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“Don’t Let Them Get To You”: Understanding the Role of TikTok as a Source of Support for Cyberbullying Victims

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"Don't Let Them Get To You": Understanding the Role of TikTok as a Source of Support for Cyberbullying Victims

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Abstract

Cyberbullying poses a significant threat to teenagers and young adults, who often seek support and advice online. Little is known about the support and advice shared online for victims of cyberbullying and whether it is helpful. In this study, we used qualitative thematic analysis to examine a sample of 150 TikTok videos that give support or advice for cyberbullying victims. We identified 33 unique pieces of support and advice across 5 categories, with differences in tone and delivery among different types of videos. We then evaluated the quality of the support and advice in a survey of 493 young adults who had prior experiences with cyberbullying. Young adults perceive 97% of the support and advice as comprehensible and 60% as effective, but only 37% of the advice is seen as actionable. However, they did identify 6 pieces of advice that are both effective and actionable, as well as 4 types of emotional support that are effective. Participants held nuanced views of TikTok as a platform for advice. We discuss insights from our study that may lead to better support for youth.

1 Introduction

Cyberbullying poses a significant threat to teens and young adults, affecting their emotional, psychological, and sometimes physical well-being [18, 27, 35]. With more than 90% of teens using electronic devices for daily communication with their peers, social victimization is an increasingly common and serious problem for them [29]. Cyberbullying is among the most prominent online risks that teenagers and young adults face, along with exposure to explicit content, privacy breaches, and sexual solicitations [25, 52, 78]. According to the 2025 report by the Cyberbullying Research Center, approximately 58% of teenagers in the United States have experienced cyberbullying, with about 33% reporting they were cyberbullied in the past 30 days [50].

With the increasing focus in the usable security and privacy community on harms to people [75], it is important to study how people receive support and advice for cyberbullying, which is a form of online hate and harassment [72]. While expert advice often emphasizes seeking help from trusted friends or family members, evidence suggests that many teens and young adults increasingly turn to online spaces for advice and support. Prior work shows that individuals often prefer to seek advice regarding sensitive issues from peers or even strangers rather than their parents [55]. Recent surveys also show that teens frequently look to social media platforms for mental health information and coping strategies [19, 41, 47]. Online support communities, including microblogging platforms [55], mental health forums [45], and cyberbullying-specific discussion boards [10, 11], have emerged as important venues where individuals exchange advice and share experiences. This shift may reflect a generational preference for online peer support over face-to-face conversations with parents, raising important questions about how teens and young adults evaluate and act upon the advice they encounter online.

In this work, we examine support and advice related to cyberbullying found on TikTok. Cyberbullying can be a significant and often traumatic event [29], but little research has focused on online advice. TikTok is a globally popular video-based social media platform with over 1 billion users, and is most popular among younger generations [66]. Moreover, research has shown TikTok can be a place where individuals can find social support from peers and build community [61]. Our study aims to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What support and advice is shared on TikTok for victims of cyberbullying?

RQ2: How do young adults rate the comprehensibility, efficacy, and actionability of this cyberbullying support and advice?

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To answer these questions, we first collected and analyzed 150 TikTok videos related to cyberbullying support and advice. We identified 33 types of support and advice across 5 categories. By support, we refer to content that help someone feel less alone, understood, and emotionally cared for; by advice, we refer to content that suggests what someone could do next or how they might handle the situation. We also identified two different styles of videos, characterized by tone and delivery. To assess the quality of this support and advice, we conducted a survey of 493 young adults (ages 18-25) with prior experiences of cyberbullying. Participants evaluated representative examples of support and advice for comprehensibility and perceived efficacy. They likewise evaluated advice for perceived actionability. We did not measure actionability for emotional support since support is not meant to be actionable but is still considered valuable by participants.

Our survey found that 97% of the support and advice was considered comprehensible and 60% was considered effective. Only 37% of advice was perceived as actionable. Our survey did identify six pieces of advice across three categories that rated highly for both efficacy and actionability. This advice includes coping strategies (*ignore*, *block and report*, *adjust privacy settings*), seeking support (*save evidence*), and mental health advice (*exercise* and *journaling*). The survey also indicates that four types of emotional support are helpful. Support and advice found on TikTok varied from a straightforward list of advice to an informal video that includes emotional or motivational elements, along with personal experiences of cyberbullying. We showed participants in our survey examples of both, with 58% preferring personal stories and 38% preferring lists, and the rest were neutral.

Our research contributes to an emerging body of work that demonstrates ways to solve the security and privacy advice prioritization crisis [58, 59]. For example, recent work personalized advice for older adults [65] by first identifying their priorities and then providing tailored advice on those topics. Another work developed an app to provide short, actionable advice, one piece at a time, finding it helped users develop secure behaviors [60]. Our work focuses on a particular harm, thus helping to understand how to provide support and advice in this context. For teens and young adults, cyberbullying represents an important security and privacy challenge: it occurs in online environments where privacy, reputational harm, and mental well-being are at risk. By focusing on cyberbullying and surfacing support and advice that is considered both effective and actionable, we have laid the groundwork for delivering effective cyberbullying support and advice.

