CYBER-VIOLENCE

WHAT IS CYBERVIOLENCE?

Cyberviolence is any online behavior that constitutes or leads to harm against the psychological, emotional, financial, and/or physical state of an individual or group. Although cyberviolence occurs online it can begin offline and/or have serious offline consequences.
Examples of cyberviolence include (but are not limited to) malicious text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, sharing of another's intimate pictures/ videos/texts without consent, online bullying, harassment, cyberstalking, blackmail, expressions of racism, homophobia and misogyny.

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Anyone can experience cyberviolence; however there are some populations that experience higher rates of cyberviolence due to intersecting power imbalances that make certain groups more vulnerable.

Cyberviolence is largely gender-based as it is disproportionately experienced by self-identifying females. Gender-based cyberviolence refers to misogynistic behavior that can flow on and off line. In addition, individuals who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, intersex, queer and/or questioning, and two-spirit (LGBTTIQQ2S), are also more vulnerable to being targeted by an online perpetrator.

IMPACT OF CYBERVIOLENCE

Cyberviolence is a significant online problem that results in offline consequences. It is important to remember that behind the screen there are real people with real lives, and the harm caused by cyberviolence is often predominantly psychological and emotional. Cyberviolence can lead to offline consequences such as:

- Depression, social anxiety, loneliness, isolation, stress related health problems (e.g., headaches, stomach aches) and low self-esteem
- School and work absenteeism
- Academic and professional performance problems
- Aggressive behaviours
- Contemplating, attempting, or committing suicide

GENERAL ONLINE SECURITY TIPS:

Here are a few general online security tips that can help in facilitating a safer online space:

- Log out of accounts when no longer in use.
- Do not share your passwords, and make sure to change them regularly.
- Use your privacy settings on social media accounts to adjust what you would like to share and with who (e.g., only friends).

HELPFUL RESOURCES

ON CAMPUS

Sexual Assault Resource Centre (SARC)
SGW H 645, 514-848-2424 ext. 3353

Counselling & Psychological Services
SGW H-440, 514-848-2424 ext. 3545
LOY AD-103, 514-848-2424 ext. 3555

Office of Rights and Responsibilities
SGW GM-1120, 514- 848-2424 ext. 8659

Centre for Gender Advocacy
2110 Mackay St., 514-848-2424 ext. 7431

OFF CAMPUS

Help and information centre on sexual harassment in the workplace (GAIHST) 514-526-0789

Sexual Assault Provincial Helpline (24/7)
1-888-933-9007 or 514-933-9007 in Montreal

ONLINE

cyberviolence.atwaterlibrary.ca
rcmp-grc.gc.ca/cycp-cpcj/bull-inti/index-eng.htm

Remember that cyberviolence is never the targeted person's fault and can take place despite ones best efforts to put security measures in place.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU, OR A FRIEND, ARE EXPERIENCING CYBERVIOLENCE

- If you are in immediate danger, dial 911

- Do not respond to abusive messages, texts, emails, or comments.

- Screenshot or save any threats, abusive messages, or proof of cyberviolence.

- Disable location sharing

- Contact one of the resources listed in the "Helpful Resource" section for further guidance and information

If someone discloses to you that they are experiencing cyberviolence one of the most important things you can do is listen to, and believe, them. You can show your support by asking them how you can help; some people will find it helpful to be provided with information, such as this handout, or to be accompanied to one of the resources listed above.

References
http://cyberviolence.atwaterlibrary.ca/the-project/
Citron, D. K. (2009, October 14). Law's expressive value in combating cyber gender harassment. Michigan Law Review, 180, 373-415. Retrieved November 20, 2014, from http://digitalcommons.law.umaryland.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1687&context=fac_pubs
Dixon, S., Craven, E., Hayley, C., Weber, S. Preventing and eliminating cyberviolence initiative: Needs assessment findings. Atwater Library and Computer Centre. Montreal, QC. Retrieved July 13, 2017, from http://cyberviolence.atwaterlibrary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Atwater-Library-Preventing-and-Eliminating-Cyberviolence-Initiative-press-draft.pdf.

LEARN MORE AT: concordia.ca/sarc