

## Report - STUDENTS (May 2017)

What do I know about cyberbullying? Perceptions of students from Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Poland and Turkey

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## Introduction

Cyberbullying is a current phenomenon that must be understood in the context of the evolution of the Information Technology and Communication (ICT) in today's society. This development has an unquestionable positive impact in family life, young people life and school life but also can produce a negative one, namely through the increase of risk behaviours between children and young people.

Cyberbullying is one of the main online risks that share some basic behaviour with bullying face-to-face, but that have also some particularities that can produce a high harmful impact on young people and which has gained a relevant dimension.

Cyberbullying can be understood by the nature of the behaviour or abuse itself. Willard (2007) distinguished **Flaming**: Online fights using electronic messages with angry and vulgar language; **Harassment**: Repeatedly sending nasty, mean, and insulting messages; **Denigration**: "Dissing" someone online. Sending or posting gossip or rumors about a person to damage his or her reputation or friendships; **Impersonation**: Pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material to get that person in trouble or danger or to damage that person's reputation or friendships; **Outing**: Sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or images online; **Trickery**: Talking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing information, then sharing it online; **Exclusion**: Intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group; **Cyberstalking**: Repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear.

As Cassidy et al. (2013) say "While some researchers like Dan Olweus (2012a, 2012b), Smith (2012a), and Hinduja & Patchin (2012a) claim that the rate of cyberbullying has not increased since it first emerged as a problem in the middle of the last decade, other researchers (e.g. Cassidy, Brown, & Jackson, 2011; Kowalski et al., 2012a; Rivers & Noret, 2010) have found an increase over the past five years." Although cyberbullying appears, according to statistics, not very often in comparison to other Internet dangers, it is proved to be emotionally the most painful Internet danger we should find ways to prevent".

## Methodology

### Aims

This article aims to analyse students perceptions and knowledge about the characteristics, ways of facing and dealing with, experience, and training needs on cyberbullying issues.

### Participants

In this study participated 190 students from Poland, Bulgaria, Cyprus and Turkey, aged between 11 to 15 years old.

### Instruments

The instrument used was a questionnaire, *What do I know about cyberbullying* (version for students). The questionnaire is divided in two main sections: one section included a set of questions about socio demographic data; a second section included a Likert scale with 14 statements that should be rated in a five-point scale (1= Completely disagree to 5= Completely agree) about participants:

- **Knowledge about the characteristics of cyberbullying** [Q.1. I have a clear idea of what cyberbullying is; Q.3. I feel confident in identifying cyberbullying; Q.6. I am familiar with the various methods used to cyberbully; Q.7. I am aware of the impact of cyberbullying can have on me and my friends; Q.8. I am familiar with the signs and symptoms of cyberbullying];
- **Experience of cyberbullying** [Q.2. I and my colleagues are affected by cyberbullying];
- **Knowledge about how to deal with cyberbullying** [Q.9. I am aware what I should do to prevent my colleagues; Q.10. I know how to help my colleagues; Q.11. I know what to do if my colleagues are cyberbullying others; Q.12. I am confident and comfortable about my ability to guide my colleagues; Q.13. I know whom I should ask for help, if my colleagues];
- **Training needs** [Q.4. Schools should develop policies on cyberbullying; Q.5. Teachers should organize classrooms activities to deal with cyberbullying; Q.14. I want to learn more about cyberbullying].

The questionnaires were delivered in an online form and data gathered were analysed with SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences).

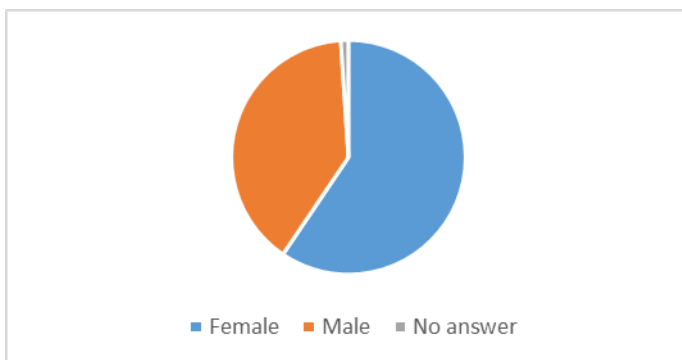
## Results

### Sociodemographic data

This section presents sociodemographic data about the participants in the study as well as data on their knowledge about the characteristics of cyberbullying, experience of cyberbullying, knowledge about how to deal with cyberbullying and training .The participants were predominantly female (61.7%) (Table 1 and Figure 1).