2 Related Work

2.1 Cyberbullying and Social Media

Cyberbullying, much like traditional bullying, is characterized by aggressive behavior where an individual or group deliberately and repeatedly harms another who is less capable of defending themselves [68]. Drawing on Olweus's foundational definition of bullying [49], cyberbullying reflects a misuse of power in online environments to inflict emotional, psychological, or social harm. Researchers emphasize that these harms are not confined to physical spaces but extend into digital contexts, where the anonymity and reach of the internet can intensify their impact [33] and have psychosocial consequences for both the target and the perpetrators [16, 28].

Cyberbullying has become a widespread issue in the digital age [23, 37, 39]. Its prevalence is closely tied to the pervasive use of messaging apps and social media, which create new avenues for harmful interactions [36, 63]. These digital platforms offer an ideal setting for cyberbullying to thrive, as they allow bullies to remain anonymous [73]. Unlike traditional bullying, the persistence of online communication means that individuals can be targeted at any time, making it far more difficult to escape [64].

Prior work shows that adolescents often seek and provide peer support in response to cyberbullying. Social support is a common coping strategy during adolescence, though digital platforms can both strengthen and weaken these connections [17, 19]. Victims commonly use multiple strategies, such as blocking, seeking support, or ignoring the bully, yet these are often less effective online than in other forms of harassment [44]. Youth also turn to online spaces to share advice, empathy, and coping strategies, and organizational chat-support services are valued for immediate, confidential help and follow-up [10, 11, 15]. Altogether, this body of work underscores that coping with cyberbullying is not a single act, but an ongoing process shaped by both individual and contextual factors [53].

Within HCI, Iivari et al. [30] reviewed 146 cyberbullying papers and found a strong emphasis on detection and awareness, calling for more participatory, values-driven, and systemic approaches. Building on this, Ashktorab et al. [8] engaged high school students in participatory design to identify solutions, and Aliyu et al. [5] proposed 15 disclosure-based interventions. Related work shows how mobile app interfaces and features shape adolescents' experiences of cyberbullying, revealing both risks and opportunities for design [43, 67].

2.2 Security and Privacy Advice

Researchers have studied how broader types of security and privacy advice propagate and influence user behavior (or not). In a series of studies, Redmiles et al. found that users learn digital security skills haphazardly from various sources, with a "digital divide" in advice sources based on skill levels and socioeconomic status [56]. They further explored how users engage with and learn digital security advice [57] and conducted a comprehensive evaluation of online security and privacy advice [58], finding that users and experts struggle to prioritize it effectively.

Tahaei et al. highlight the sheer scale of available guidance by identifying 148 pieces of privacy advice from Stack Overflow [71]. Reeder et al. find little expert consensus on the most important advice for non-technical users [59], while Ion et al. and Busse et al. show a mismatch between expert and non-expert priorities for staying secure online [14, 31].

HCI research has examined how security advice circulates across social media platforms. Boyd et al. found that many BLM protesters were unaware of key safety practices, such as using end-to-end encrypted messengers [12]. Schmuser et al. analyzed security and privacy advice shared on Twitter during the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, identifying the types of guidance and actors involved [62]. Wei et al. examined anti-privacy and anti-security advice on TikTok, including videos demonstrating surveillance in intimate relationships [77]. Elgedawy et al. evaluated the content and quality of YouTube and TikTok videos offering security guidance to parents and children [22].

Some work has begun trying to solve the advice crisis such as, Rotthaler et al. developed an app to deliver actionable digital security and privacy advice, finding that end users were more likely to adopt recommendations when they were framed clearly, personalized, and presented at the right time [60]. Other recent work personalized advice for older adults [65] by first identifying their priorities and then providing tailored advice on those topics. Our work builds on this line of research by identify cyberbullying advice on TikTok and then asking young adults to rate the advice so that we can identify advice that is comprehensible, effective, and actionable.

3 Identifying Cyberbullying Support and Advice

To address **RQ1**, we collected support and advice for victims of cyberbullying, then used thematic analysis to identify individual pieces of advice and grouped these into categories. Figure 1 shows the steps of our methodology.

3.1 Query Selection

We began by developing a set of search queries grounded in prior work on cyberbullying and in publicly available narratives of cyberbullying experiences. We first reviewed keywords used in prior literature on cyberbullying [2–4, 54, 72, 76, 79], along with stories by the Cyberbullying Research Center [50]. From this process, we compiled an initial set of candidate terms. These included direct descriptors such as *cyberbullying* and *bullying*, as well as terms capturing common forms of harm associated with cyberbullying, including mean comments, humiliation, hateful messages, trolling, and online gossip. We then paired these terms with advice-seeking phrases such as *cope with*, *deal with*, and *handle*, producing a set of candidate search queries.

Queries that included the terms cyberbullying or bullying consistently returned relevant videos. In contrast, queries constructed from harm-related keywords yielded a broader set of results spanning hate and harassment more generally. To distinguish cyberbullying from this broader category, we relied on the definition by Smith et al. [69] and elements of cyberbullying by Dooley et al. [21] which specifically make this distinction and characterize cyberbullying as an "aggressive, intentional act carried out repeatedly over time using electronic forms of contact against a victim who cannot easily defend themselves." This definition emphasizes four key elements: aggression, intentionality, repetition, and a power imbalance.

