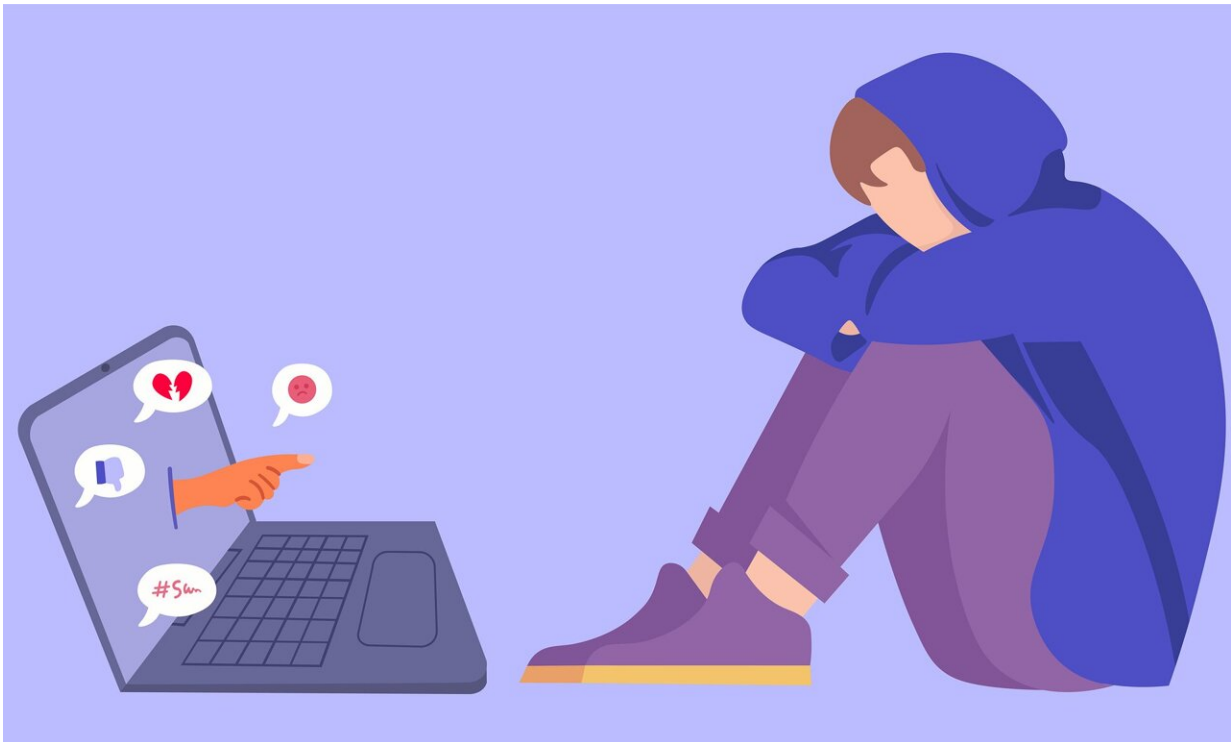


# Does cyberbullying affect adolescents' risk of developing eating disorders?

September 6 2023

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In a study of US adolescents, both victims and perpetrators of cyberbullying were more likely than other youth to experience eating disorder symptoms. The findings are published in the *International Journal of Eating Disorders*.

In the study of 10,258 adolescents aged 10–14 years, participants answered questions about whether they had experienced cyberbullying victimization and perpetration, as well as whether they had experienced eating disorder symptoms.

Cyberbullying victimization was associated with worrying about [weight gain](#), tying self-worth to weight, inappropriate compensatory behaviors to prevent weight gain, binge eating, and distress with binge eating.

Cyberbullying perpetration was associated with worrying about weight gain, tying self-worth to weight, and distress with binge eating.

"Adolescents experience cyberbullying related to appearance and weight. Cyberbullying can lead to low [self-esteem](#), body dissatisfaction, and the development of an eating disorder," said senior author, Jason M. Nagata MD, of the University of California, San Francisco. "Adolescents should limit [social media](#) that encourages eating disorders and appearance comparisons. Parents should advise their children to avoid cyberbullying and encourage them to report online harassment if it occurs."

**More information:** Cyberbullying and Eating Disorder Symptoms in U.S. Early Adolescents, *International Journal of Eating Disorders* (2023). DOI: [10.1002/eat.24034](https://doi.org/10.1002/eat.24034)

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