**Table 1 Gender**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Female</b>	113	60
<b>Male</b>	75	39
<b>No answer</b>	2	1
<b>Total</b>	190	100



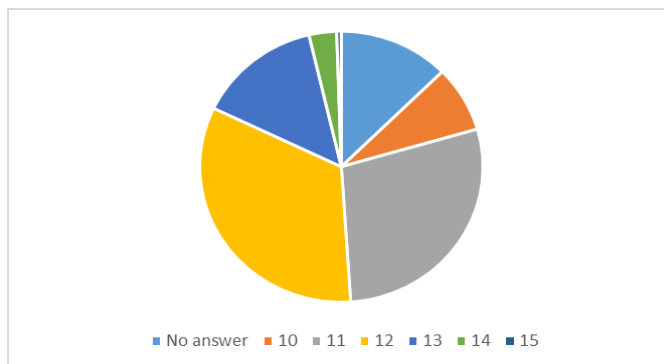
**Figure 1 Gender**

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Participants were from 10 to 15 years old, average 11.8 (Table 2 and Figure 2).

**Table 2 Age**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>No answer</b>	24	13
<b>10</b>	15	8
<b>11</b>	54	28
<b>12</b>	63	33
<b>13</b>	27	14
<b>14</b>	6	3
<b>15</b>	1	1
<b>Total</b>	190	100



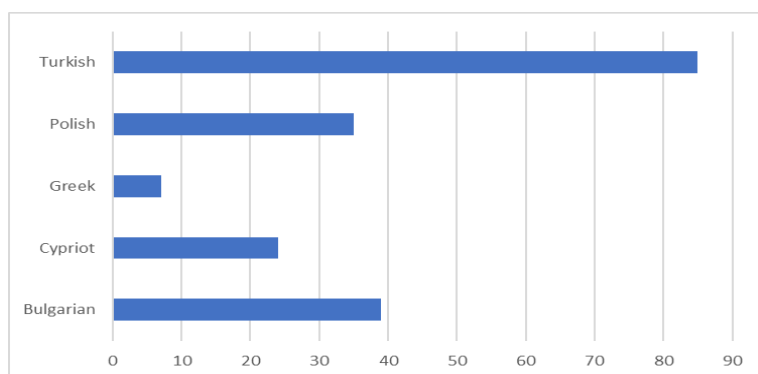
**Figure 2 Age**

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The study subjects were students from schools participating in the project, namely from Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Poland and Turkey. The distribution of students is presented in Table 3 and Figure 3.

**Table 3 Nationality**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Bulgarian</b>	39	21
<b>Cypriot</b>	24	13
<b>Greek</b>	7	4
<b>Polish</b>	35	18
<b>Turkish</b>	85	45
<b>Total</b>	167	100



**Figure 3 Nationality**

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## Students knowledge about the characteristics of cyberbullying

Results of students' *Knowledge about the characteristics of cyberbullying* are presented in Tables 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Students from the participant's schools *Agree* and *Strongly agree* that they have *a clear idea of what cyberbullying is* (Table 4). The exception is Turkish students: although 36 students *Strongly agree* that they know what cyberbullying is, 29 students also *Strongly disagree* with that statement.

**Table 4** Frequency distribution of students' answers for the statement *I have a clear idea of what cyberbullying is*

		Q1. I have a clear idea of what cyberbullying is					Total
		1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree or disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	
	Bulgarian	0	1 2,6%	0	9 23,1%	29 74,4%	39 100%
	Cypriot	0	2 8,3%	5 20,8%	6 25%	11 45,8%	24 100%
	Greek	0	0	1 14,3%	4 57,1%	2 28,6%	7 100%
	Polish	3 8,6%	2 5,7%	4 11,4%	9 25,7%	17 48,6%	35 100%
	Turkish	28 32,9%	5 5,9%	8 9,4%	8 9,4%	36 42,4%	85 100%
Total		31	10	18	36	95	190

The distribution of students' answers to the statement *I feel confident in identifying cyberbullying* is very similar to the previous described in Table 4: students *Agree* and *Strongly agree* that they feel confident in identifying cyberbullying (Table 5). The exception is Turkish students: although 26 students *Strongly agree* with the statement, 27 students *Strongly disagree* and 18 students *Neither agree or disagree*.