Videos returned by harm-based queries did not meet these criteria. Some addressed one-time incidents of encountering violence online, while others offered general emotional advice unrelated to targeted abuse. Additional content included religious or moral guidance about shame and sin, or advice directed at content creators on managing comments. We also tried following hashtags that appeared in these videos, but this did not lead to new relevant videos, and many hashtags were designed to capture views rather than to accurately label content (e.g., #foryoupage #howtotiktok). Similarly, adding the term 'teen' to our queries did not improve search results.

Based on this iterative process, we refined our search strategy to a final set of 20 queries focused on cyberbullying-specific language such as *online bullying help*, *what to do if I am being cyberbullied?*, and *tips facing online bullying*. The complete list of queries is provided in Table 2 in the appendix.

3.2 Data Collection

We collected data between May and July 2025. To identify relevant TikTok content, we followed a three-step collection pipeline: (1) executing search queries on TikTok to retrieve candidate videos, (2) removing duplicates, and (3) applying screening criteria. Each query was run directly in the official TikTok mobile application, and we recorded the top 20 search results per query. To reduce the influence of personalization on search rankings, all searches were conducted using a newly created, non-personalized TikTok account.

We screened videos using inclusion criteria. First, the video had to be in English. Second, it had to provide advice or guidance relevant to cyberbullying, consistent with the definition proposed by Dooley et al. [21]. Third, the content had to be directed toward individuals experiencing cyberbullying themselves, rather than toward parents, caregivers, or other third parties.

The final three queries did not yield any new relevant videos, indicating that we had reached saturation in the dataset. In total, we collected 400 videos. After removing duplicates (125 videos) and excluding off-topic content (125 videos), 150 videos met our inclusion criteria and comprised the final dataset. Collectively, the videos in our dataset had over 1.8 mil-

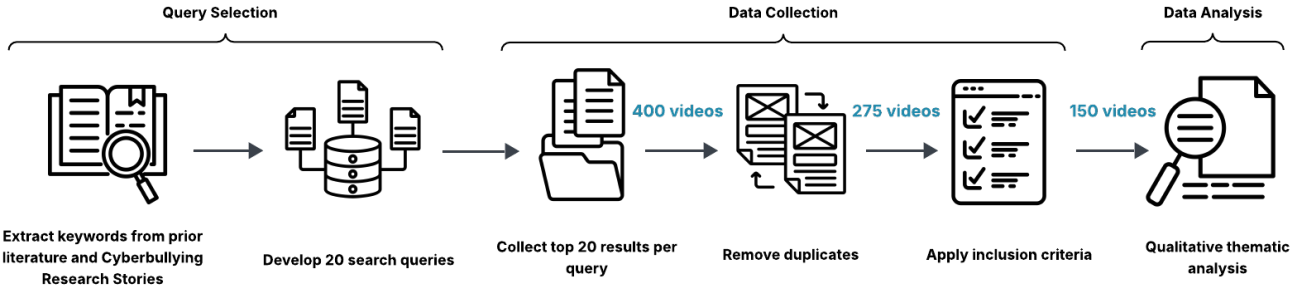


Figure 1: Overview of our methodology

lion likes (mean = 11.2K, median = 222, max = 800K), were saved approximately 200K times, and accumulated 33.5K comments.

3.3 Data Analysis

We analyzed our dataset using thematic analysis [13]. We adopted an inductive and data-driven approach, as our goal was to characterize the landscape of cyberbullying advice available on TikTok. We first familiarized ourselves with the videos through repeated viewing and taking memos along the way. We then generated initial, low-level codes that captured salient features of the videos, such as the types of advice presented, types of support offered, the ways creators framed cyberbullying, and sources of the advice, etc. We proceeded through a substantial portion of the dataset until codes began to recur consistently and the set of concepts captured by the codebook stabilized. Throughout analysis, we iteratively developed and refined the codebook and themes.

Two researchers conducted coding together in person. The authors regularly discussed their observations, compared notes, and resolved any disagreements on the spot, consistent with collaborative coding practices used in prior qualitative work [25, 61, 74, 77].

When presenting our findings, we deliberately avoid including quantifiers of prevalence in our findings. We avoid doing so because the use of numbers could lead researchers or audiences to overgeneralize the conclusions, disregarding the specific context within which these findings are derived [46]. Our goal in this section is to identify the scope of advice, rather than characterizing the frequency of its appearance in our corpus.

3.4 Results

The advice on cyberbullying came from a wide variety of people and groups as shown in Table 1. Many of the videos came from miscellaneous content creators such as actors, singers, podcasters, fitness influencers, travelers, and beauty or fashion creators, who often shared personal experiences or lifestyle content. A small number of videos were created by people in mental health services, including psychologists, therapists, child counselors, and life coaches, who emphasized emotional support and resilience. People from the education sector, such as authors, professors, and motivational speakers, also shared their advice. In addition, there were videos from organizations and companies, including non-profits focused on child well-being, internet safety, and anti-bullying, alongside legal professionals and police who provided guidance on rights and protections.

