

Our Cyberbullying Scale

We have fielded over twenty unique surveys of youth, parents, educators, and law enforcement officers involving more than 50,000 participants from multiple countries over the last two decades. The primary focus of our research, however, has been middle and high school aged youth (12 to 17-year-olds) in the United States. You can read the details of our sixteen surveys of nearly 35,000 US youth [here](#). We have fielded surveys administered via paper and pencil instruments in classrooms in schools, and via online instruments (both at school and via digital recruitment). In our most recent five surveys, conducted over the last eight years, we have used national samples of US youth acquired by partnering with national research firms to access representative samples across diverse demographic characteristics (age, race, gender, region of the country).

On our survey instrument we begin by formally define cyberbullying as “...when someone repeatedly and intentionally

other electronic devices.” We then ask students if they have been cyberbullied or if they have cyberbullied someone else, ever in their lifetime or in the most recent 30 days. Some researchers ask about experiences within the last year (or school year), but we feel that a child’s memory is most reliable when asking about recent or lifetime experiences. We next ask them about a series of behaviors that are various forms of cyberbullying. In total, our scale includes 9 items for victimization and 9 items for offending.

Cyberbullying Victimization Scale

In the last 30 days, I have been cyberbullied in these ways...

1. I have been cyberbullied
2. Someone posted mean or hurtful comments about me online
3. Someone posted a mean or hurtful picture online of me online
4. Someone posted a mean or hurtful video online of me online
5. Someone created a mean or hurtful web page about me
6. Someone spread rumors about me online
7. Someone threatened to hurt me through a cell phone text message
8. Someone threatened to hurt me online
9. Someone pretended to be me online and acted in a way that was mean or hurtful

We've used several different indicators for cyberbullying victimization and offending over the years. Depending on the research question and methodology used, different variables are appropriate for different contexts. For example, a researcher might want to use the single item "I have been cyberbullied" to assess whether someone has been cyberbullied—and how frequently—in the most recent 30 days or in their lifetime. Most often, we use a version of the following scales below to assess general experience with cyberbullying and online aggression.

Variety scale: Recode each variable to a dichotomy (never and once=0; a few times and many times=1); range=0-9.

[This measure gives the researcher a continuous variable that assesses the variety of cyberbullying types experienced. Higher scores represent more experiences with different types of cyberbullying.]

Summary scale: never=0; once=1; a few times=2; many times=3. Sum responses for each variable with higher values representing more involvement in cyberbullying; range=0-27.

[This measure gives the researcher a continuous variable that assesses overall experience with victimization. It includes both variation in types of cyberbullying as well as the frequency of experience.]

[This measure gives the researcher a binary measure (dummy variable) which indicates if a respondent has been the victim of cyberbullying or not. This works well when using logistic regression or other statistical techniques which require a binary dependent variable.]

Psychometric Properties (across eleven studies)

Cronbach's Alpha range: 0.867-0.935

Principal Components Analysis / Exploratory
Factor Analysis

	Loadings
1. I have been cyberbullied	.671-.755
2. Someone posted mean or hurtful comments about me online	.743-.813
3. Someone posted a mean or hurtful picture online of me online	.773-.861
4. Someone posted a mean or hurtful video online of me online	.707-.900
5. Someone created a mean or hurtful web page about me	.688-.910
6. Someone spread rumors about me online	.717-.802

message	
8. Someone threatened to hurt me online	.547-.870
9. Someone pretended to be me online and acted in a way that was mean or hurtful	.624-.866

All loaded onto 1 component; Eigenvalue range 4.64-6.40 (51.52-71.52% of variance)

Inter-Item Correlations

	1	2	3	4
1. I have been cyberbullied				
2. Someone posted mean or hurtful comments about me online	.43-.66			
3. Someone posted a mean or hurtful picture online of me online	.36-.57	.61-.67		

posted a mean or hurtful video online of me online	.30-.58	.47-.67	.70-.89	
5. Someone created a mean or hurtful web page about me	.37-.59	.36-.63	.55-.87	.57
6. Someone spread rumors about me online	.35-.62	.63-.73	.55-.63	.44
7. Someone threatened to hurt me through a cell phone text message	.37-.58	.50-.68	.47-.69	.48
8. Someone threatened to hurt me online	.42-.60	.53-.70	.58-.71	.54

pretended to be me online and acted in a way that was mean or hurtful	.35-.55	.35-.64	.41-.77	.50
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Cyberbullying Offending Scale

In the last 30 days, I have cyberbullied others
in these ways...

1. I cyberbullied others
2. I posted mean or hurtful comments
about someone online
3. I posted a mean or hurtful picture online
of someone
4. I posted a mean or hurtful video online
of someone
5. I spread rumors about someone online
6. I threatened to hurt someone online
7. I threatened to hurt someone through a
cell phone text message
8. I created a mean or hurtful web page
about someone
9. I pretended to be someone else online
and acted in a way that was mean or
hurtful to them

Response options: never (0); once (1); a few
times (2); many times (3)

and many times=1); range=0-9.

[This measure gives the researcher a continuous variable that assesses the variety of cyberbullying types perpetrated against others. Higher scores represent more experiences with different types of cyberbullying.]

Summary scale: never=0; once=1; a few times=2; many times=3. Sum responses for each variable with higher values representing more participation in cyberbullying; range=0-27.

[This measure gives the researcher a continuous variable that assesses overall participation in cyberbullying. It includes both diversity of types of cyberbullying as well as the frequency of participation.]