**Table 5 Frequency distribution of students' answers for the statement *I feel confident in identifying cyberbullying***

		Q3. I feel confident in identifying cyberbullying					Total
		1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree or disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	
	Bulgarian	0	0	4 10,3%	17 43,6%	18 46,2%	39 100%
	Cypriot	0	1 4,2%	1 4,2%	10 41,67%	12 50%	24 100%
	Greek	0	0	2 28,6%	5 71,4%	0	7 100%
	Polish	3 8,6%	4 11,4%	3 8,6%	8 22,9%	17 48,6%	35 100%
	Turkish	27 31,8%	9 10,6%	18 21,2%	5 5,9%	26 30,6%	85 100%
Total		30	14	28	45	73	190

Students from Bulgaria *Strongly agree* and *Agree* that they are *familiar with the various methods used to cyberbully* (Table 6) and students from Poland *Agree* but also *Strongly disagree* with the statement. Students from Turkey predominantly *Strongly disagree* or *neither agree nor disagree*.

**Table 6 Frequency distribution of students' answers for the statement *I am familiar with the various methods used to cyberbully***

		Q6. I am familiar with the various methods used to cyberbully						Total
		No Answer	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree or disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	
	Bulgarian	0	1 2,6%	4 10,3%	7 17,0%	12 30,8%	15 38,5%	39 100%
	Cypriot	2 8,3%	6 25%	9 37,5%	6 25%	1 4,2%	0	24 100%
	Greek	0	0	0	2 28,6%	5 71,4%	0	7 100%
	Polish	0	9 25,7%	5 14,3%	3 8,6%	12 34,3%	6 17,1%	35 100%
	Turkish	0	36 42,4%	5 5,9%	20 23,5%	12 14,1%	12 14,1%	85 100%
Total		2	52	23	38	42	33	188

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Students from Bulgaria *Strongly Agree* that they are *aware of the impact of cyberbullying can have on them and their friends* (Table 7) while students from Turkey either *Strongly disagree* or *Strongly agree*.

**Table 7** Frequency distribution of students' answers for the statement *I am aware of the impact of cyberbullying can have on me and my friends*

		Q7. I am aware of the impact of cyberbullying can have on me and on my friends and colleagues					Total
		1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree or disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	
	Bulgarian	1 2,6%	1 2,6%	2 5,1%	9 23,1%	26 66,7%	39 100%
	Cypriot	0	0	0	0	24 100%	24 100%
	Greek	0	0	1 14,3%	6 85,7%	0	7 100%
	Polish	5 14,3%	0	6 17,1%	4 11,4%	20 57,1%	35 100%
	Turkish	23 27,1%	10 11,8%	15 17,6%	6 7,1%	31 36,5%	85 100%
Total		29	11	24	25	101	190

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Students from Bulgaria, Greek and Poland *Agree* and *Strongly agree* that they are *familiar with signs and symptoms of cyberbullying*, while students from Turkey mainly *Strongly disagree* with this statement (Table 8).

**Table 8** Frequency distribution of students' answers for the statement *I am familiar with the signs and symptoms of cyberbullying*

		Q8. I am familiar with the signs and symptoms of cyberbullying					Total
		1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree or disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	
	Bulgarian	1 2,6%	2 5,1%	4 10,3%	14 35,9%	18 46,2%	39 100%
	Cypriot	0	0	0	0	24 100%	24 100%
	Greek	0	0	2 28,6%	5 71,4%	0	7 100%
	Polish	4 11,4%	6 17,1%	5 14,3%	13 37,1%	7 20,0%	35 100%
	Turkish	42 49,4%	3 3,5%	21 24,7%	5 5,9%	14 16,5%	85 100%
Total		47	11	32	37	63	190

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## Students experience of cyberbullying

Results of **Experience of cyberbullying** are presented in Table 9. Most of the students said that they did not experience cyberbullying.

**Table 9** Frequency distribution of students' answers for the statement *I and my colleagues are affected by cyberbullying*

		Q2. I and my colleagues are affected by cyberbullying					Total
		1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree or disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	
	Bulgarian	21 53,8%	10 25,6%	2 5,1%	4 10,3%	2 5,1%	39 100%
	Cypriot	19 79,2%	3 12,5%	0	2 8,3%	0	24 100%
	Greek	0	5 71,4%	1 14,3%	1 14,3%	0	7 100%
	Polish	21 60%	6 17,1%	1 2,95	3 8,6%	4 11,4%	35 100%
	Turkish	47 55,3%	7 8,2%	17 20%	3 3,5%	11 12,9%	85 100%
Total		108	31	21	13	17	190

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## Students knowledge about how to deal with cyberbullying

**Knowledge about how to deal with cyberbullying** was analysed in questions Q9, Q10, Q11, Q12 and Q13. Results are presented in:

- Table 10 (*I am aware what I should do to prevent my colleagues become involved in cyberbullying*);
- Table 11 (*I know how to help my colleagues if they are being victimized*);
- Table 12 (*I know what to do if my colleagues are cyberbullying others*);
- Table 13 (*I am confident and comfortable about my ability to guide my colleagues in relation to safe, responsible use of ICT*);
- Table 14 (*I know whom I should ask for help, if my colleagues are involved in a cyberbullying situation*).