Type of Creator	Count
Mental Health Services	18
Education	12
Lawyer/Police	11
Non-profit Organizations	06
Tech Companies	06
Independent Content Creators	176

Table 1: Categorization of creators in our corpus

In total, 95% of the videos had less than or equal to 12,000 likes, 447 comments, and 2,395 saves. The distributions do have long tails, so there were a small number of videos that had a very high level of engagement. Videos in our dataset were published between 2020-03-07 to 2025-06-23.

3.4.1 Categories of Advice

Through qualitative analysis, we identified a total of 33 unique pieces of cyberbullying advice from the TikTok videos we collected. In a second phase of coding, we clustered these into five categories of advice. Tables 3 and 4 in the appendix show these categories, along with examples for each category.

Coping Strategies (CS). Coping strategies give advice on how the victim of cyberbullying should respond in the moment when they encounter cyberbullying. These strategies are aimed at directly addressing the situation while reducing

exposure to harmful behavior. For example, videos recommended that the target **ignore the bully and refrain from responding**, as engaging with them often escalates the conflict. *"Don't engage with the bullies. Responding to them, even in a defensive way or an angry way, often makes the situation worse. It can be tough, but try to ignore them and don't give them any attention." (Video 11, Query 1)*. They also recommended that the target of bullying should **block and report the bully to the social media platform or service provider** where the incident occurred.

Other videos recommended a variety of related strategies. Some recommended **taking a temporary break from social media** to help reduce emotional strain and exposure to harmful content, giving the individual space to recover. Others mentioned **keeping one's account private** and being cautious about oversharing personal details, to help limit the bully's access to information and reduce potential points of attack.

Contrary to the above advice, some videos advised individuals to **engage constructively** with the bully, offering multiple ways to respond if one chooses to do so. Some suggested having a mediated conversation with the bully to resolve misunderstandings or conflicts. For example, one video recommended *"If they say something mean to you, say something genuinely nice back and act like you didn't notice that they were being mean." (Video 6, Query 12)*. However, others recommended calling out the behavior directly if the individual feels safe doing so. Still others recommended in certain cases, responding with kindness, expressing empathy, or even giving a genuine compliment, to help resolve tension.

Seeking Support (SS). The seeking support category covers advice telling victims how to find support among family, friends, or other resources. For example, videos recommended **talking to a trusted adult, friend, or family member** for emotional support and practical advice. *"Reaching out and talking to someone whom you trust can make a world of difference. It can be a parent, a teacher, a counselor, a pastor, even a friend. But just don't keep this pain to yourself." (Video 5, Query 11)*. Some videos had related advice, such as **involving school administration** if the bullying takes place within a school environment. Others recommended **finding support networks or local organizations** that specialize in cyberbullying or youth mental health programs, as these resources can offer guidance and support against cyberbullying.

Other videos focused on holding the bully accountable. Some videos emphasized the importance of **keeping evidence, such as screenshots of harmful messages, emails, or posts**, as this documentation can be crucial when reporting the behavior to social media platforms, schools, or legal authorities. *"Screenshot the evidence of the cyberbullying, just in case you need it for later. If you have the evidence, it's easier to prove that somebody is bullying you online, in case things get really out of hand." (Video 12, Query 1)*. Some directly recommended **contacting law enforcement** when necessary to help ensure personal safety. Several legal professionals advised individuals to **check their state laws against cyberbullying** to understand what legal protections are in place and how to take action.

Emotional Support (ES). Emotional support was also highlighted in the videos, focusing on lifting up the victim to help them see that they are valued and that what they have experienced is not acceptable. For example, some creators shared **personal experiences of being bullied** and how they dealt with it, offering encouragement by showing that others have gone through similar situations and recommending ways for moving forward. Others stressed that **bullying is never acceptable** and encouraged viewers to actively protect their self-worth. They recommended **empowering yourself and reminding yourself of your worth**, or stressed that **the bully's opinions are irrelevant** and not worth giving importance to.

Notably, some videos told viewers **the bully is projecting their insecurities**, highlighting that the bullying is not a true reflection of them but of the bully's problems. *"Most bullies are just insecure about themselves. If they were happy people, they wouldn't feel the need to bully anyone, and it might just be their biggest regret when they grow up. So don't let them get to you." (Video 13, Query 11)*. Others explained that bullies often don't truly know you or that not everyone shares the same beliefs and perspectives.

Several videos offered unique perspectives: one video explained that **bullying happens to everyone** at some point. Another told viewers that **having "haters" is a sign of making an impact**. *"Remember that it's the 1% of negativity that cannot overshadow the 99% of love and support that you receive, and when you do choose to focus on the positive, you empower yourself to rise above the hate." (Video 1, Query 11)*

Mental Health Advice (MH). The mental health advice category covers advice that explains the importance of protecting one's well-being while dealing with cyberbullying. These videos recommended a wide range of advice, for example suggesting that the victim **practice self-care and build self-confidence**. This advice was framed as a way to strengthen emotional resilience, reminding individuals to prioritize their mental and physical health rather than allowing the bully's words to define their self-worth. *"Practice self care. It's so important to take care of yourself when you're getting bullied, make sure you're eating well, getting enough sleep and finding time to do those things that make you happy." (Video 11, Query 1)*. Likewise, some recommended that the victim **check and reflect on themselves**, suggesting that self-awareness and reflection can help in processing emotions and understanding one's own reactions to bullying.

