

# Awareness and parental involvement in dealing with the phenomenon of cyberbullying / Tamir Tal

## Abstract

This research examines whether parents are aware to the cyberbullying phenomenon, and what are the actions that they take in order to deal with it, when the population chosen for this research is parents for children between the ages of 10-12 years, due to insufficient research done on the topic in this range of ages.

The research was conducted on 133 parents from this population and their answers were tested, among other factors, in comparison to results of other research, which examined the phenomenon in children of this age.

The existent literature on this topic shows that increasing use in computers, internet and mobile phones, as well as different social networks, led to several new phenomena, which one of them is the cyberbullying phenomenon, in which people use the different technologies in order to intimidate, embarrass, threaten or harass a person or a group of people, whether by publishing offensive material on the internet websites or social networks, or by sending embarrassing pictures or videos through the electronic mail, or text messages.

The phenomenon is worrying, especially since even though actions are taken, mostly by the ministry of education and schools, to increase the children's awareness of the phenomenon and ways of dealing with it, it only becomes wider and bigger. In a research held in 2016 it was found that over 72% of the children in grades 4-6 have experienced cyberbullying in some frequency, compared to 47% in a research held in 2015. It was also found that this type of violence affects its victims mentally and makes them more worried, anxious, upset, frustrated and moody, in such a way that in some cases they do not even want to attend school, and in radical cases even try to commit suicide.

The results of this research indicate that although the parents understand that there are mental consequences to the victims of the phenomenon and criminal consequences to the attackers, they are not aware to the scope of the phenomenon among their own children and the damage that is actually done to them, so they are unable to assist them in dealing with it. Most of them believe

that their children were not part of cyberbullying whether as victims or as attackers, even though findings in other research showed that most of the children were involved in some amount of cyberbullying. Therefore, it is clear that the few actions that the parents take in order to handle the phenomenon are not successful in reaching their goal to decrease the cases of cyberbullying.

MMS Number: 990025482640205776