All the items presented the same pattern of results. Students *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* on their *awareness on what to do to prevent colleagues to become involved in cyberbullying* (Table 10). Also, students *Agree* and *Strongly Agree* to *know how to help colleagues if they are being victimized* (Table 11) and to *know what to do if colleagues are cyberbullying others* (Table 12).

A similar result was obtained in the statements *I am confident and comfortable about my ability to guide my colleagues in relation to safe, responsible use of ICT* (Table 13) and *I know whom I should ask for help, if my colleagues are involved in a cyberbullying situation* (Table 14).

However, Turkish students did not follow the pattern referred showing their answers as divided in two different groups: some *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* with the statements, but others *Strongly Disagree* with them.

**Table 10** Frequency distribution of students' answers for the statement *I am aware what I should do to prevent my colleagues become involved in cyberbullying*

		Q9. I am aware what I should do to prevent my colleagues become involved in cyberbullying					Total
		1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree or disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	
	Bulgarian	0	4 10,3%	2 5,1%	9 23,1%	24 61,5%	39 100%
	Cypriot	0	2 8,3%	6 25%	6 25%	10 41,6%	24 100%
	Greek	0	0	2 28,6%	4 57,1%	1 14,3%	7 100%
	Polish	3 8,6%	3 8,6%	4 11,45	8 22,9%	17 48,6%	35 100%
	Turkish	29 34,1%	8 9,4%	12 14,1%	8 22,9%	28 32,9%	85 100%
Total		32	17	26	35	80	190

**Table 11** Frequency distribution of students' answers for the statement *I know how to help my colleagues if they are being victimized*

		Q10. I know how to help my colleagues if they are being victimized					Total
		1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree or disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	
	Bulgarian	2 5,1%	4 10,3%	2 5,1%	21 53,8%	10 25,6%	39 100%
	Cypriot	0	0	1 4,2%	3 12,5%	20 83,3%	24 100%
	Greek	0	0	3 42,9%	4 57,1%	0	7 100%
	Polish	3 8,6%	2 5,7%	12 34,3%	11 31,4%	7 20%	35 100%
	Turkish	28 32,9%	6 7,1%	13 15,3%	8 9,4%	30 35,3%	85 100%
Total		33	12	31	47	67	190

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**Table 12** Frequency distribution of students' answers for the statement *I know what to do if my colleagues are cyberbullying others*

		Q11. I know what to do if my colleagues are cyberbullying others					Total
		1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree or disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	
	Bulgarian	0	0	6 15,4%	21 53,8%	12 30,8%	39 100%
	Cypriot	4 16,6%	2 8,3%	2 8,3%	1 4,2%	15 62,5%	24 100%
	Greek	0	0	0	6 85,7%	1 14,3%	7 100%
	Polish	4 11,4%	3 8,6%	9 25,7%	8 22,9%	11 31,4%	27 100%
	Turkish	28 32,9%	5 5,9%	11 12,9%	10 11,8%	31 36,5%	85 100%
Total		36	10	28	38	70	182

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**Table 13** Frequency distribution of students' answers for the statement *I am confident and comfortable about my ability to guide my colleagues in relation to safe, responsible use of ICT*

		2.12. I am confident and comfortable about my ability to guide my colleagues in relation to safe, responsible use of ICT						Total
		No Answer	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree or disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	
	Bulgarian	0	1 2,6%	1 2,6%	6 15,4%	11 28,2%	20 51,3%	39 100%
	Cypriot	2 8,3%	10 41,6%	4 16,6%	6 25%	0	2 8,3%	24 100%
	Greek	0	0	0	1 14,3%	6 85,7%	0	7 100%
	Polish	0	3 8,6%	4 11,4%	6 17,1%	12 34,3%	10 28,6%	35 100%
	Turkish	0	30 35,3%	11 12,9%	16 18,8%	11 12,9%	17 20%	85 100%
Total		2	44	20	35	40	49	188

**Table 14** Frequency distribution of students' answers for the statement *I know whom I should ask for help, if my colleagues are involved in a cyberbullying situation.*