Some videos suggested protective measures. For example, videos suggested **setting clear boundaries with the bully**. This involved limiting engagement, blocking communication,

or asserting personal limits to prevent further harm. *"Set boundaries clearly and assertively. Tell the bully to stop their behavior." (Video 17, Query 11)*. Others told the victim to **avoid taking the comments personally**, emphasizing that the bully's words often reflect their own issues.

Finally, some videos recommended **doing positive things such as volunteering, exercising, or journaling** as healthy activities to cope with stress. *"So I pushed myself to try and get out the house, and I found that volunteering was really useful. Volunteering has allowed me to get my confidence back by connecting with new people, and it gives me a safe space to talk about different problems I might have while doing different activities." (Video 20, Query 3).*

Spiritual Advice (SA). A set of videos clearly came from creators who were sharing spiritual messages grounded in a Christian belief system, thus offering advice for cyberbullying through a faith-centered message. These videos encouraged individuals to **keep talking to God** and **to maintain a deep personal relationship with Him (God)**, framing this connection as a source of strength and emotional resilience during difficult times. *"God's watching over you, and he's got you, so don't worry about them. Let God take care of them." (Video 8, Query 12)*

Other spiritual advice included **praying for the bully**, encouraging forgiveness and compassion toward the bully rather than retaliation. Some quoted from the Bible, such as recommending that the victim **turn the other cheek**, a reference to a verse in Matthew[1] where Jesus teaches his followers to avoid retaliating and to use a pacifist approach. Still others described **developing a thick skin** as a practical and spiritual act of humility.

3.4.2 Tone and Delivery

The videos in our corpus tended to offer advice in two different styles, either (a) a professional, straightforward list of advice, shown in bullet-pointed text that overlaid the video, often from a professional or (b) an informal video that includes emotional or motivational elements, often embedded within a personal experience from someone who has been bullied themselves. These more informal, story-telling videos introduce powerful elements that are largely absent from expert advice. These videos feature real individuals, sharing their lived experiences of being bullied, detailing the actions they took, and describing the outcomes. Some recount interactions with law enforcement, school authorities, or support networks, or simply narrate the incidents themselves. The inclusion of personal narratives, often shared by individuals showing their faces, adds an authentic, relatable dimension that enhances the emotional and informational impact of the content.

Of particular note are the emotional support and mental health strategies offered in the videos. Creators particularly emphasized helping victims understand that the bullying they have endured doesn't accurately reflect who they are, but rather reflects the insecurities and problems of the bully. They delivered positive, uplifting messages designed to build confidence and resilience in the viewer. This kind of personal outreach can potentially help victims who don't have family or friends who can share this kind of message with them.

[1] Matthew 5:38-39

4 Evaluating Support and Advice

To address **RQ2**, we conducted a survey to measure the perceived comprehensibility, the perceived efficacy, and the perceived actionability of each piece of support and advice. We adapted this measurement approach from Redmiles et al. [58], a study evaluating security advice available on the web.

4.1 Survey Structure

We conducted several pilot tests to verify survey logic and refine question wording for clarity. The final survey comprised four sections: experiences, rating the support and advice, preference of advice style, and perceptions and frequency of using TikTok. Our full survey is available in our supplementary materials.[2]

The first section asked participants about their experiences with cyberbullying, including whether they had experienced it, when it occurred, where they sought help, and whether they looked for advice online. The second part of the survey asked respondents to rate pieces of support and advice across the 5 categories shown in Tables 3 and 4 in the appendix. These pieces were taken from transcripts that we coded and was representative of this type of support or advice.

To reduce fatigue, we did not ask participants to rate all 33 pieces of support or advice. We also ensured coverage across categories rather than relying on purely random selection. We grouped the pieces by category, then split large categories, resulting in nine total groups of advice. This included two groups of coping strategies (3 pieces of advice each), one group of seeking support (5), two groups of mental health advice (4 and 5), two groups of emotional support (3 and 3), and two groups of spiritual support (4 and 5). Each participant rated one random piece of advice or support from each group, for a total of 9 pieces of advice or support they viewed and rated.

We asked respondents to evaluate each piece of advice in terms of three metrics:

- *Comprehensibility:* How easy the participant thought it would be to read and understand the transcript of the advice.
- *Perceived efficacy:* How helpful the respondent thought this piece of advice would be if they were experiencing cyberbullying.

[2] https://zenodo.org/records/20683435

- *Perceived actionability:* How difficult the participant thought it would be to follow this advice.

We asked participants to rate support using only the first two metrics, because support is not meant to be followed.

Participants rated each of these metrics using a 7-point Likert scale from *extremely helpful* or *extremely difficult* to *extremely unhelpful* or *extremely easy*, respectively.

