

## ***The consequences of cyberbullying for the bully in the short, medium, and long term***

### **Lesson 7, Student Activity 5**

Unchecked bullying is often an early step towards more serious misbehavior and unlawful activity:

- Some research indicates that nearly 60 percent of boys who researchers classified as bullies in grades six to nine were convicted of at least one crime by the age of 24; 40 percent of them had three or more convictions by age 24.<sup>1</sup>
- Among boys who said they had bullied others at least once a week in school, more than half had carried a weapon in the past month, 43 percent had carried a weapon in school, 39 percent were involved in frequent fighting, and 46 percent reported having been injured in a fight.<sup>2</sup>

A study conducted in Finland, [Bullying, depression, and suicidal ideation in Finnish adolescents: school survey](#), concluded: "Adolescents who are being bullied and those who are bullies are at an increased risk of depression and suicide. The need for psychiatric intervention should be considered not only for targets of bullying but also for bullies."

The act of bullying, whether online or offline, may have longer term consequences for the bully than for the target. Bullying often becomes the bully's default coping method, a negative pattern that is reinforced as they surround themselves with friends who approve, or even support their aggressive actions. Bullies may take their abusive patterns into adulthood at work and home.

While young bullies may enjoy a temporary level of popularity and peer status, they often have trouble making and keeping friends, do poorly in school, and aren't well liked by teachers. Bullies also have an increased risk for using alcohol and drugs.

**Make sure your students understand the impact of engaging in cyberbullying relationships.** Many targets are also bullies. Help them understand that [bullying deeply affects the bully](#) and discuss why revenge (online or offline) is not appropriate. Make it clear what the consequences will be if they engage in a bullying relationship as bully or target.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments or questions: \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>1</sup> Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, September 2003

<sup>2</sup> National Institute of Health, 2003