

TIPS TO PROTECT 2SLGBTQIA+ COMMUNITIES FROM SOCIAL MEDIA CYBERBULLYING & HARASSMENT

This resource is intended as a guide to support Canadian 2SLGBTQIA+ organizations and communities in protecting themselves against online harms. We recognize that these strategies may not work for everyone and suggest using your discretion when adopting these recommendations.

DO'S

1 Report incidents of online harassment to colleagues, family, and friends

- If you feel safe to do so, inform your colleagues and inner circles about the incident. This way, they will be alert and vigilant in addressing incidents that escalate from online to offline harassment.

2 Screenshot any direct online harassment or threats

- Recording any harassment or threats that are directed towards you will allow you to track these incidents. This can be useful if you choose to report the incident to your organization or the police.

3 Record identifiable information about the perpetrator like their name, email, and phone number (if it is available)

- Note any identifiable information about the perpetrator. This can be useful for blocking related accounts, filing police reports and requesting restraining orders.

4 Once all identifiable information is recorded, you can block the person's account (if possible)

- Limiting their ability to interact with you/ your organization may encourage them to stop the cyberbullying and/or harassment.

5 Protect yourself online by making public profiles private

- Having social media accounts publicly available gives everyone access to your personal life. Making your accounts private can make it more difficult for cyberbullies to locate your personal information.

6 Have resources on hand to support staff and volunteers who become targets of cyberbullying or harassment

- Organizations that become targets of cyberbullying and harassment must be prepared to support their staff and volunteers. This includes having protocols in place to mitigate these incidents and crisis support services readily available for anyone who needs support.

7 Enable two-factor authentication for all social media accounts

- 2SLGBTQIA+ organizations can be targets of online harm. Taking extra security measures to protect social media accounts will reduce the possibility of having accounts hacked and data breached.

8 Protect your accounts by using strong passwords

- Having a strong password can protect your account from being breached. Password generators like 1password will generate complex passwords for you. You can use sites like Bitwarden to manage these complex passwords.

1 Don't engage with anti-2SLGBTQIA+ content on social media

- By engaging in content that is sharing anti-2SLGBTQIA+ material, you can become a target of these communities which can turn into direct cyberbullying and harassment.

2 Don't respond to personal messages or emails

- If you receive a private message that contains anti-2SLGBTQIA+ discourses do not engage with the perpetrator. Simply screenshot the content and block the user.

3 Don't share others' information publicly on social media

- If someone/an anti-2SLGBTQIA+ organization is harassing you, do not publicly share their information using social media or other online platforms. This approach can be seen as retaliation or revenge, which can have legal consequences.

4 Don't wait to report the issue to your team or supervisor

- Cyberbullying and harassment can occur in the workplace. 2SLGBTQIA+ organizations and community leaders who work for these organizations can become direct targets of anti-2SLGBTQIA+ discourses. If the incident is related to your workplace and you feel safe to report it, do not wait to report the issue to your colleagues or supervisor.

These resources were used to inform this document:

(2021). *Strategies for Fighting Cyberbullying*. MediaSmarts. <https://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/digital-issues/cyberbullying/strategies-fighting-cyberbullying>

(n.d.). *Cyberbullying and the Law*. MediaSmarts. <https://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/digital-issues/cyberbullying/cyberbullying-law>