Today’s piece was prepared by Susan Trout, MD, based on a New York Times article [How to Safeguard Children Against Cyberbullying](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/05/well/family/how-to-safeguard-children-against-cyberbullying.html?searchResultPosition=30)

The author discusses the prevalence of cyberbullying, its effect on children and adolescents and steps parents can take to support their children. The article begins with the story of Mallory Grossman, a 12-year-old girl who was harassed online by classmates and ultimately committed suicide in June 2017. In response, Mallory’s mother is now working to pass Mallory’s Law, a New Jersey statute that would create increased accountability in the manner in which the state’s schools are obligated to respond to bullying behavior. The article reports that cyberbullying is increasingly common with up to 59% of teens reporting bullying or harassment online per a 2018 Pew Research Center report, many reporting the perception that teachers, social media companies and politicians have failed to help them. The article details potential effects of online bullying and harassment, including anxiety, depression, academic problems and even suicidality. Based on reports from the CDC and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, the author posits that cyberbullying poses a significant health problem and suggests that parents take preventive and intervening steps. The article directs attention to parents regarding warning signs, monitoring, and reporting and to be aware of state and local anti-bullying legislation.

This was a very well researched article, providing high quality evidence for the prevalence of cyberbullying among children and adolescents as well as the substantial health impacts that such harassment may have. The article provides simple and actionable advice for parents of children who are experiencing online bullying as well as resources for support for children and their parents in these difficult situations. Importantly, the article also encourages an active dialogue between parents and their children about this issue and recommends that parents and children make a plan for how they will address online harassment before it occurs. This article was appropriately concise and narrow in its scope, focusing on actions that can be taken by parents in the context of increasing focus on the issue of cyberbullying at a state and national level.

**RESOURCES ON BULLYING FOR CHILDREN & CAREGIVERS:**

[Bullying and Cyberbullying](https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/resilience/Pages/Bullying-and-Cyberbullying.aspx) *The Resilience Project, American Academy of Pediatrics*

[Stopbullying.gov](https://www.stopbullying.gov/) *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

[Crisis Text Line](https://www.crisistextline.org/) *Free support for bullying and other crises. Text 741741 from anywhere in the US.*

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!