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Students Give Advice At Cyber Bullying Conference

Educators, Police Learn To Deal With Technology

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ANNAPOLIS, Md. -- School districts across the country are still trying to get a handle on cyber bullying, and at a conference in College Park on Thursday, high school students spent time asking questions and giving advice on some pressing technology issues.

Cyber bullying is when the Internet or other electronic devices are used to threaten or harass another person.

Several Maryland high school students were the experts at the conference that focused on cyberethics, safety and security. Students shared their concerns with those in education, law enforcement and business about how to speak the same language on the topic.

"I know some of my friends have Facebook before they are 13, and they really don't understand the effect they can have when they do that," said student Brianna Mentle.

"It's important to educate students because, nowadays, everyone over 6 years old has cell phones, and they have accounts online," said student Priya Gupta.

ANTI-BULLYING HELP FOR PARENTS, KIDS

» Stand Up To Bullying With These Resources
» Cyber Bullying: A Parent's Guide
» Maryland Schools Bullying Policy
» Baltimore County Anti-Bullying Brochure

Students said some of their classmates and friends are not aware of what happens once a message is posted on the Internet or in a text.

"I don't think they really realize it's permanent and that you can't delete it, and maybe a month later, someone learns about it," said student Richard Mentle.

"I don't think students realize that it is there forever, and there are so many ways other people hack into their account and see what they are saying," said student Hope Scheckelhoff.

Much of what's being shared at the three-day conference from students and experts may help shape school policy across Maryland.

"As parents or as educators, we have some great ideas, but sometimes we miss the boat with what kids really see as important or not as important," said Dr. Davina Pruitt-Mentle of the group CyberWatch.

Members of the cyber generation were quick to offer some on-the-spot advice to parents before their children log on.

"Teach them that if you say certain things, you can get sued. You can ruin your life. You have to be careful with the legality and all of that," said student Zeshan Tariq.

"Tell their child that they don't want their home information or telephone information on their Facebook. I don't think parents know what their kids are posting on their Facebooks, exactly," said student John Stelben.

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