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L12: Cybercrime

IST110 Introduction to Information Sciences and Technology

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Who Deserves Cyberbullying Punishment?

When it comes to punishing those who commit cybercrime offences, the outcome may depend on the crime (as it should). Often, many adults do not think of children cyberbullying children as an actual punishable crime. Other times, people may think that a cybercrime has been committed over the internet may not be reportable to the police.

As many as 52% of children that experience cyberbullying think that it is not bullying. Adding to that 26% of the children who experience cyberbullying do not report the experience to anyone! (Stripe, 2020) I believe that those who commit cybercrime, young or old, deserve to be punished. If a considerable punishment is enlisted to the offender, it would be more likely that they would not commit the crime again. In Annapolis 58% of kids admit to being cyberbullied, and more than 40% of them say it happens more than once (Facts About Cyberbullying, 2024). A law was passed in 2019 that raised cyberbullying’s punishable crime from $500 in 2013 to a maximum of $10,000 and three years in prison (Crawford, 2024). Tough laws like this can encourage parents to teach their children the rights and wrongs of life, and even adults can learn from these stringent laws.

Usually, the older generations now starting to include millennials do not think of their social media email, and other accounts being hacked of a crime. Though many times a victim may not know the suspect of the crime, it is still a crime. When there is a known suspect, if there was no harm committed, it may go unreported. The Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA) makes it federally illegal to access someone’s private communications without permission to include emails, cell phones, computers, and social media accounts to name a few. If an eavesdropping colleague enters into a victim’s cell phone or emails without permission, a crime has been committed and should be reported. While this may seem like a petty crime to report, if citizens are able to get away with a small crime like this, though unlikely, it could potentially escalate. People may not fully understand that they were even committing a cybercrime.

In conclusion, yes, I think that those who commit cybercrime should be punished. I also think that even more so, if they are a repeat offender, they deserve to be punished more severely than the previous offense. If California’s three strike law can still dramatically increase punishment of felons (Three Strikes Law - A General summary, 2024). Then I am sure that the government and federal law makers can find a similar effect for cybercriminals. Children do not deserve to be bullied, and everyone should know their limits when illegally accessing electronic files, documents, and devices.

# References

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