In the third section, we asked respondents to indicate their preferred style of advice by presenting two pieces of advice with distinct styles: (1) advice shared through a personal narrative, where individuals draw on their own experiences to offer guidance, and (2) a formal list of advice presented in a direct, instructional format. These pieces of advice were drawn randomly from a bank of five paired examples, which we identified in our coding.

In the last part of the survey, we asked respondents about their frequency of TikTok use and their opinions on whether TikTok could serve as a useful platform for teens and young adults to find advice on cyberbullying. We also included two attention check questions in our survey.

4.2 Recruitment

We recruited respondents through Prolific, restricting participation to users between the ages of 18 and 24, who live in the United States, and had experienced cyberbullying at some point in their lives. Age and location requirements were enforced using Prolific's demographic filtering mechanisms. For prior experience with cyberbullying, we used a screening question to exclude individuals with no experience with cyberbullying. We focused on those with prior experiences of cyberbullying to capture the perspectives of young adults who could reflect on whether the advice might have been helpful to them in the past.

We used a standard size sample calculator for measuring opinions from a large population, given a 95% confidence level and 10% margin of error. This calculation indicated we needed a sample of 96 people for each item. Because the largest group contained 5 pieces of advice, and each participant would rate one piece of advice per group, this meant we needed $96 * 5 = 480$ participants. Our survey received 493 approved responses, with 5 rejected for missing both attention check questions, and an additional 53 who chose to exit early. We compensated each of the approved participants $2 for completing the survey. The median time to take the survey was 7 minutes, 27 seconds, resulting in an average reward per hour of $16.11. Any participants not eligible due to no prior cyberbullying experience were compensated $0.14, per Prolific policy.

Each piece of advice was rated by a minimum of 96 participants and a maximum of 167 participants.

4.3 Analysis

We conducted both quantitative and qualitative analyses of the survey data. Since our primary goal was to examine how participants perceived the comprehensibility, efficacy, and actionability of the advice, much of our data presentation is descriptive in nature.

We also used qualitative methods to better understand free-text responses. For these questions, two members of the research team used thematic analysis to collaboratively code responses using open and axial coding. These two team members collaboratively developed codebooks for each question by reviewing all responses and discussing emerging themes until no new codes emerged. One team member then applied the codebook to the rest of the responses, discussing any new codes that arose with the other team member as needed.

4.4 Results

In this section, we present findings from our survey.

4.4.1 Perceived Comprehensibility

Figure 2 shows the distribution of comprehensibility ratings across transcripts of advice. Overall, the majority of participants rated 32/33 (97%) of the pieces of support and advice as at least slightly easy to understand. Across all of the individual ratings participants gave, 53.5% were extremely easy, 21.5% were moderately easy and 8.2% were slightly easy. Together, this means that 83.2% of ratings indicated the transcripts were easy to understand. Only 4.8% of responses were rated as neutral, while 4.6% were rated as slightly difficult, 2.8% moderately difficult and 4.6% extremely difficult.

Our figure also shows two thresholds at 60% and 80% to help evaluate sentiment beyond a bare majority. All advice was rated as at least easy to understand by 60% or more of the participants, with the exception of *don't allow pride* from the spiritual support category. Twenty-seven (27) of the 33 pieces of advice were rated as easy to understand by 80% of participants.

We also calculated mean ratings for each piece of advice, by converting each Likert rating to a scale from 1 to 7. This data is shown in Table 5 in the appendix. Most of the advice in the seeking support, emotional support, and mental health support had a mean at or above 6.0, indicating this advice was considered easy to understand. Coping strategies all had a mean between 5.0 and 6.0. Spiritual support was all rated between 5.0 and 7.0, with the exception of the advice to *don't allow pride*, which had the lowest mean rating of all advice.

4.4.2 Perceived Efficacy

Figure 3 shows ratings for the perceived efficacy of the advice. The majority of participants rated 20/33 (60%) of the support and advice as effective. The majority of ratings (56.9%)

