whom they are allowed to communicate, about what subjects, when children should call for their parents’ advice, and what to do when children witness wrongdoing, whether that wrongdoing concerns themselves or others (Pendergrass and Wright, 2014). Children need to be reassured to trust their parents and feel comfortable in involving them when they see something that does not feel right. It is essential that parents provide their children with such a reassurance. Children need to talk, share and vent. Silence would isolate victims and

enable evil to continue (Yeung, 2018).⁵ Children need guidance and support when they face situations that make them feel vulnerable and uncomfortable.

Responsible parents are likely to discern changes in their children's behaviour when such changes take place. Responsible parents know their children's friends and teachers and may contact them in case of need. Responsible parents should work with teachers to ensure that the school provides a safe, calm and protective environment where anti-social activities are stamped out. Research shows that social support from family and teachers reduce depressive and anxiety symptoms among children. Such social support may ameliorate the potential link between cyberbullying and distress outcomes at the psychosocial well-being level (Chang, Xing, Tin Hung Ho, et al, 2019; Hellfeldt, Lopez-Romero, and Andershed, 2020; Yang, Chen, Lin, et al, 2021).

Responsible parents should consult physicians when they observe changes in the child's behaviour, when the child complains about reoccurring health problems, shows signs of stress and distress, does not wish to go to school, lost her appetite, closes herself in her room for long hours, does not wish to engage with her surroundings and, generally speaking, looks miserable and unhappy. Bullied people reported negative feelings, including depression, sadness, exploitation, helplessness, frustration and lack of security (Hinduja and Patchin, 2007; Kowalski, Limber, and Agatston, 2008; Shariff, 2009; Wolke, Copeland, Angold, Costello, 2013; Fisher, Gardella, and Teurbe-Tolon, 2016; Englander, 2020). Having these feelings make the bullied more vulnerable to further harassment and injury. Parents should be attentive to those signs and seek expert advice. Clinicians can help parents identify risk factors for suicide and devise appropriate redeeming interventions. Paediatricians should be trained to play a supporting role in caring for children's social and developmental well-being, sensibly and sensitively inquire about children's online activities, about their school life and then about bullying and cyberbullying. Mental care and support to reduce isolation, coping with stress and taking active steps to resolve the problem with relevant stakeholders should be provided to the struggling children.

I have mentioned that individuals with a low activity form of MAOA-L, the gene that encodes monoamine oxidase A, will be more likely to react with aggression to challenges and provocations. Adults should be aware of their propensity to aggression and seek counselling and other ways to mitigate negative thoughts and energy. Parents are expected to be responsible for the conduct of their children, to secure anger management treatment for them and to ascertain that children with aggressive propensities will not be free to bully others at will. Studies concerning gene-environment interaction have established the importance of examining genetic variance within particular social contexts. For example, a cross-sectional study of 507 Asian male adolescents found positive interaction effects between child maltreatment and MAOA-L in relation to aggressive behaviour (McDermott, Tingley, Cowden, et al, 2009; Zhang, Ming, Wang, and Yao, 2016). Another study showed that individuals with the low-activity form of monoamine oxidase-A, who are exposed to violence in youth, have a greater likelihood of engaging in physical aggression later in adulthood (McDermott, Dawes, Prom-Wormley, et al, 2012). Parental responsibility is vital in

securing safety and peace of mind for their children, ensuring that their children would not be bullies or bullied in school and after school.

CONCLUSION

Cyberbullying is a heart-wrenching phenomenon because the majority of young lives that were cut short could have been saved if the relevant stakeholders, parents, schools, Internet intermediaries and governments were to take appropriate steps to fight against it. Presently, schools, Internet companies and governments are certainly aware of the harms of cyberbullying. They can and need to be far more proactive in trying to minimise the effects of cyberbullying.

Furthermore, parents and young adults may learn to detect and prevent online abuse by means of conversation. It is possible to develop digital communities that promote critical digital culture and prevent online abuse. Group members identify toxic phrases, warn relevant stakeholders about them, support targets of hatred and bullying. They may help their own group members as well as members of other digital communities, provide advice as to how to protect themselves and alert Internet intermediaries about the abuse that is taking place on their servers, pleading with them to remove toxic messages and block those who abuse the Internet by means of harassing others. They may discuss the benefits and drawbacks of digital tools that guide children and parents how to remain digitally safe, training schemes, safety resources, crime reporting systems and children friendly search engines (Andrews, Alathur, and Chetty, 2020).

Internet users can reduce Internet abuse and violent language when they are acting collectively. They can and should exert pressure on social networks to protect children and youth or the companies will suffer economic losses. We, as customers, should demand safe and responsible service. Future research should analyse new technological tools geared to identify cyberbullying, their implementation, and new initiatives to combat bullying and cyberbullying on the Internet, at school and at the workplace.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ For discussion on bullying and cyberbullying in wider populations, see, e.g., Wang, Yogeewaran, Andrews, et al (2019).
- ² <https://www.change.org/p/stop-bullying-and-harassment-on-yik-yak>
- ³ It is reiterated that cyberbullying does not necessarily relate only to young people; it is just that most of the research in this field has tended to focus on the young. For discussion on cyberbullying among adults, see Harvey, Heames, Richey, et al (2006); Forssell (2016); Vranjes, Erreygers, Vandebosch, et al (2018).
- ⁴ For discussion on constructive ways of defending victims of cyberbullying, see Luo and Bussey (2019).
- ⁵ See also <https://stopthesilencestopbullying.weebly.com> and <https://breakthesilenceofbullying.wordpress.com>

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