

How Cyberbullying Can Affect a Target's Behavior

Lesson 4, Student Activity 1

Caroline was walking home from school when her cell phone beeped, indicating that she had a text message from Brittany. "I H8 U. BYKT. UR fat and ugly! YBS U met me." (I hate you. But you knew that. You are fat and ugly! You'll be sorry you met me).

Tears came to Caroline's eyes. Brittany was a new kid in school who, for some reason, had singled Caroline out to be mean to her. "She keeps after me," Caroline told her friend. "She sends me about 10 text messages a day, she posts nasty comments on my blog. She calls me on my cell phone. I can't sleep anymore thinking about it."

Caroline's mother had asked her the night before why she seemed so jumpy and tired all the time. Caroline responded that she was fine, just busy at school. She didn't want to tell anybody what was happening. Secretly Caroline felt it was her fault that Brittany was coming after her because she was a little overweight. Plus she was afraid that her mom would contact the school and Brittany would get in trouble and that would make things even worse for her.

She hesitantly turned on her computer to do some homework, afraid Brittany might have sent another message. Suddenly an instant message popped up. It was from Brittany. Caroline moved away from the computer like it had given her a shock. "Just leave me alone!" she screamed and ran from her computer in tears.

How has cyberbullying affected Caroline's behavior?