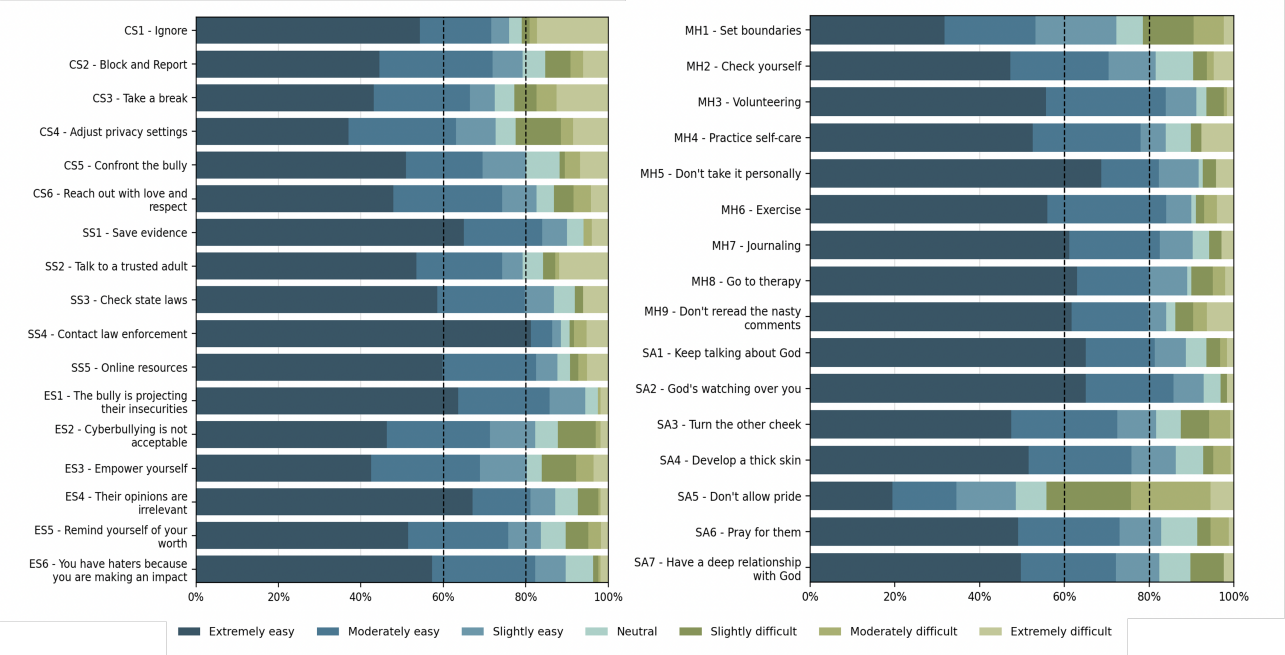


Figure 2: Likert plots showing the comprehensibility ratings for all 33 pieces of support and advice across 5 categories, from extremely easy to extremely difficult. A majority of participants rated 97% of the support and advice as easy to understand.

were in the helpful range, either extremely helpful (15.6%), moderately helpful (20.4%) or slightly helpful (20.9%). However, there was significant variability in the perceived efficacy among the different pieces of advice. This is evident in the larger number of low ratings, with 9.8% rated as slightly unhelpful, 10.1% as moderately unhelpful and 13.6% as extremely unhelpful.

Our figure again shows thresholds for 60% and 80% of the participants. Eight (8) of the 33 (24%) pieces of advice received ratings of slightly to extremely helpful by 80% of participants. These include a number of coping strategies (*ignore*, *block and report*, *take a break*, *adjust privacy settings*), some advice for seeking support (*save evidence*, *talk to a trusted adult*), and some emotional and mental health support (*the bully is projecting their insecurities*, and *don't re-read the nasty comments*). An additional 8 pieces of advice met the 60% threshold, including advice for seeking support (*online resources*), and more emotional and mental health support (*empower yourself*, *their opinions are irrelevant*, *remind yourself of your worth*, *volunteering*, *practice self-care*, *exercise*, *journaling*). In contrast, 4 pieces of advice were rated as slightly to extremely unhelpful by 60% or more of participants. This advice includes *reach out with love and respect*, *check yourself*, *don't allow pride*, and *have a deep relationship with God*.

We also examined the mean ratings for each piece of advice, given in Table 5 in the appendix. We can classify helpful advice as anything with a mean of 5.0 or higher. This includes 12 pieces of advice, overlapping with those listed as meeting the 60% threshold above. The exceptions are *online resources*, *their opinions are irrelevant*, *exercise*, and *journaling*, which ranked above 4.5 but below 5.0. We can classify as unhelpful any advice with a mean below 4.0, which includes *confront the bully*, *reach out with love and respect*, *cyberbullying is not acceptable*, *you have haters because you are making an impact*, *check yourself*, and all of the spiritual support.

We think it is important to emphasize that spiritual advice may only be considered helpful by those who consider themselves spiritual. Since the advice was given in a Christian context, we asked participants whether they consider themselves Christian. Among those who said yes, all of the advice was rated with average between 4.0 and 5.0 (neutral), with the exception of *don't allow pride*. Thus, opinions were still mixed on this advice, though the mean was a full point higher on average in this category.

4.4.3 Perceived Actionability

Ratings on actionability were split, with only 10/27 (37%) of the advice rated as actionable by a majority of participants, as shown in Figure 4. The split in ratings for actionability was even, with 41.9% of all ratings in the easy-to-follow categories and an equal 41.9% of ratings in the difficult to follow categories. Positive ratings were split between extremely easy (12.9%), moderately easy (15.2%), and slightly easy 13.8%. Negative ratings were split between extremely difficult (12.3%), moderately difficult, (14.0%), and slightly difficult (15.6%).

