

You Choose: Cyberbullying

Directions: Read the Story. Then, following the example below, pick a question to answer. Print this page and create a story that tells about the outcome.

Justin has been in the same group of guys throughout high school. In his junior year, Justin decided he might like to try out for the school play. Justin was in choir at his church for a long time and really likes to sing and dance. His friends don't know this about him, so his sudden interest in theater was surprising to them.

Justin landed a small part in the play, but he is very busy at play practice almost everyday after school. He doesn't have much time to hang out with his friends anymore. He actually feels like his friends don't want him around anyway. They ignore him at school and tell him he cannot sit at lunch with them anymore.

Justin has been receiving mean and nasty text messages from an unknown number almost every day. He also has been getting chain emails from friends at school spreading rumors about Justin being "gay" because he is in the school play. The messages say that Justin is less of a man and prissy because he is in the school play.

Justin has started to feel depressed and anxious whenever he goes to school because he knows he cannot sit with his friends at lunch anymore. He also worries about going on the Internet or checking his phone because he doesn't know what nasty messages he will find.



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WHAT SHOULD JUSTIN DO?

Example Question: What might happen if Justin tells the school counselor?

Outcome: If Justin tells the school counselor, the counselor may listen and help Justin to see his options more clearly. The counselor will normalize being in theater or anything else that Justin is interested in. He may talk through options like Justin confronting his friends to explain that he really enjoys being in the school play. Justin may be able to sort out that if they were real friends they would accept Justin for who he is and support his interests. The school counselor might be able to address the possible legal issues dealing with cyberbullying, give Justin advice not to retaliate and keep records of the harassment. The counselor might also offer to talk with Justin's parents about monitoring his Internet and cell phone activity.

Other Questions:

What might happen if Justin tells his parents about the situation?

What might happen if Justin tries to talk with his friends about their behavior?

What might happen if Justin chooses to ignore his friends and make friends from the play instead?

What might happen if Justin deletes his email account or blocks the text messages?

What might happen if Justin seeks out other friends to help him confront the situation?

What might happen if Justin quits the play?

How do you think this outcome would affect the student, their self-esteem and their future?