Dichotomy: Recode summary scale so that 0 and 1=0 and 2 or above=1.

[This measure gives the researcher a binary measure (dummy variable) which indicates if a respondent has participated in cyberbullying or not. This works well when using logistic regression or other statistical techniques which require a binary dependent variable.]

Psychometric Properties (across eleven studies)

Cronbach's Alpha range: 0.793-0.969

Principal Components Analysis / Exploratory
Factor Analysis

2. I posted mean or hurtful comments about someone online	.740-.857
3. I posted a mean or hurtful picture online of someone	.876-.949
4. I posted a mean or hurtful video online of someone	.889-.968
5. I spread rumors about someone online	.742-.916
6. I threatened to hurt someone online	.853-.923
7. I threatened to hurt someone through a cell phone text message	.867-.930
8. I created a mean or hurtful web page about someone	.855-.942
9. I pretended to be someone else online and acted in a way that was mean or hurtful to them	.843-.938

All loaded onto 1 component; Eigenvalue range 5.13-7.34 (57.08-81.57% of variance)

Inter-Item Correlations

	1	2	3	4
1. I cyberbullied others				

hurtful comments about someone online	.52-.68			
3. I posted a mean or hurtful picture online of someone	.45-.70	.59-.83		
4. I posted a mean or hurtful video online of someone	.53-.70	.56-.75	.85-.94	
5. I spread rumors about someone online	.49-.63	.56-.78	.62-.83	.63
6. I threatened to hurt someone online	.51-.69	.59-.78	.72-.83	.74
7. I threatened to hurt someone through a	.48-.69	.56-.75	.72-.84	.75

message				
8. I created a mean or hurtful web page about someone	.51-.66	.54-.72	.74-.92	.78
9. I pretended to be someone else online and acted in a way that was mean or hurtful to them	.46-.68	.57-.74	.71-.86	.73

Replication

We offer the scale, along with measurement instructions and psychometric properties for future scholarly inquiry into the problem of cyberbullying. Please cite appropriately (see below). Replication using these measures for non-profit educational and research purposes is encouraged. All we ask is for proper attribution. Please cite accordingly:

Hinduja, S. & Patchin, J. W. (2024). Bullying Beyond the Schoolyard: Preventing and Responding to Cyberbullying (3rd edition).

Also, we would very much appreciate researchers who utilize our scales to send us the psychometric scores for their samples so we can continue to evaluate and refine the measures. Don't hesitate to contact us with questions.

For additional discussion of cyberbullying measurement issues, see:

Patchin, J. W. & Hinduja, S. (2015). Defining cyberbullying: Implications for research. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 23*, 69-74.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2015.05.013>

List of Our Papers/Books That Use These Scales

Hinduja, S. & Patchin, J. W. (2024). *Bullying Beyond the Schoolyard: Preventing and Responding to Cyberbullying* (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
<https://cyberbullying.org/bullying-beyond-schoolyard-preventing-responding-cyberbullying-3rd-edition>

Patchin, J. W. & Hinduja, S. (2023). Cyberbullying Among Asian American Youth Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Journal of School Health, 93*, 82-87.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/josh.13249>

Hinduja, S. & Patchin, J. W. (2022). Bias-Based Cyberbullying Among Early

Adolescence, 42(9), 1204-1235.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/02724316221088757>

Hinduja, S. & Patchin, J. W. (2022). Bullying and cyberbullying offending: The influence of six parenting dimensions among US youth.

Journal of Child and Family Studies, 31, 1454-1473. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-021-02208-7>

Patchin, J. W. & Hinduja, S. (2022).

Cyberbullying among tweens in the United States. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 42(3), 414-430.

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Lee, C., Patchin, J. W., Hinduja, S., Dischinger, A. (2020). Bullying and Delinquency: The Impact of Anger and Frustration. *Violence and Victims*, 35(4), 503-523. <https://doi.org/10.1891/VV-D-19-00076>

Hinduja, S. & Patchin, J. W. (2019).

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Patchin, J. W. & Hinduja, S. (2018). Deterring teen bullying: Assessing the impact of perceived punishment from police, schools, and parents. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 16(2), 190-207.

<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1541204016681057>

and cyberbullying victimization. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 73, 51-62.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2017.09.010>

Patchin, J. W. & Hinduja, S. (2015). Defining cyberbullying: Implications for research. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 23, 69-74.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2015.05.013>

Hinduja, S. & Patchin, J. W. (2015). *Bullying Beyond the Schoolyard: Preventing and Responding to Cyberbullying* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications (ISBN: 978-1483349930).

<https://cyberbullying.org/bullying-beyond-schoolyard-preventing-responding-cyberbullying-2nd-edition>

Hinduja, S. & Patchin, J. W. (2013). Social influences on cyberbullying behaviors among middle and high school students. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 42(5), 711-722.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-012-9902-4>

Hinduja, S. & Patchin, J. W. (2012). *School Climate 2.0: Preventing Cyberbullying and Sexting One Classroom at a Time*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications (ISBN: 978-1412997836).

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Patchin, J. W. & Hinduja, S. (2011). Traditional and nontraditional bullying among Youth: A test of general strain theory. *Youth*

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consequences of online victimization: School
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Violence, 6*(3), 89-112.
https://doi.org/10.1300/j202v06n03_06

Patchin, J. W. & Hinduja, S. (2006). Bullies
move beyond the schoolyard: A preliminary
look at cyberbullying. *Youth Violence and
Juvenile Justice, 4*(2), 123-147.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1541204006286288>

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