	No Answer	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree or disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	
Bulgarian	0	0	1 2,6%	3 7,7%	10 25,6%	25 64,1%	39 100%
Cypriot	23 95,8%	0	0	1 4,1%	0	0	24 100%
Greek	0	0	0	0	3 42,9%	4 57,1%	7 100%
Polish	0	3 8,6%	2 5,7%	5 14,3%	7 20%	18 51,4%	35 100%
Turkish	0	24 28,2%	5 5,9%	11 12,9%	11 12,9%	33 38,8%	84 100%
Total	23	27	8	20	31	80	166

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## Training needs

**Training needs** are addressed in Questions 4, 5 and 14.

Results from Q4. *Schools should develop policies on cyberbullying* are presented in Table 15.

Students from Bulgaria, Poland and Greece *Agree* and *Strongly Agree* with the statement.

Students from Cyprus *Strongly Agree* but also *Strongly Disagree* with it.

**Table 15** Frequency distribution of students' answers for the statement *Schools should develop policies on cyberbullying*

		Q4. Schools should develop policies on cyberbullying					Total
		1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree or disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	
	Bulgarian	0	0	2 5,1%	17 43,6%	20 51,3%	39 100%
	Cypriot	0	0	0	0	24 100%	24 100%
	Greek	0	0	0	1 14,%	6 85,7%	7 100%
	Polish	4 11,4%	2 5,7%	5 14,3%	6 17,1%	18 51,4%	35 100%
	Turkish	17 20%	25 2,4%	8 9,4%	0	58 68,2%	85 100%
Total		21	4	15	24	126	190

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Results obtained in Q5. *Teachers should organize classrooms activities to deal with cyberbullying* are presented in Table 16 and follow the pattern referred to Question 4.

**Table 16** Frequency distribution of students' answers for the statement *Teachers should organize classrooms activities to deal with cyberbullying*

		Q5. Teachers should organize classrooms activities to deal with cyberbullying					Total
		1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree or disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	
	Bulgarian	0	0	2 5,1%	13 33,3%	24 61,5%	39 100%
	Cypriot	0	0	0	0	24 100%	24 100%
	Greek	0	0	0	0	7 100%	7 100%
	Polish	2 5,7%	3 8,6%	1 2,9%	12 34,3%	17 48,6%	35 100%
	Turkish	20 23,5%	1 1,2%	8 9,4%	11 12,9%	45 52,9%	85 100%
<b>Total</b>		22	4	11	36	117	190

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Results from Question 14 *I want to learn more about cyberbullying* are also similar to those of Question 4 and Question 5. However, in this case Polish students answer in a similar way as Turkish students as they *Strongly Agree* and *Strongly Disagree* with the statement.

**Table 17** Frequency distribution of students' answers for the statement *I want to learn more about cyberbullying*

Q14. I want to learn more about cyberbullying						
	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree or disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree	
Bulgarian	2 5,0%	1 2,65	1 2,6%	8 20,5%	27 69,2%	39 100%
Cypriot	0	0	0	4 16,6%	20 83,3%	24 100%
Greek	0	0	1 14,3%	3 42,9%	3 42,9%	7 100%
Polish	8 22,9%	2 5,7%	4 11,4%	3 8,6%	18 51,4%	35 100%
Turkish	18	1 1,2%	4 4,7%	6 7,1%	56 65,9%	85 100%
<b>Total</b>	28	4	10	24	124	190

Finally, there was students were asked if they already participated in a training workshop about cyberbullying. Results are presented in Table 18.

**Table 18** Frequency distribution of students' answers to the question *Did you take part in a workshop about cyberbullying this year?*

	Total			
	No answer	No	Yes	
Bulgarian	22	11	6	39
Cypriot	23	0	1	24
Greek	0	3	4	7
Polish	23	7	5	35
Turkish	38	20	27	85
<b>Total</b>	83	41	43	167

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## Conclusions

In general, students from Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece and Poland have high scores on most of the items included in *Knowledge about cyberbullying*: they know what cyberbullying, their symptoms and impact. Students from Turkey answered in a different way, as some of them followed the previous pattern of results, but there are also others with low scores. In the statement *I am familiar with the various methods used to cyberbully*, students from Cyprus, Greece and Poland also have low scores.

Students from all the participants' countries did not experience cyberbullying.

Students from Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece and Poland referred knowing how to deal with cyberbullying. However if there are students from Turkey that know how to deal with cyberbullying, there are also some students who do not know how to deal with it.

Students *Strongly agree* and *Agree* that training on this subject would be important.

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