Only one piece of advice was considered easy to follow by more than 80% of participants, the advice to *adjust privacy settings*. Using a threshold of 60%, five additional pieces of

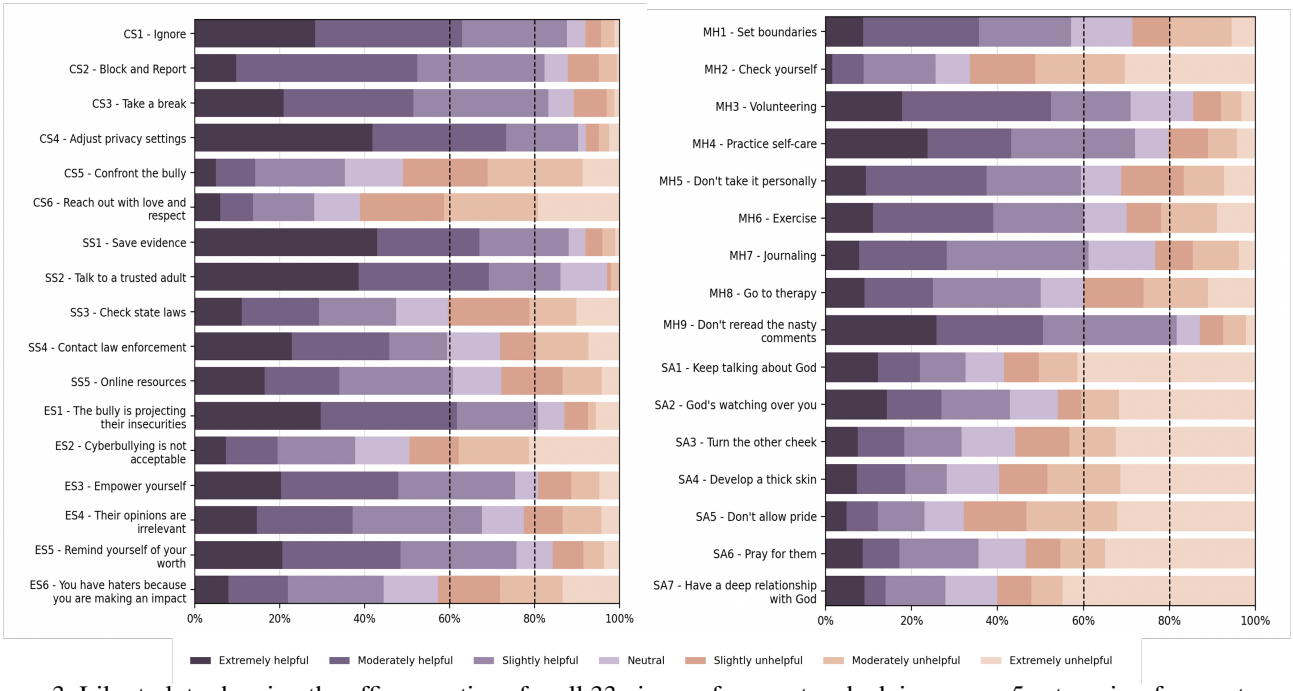


Figure 3: Likert plots showing the efficacy ratings for all 33 pieces of support and advice across 5 categories, from extremely helpful to extremely unhelpful. A majority of participants rated 60% of the support and advice as effective.

advice were considered easy to follow, namely *ignore*, *block and report*, *save evidence*, *exercise*, and *journaling*. These 6 strategies were also perceived as effective. Participants rated only 2 pieces of advice as unhelpful, using a 60% threshold, namely *confront the bully* and *don't allow pride*.

Using the mean ratings of actionability given in Table 5 in the appendix, only 3 pieces of advice received a mean rating over 5.0: *block and report*, *adjust privacy settings*, and *save evidence*. On the other hand, 13 pieces of advice received a mean rating below 4.0, including *confront the bully*, *reach out with love and respect*, *check state laws*, *check yourself*, *don't take it personally*, *go to therapy*, and all 7 pieces in the spiritual support category.

We checked whether participants who consider themselves Christian rated items of spiritual support actionable, and ratings averaged a point higher, though this still put them in the 4.0 to 5.0 range (neutral). Even among those who consider themselves Christian, *turn the other cheek* and *don't allow pride* were below 4.0 on the actionability scale.

4.4.4 Comparison to Expert Resources

To more fully evaluate the support and advice offered on TikTok, we explored whether it aligned with expert resources and whether aligned or non-aligned advice was rated well in terms of efficacy and actionability. We used two expert sources, the *Cyberbullying Research Center*, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing comprehensive resources and research on combating cyberbullying [51], and *stopbullying.gov* [70], a U.S. government initiative aimed at reducing cyberbullying. We identified these resources by consulting leading psychologists in the field. Our process for analyzing the expert sources was similar to our analysis of the videos. After coding the data, we manually compared the expert resources with the TikTok videos, comparing both categories and individual pieces of support and advice to identify overlap and divergence between these sources.

Cyberbullying advice on TikTok has strong alignment with expert advice in the categories of coping strategies and seeking support, though there were some individual pieces of advice given on TikTok that were not in expert resources. Emotional support and mental health advice both broadly align with expert guidance, but TikTok provided more detailed advice in these areas. Spiritual advice on how to deal with cyberbullying was wholly unique to TikTok. Table 5 highlights in green the advice that correlates with expert advice.

Using our 60% threshold, we identified 6 pieces of advice that rated highly for both efficacy and actionability: *adjust privacy settings*, *ignore*, *block and report*, *save evidence*, *exercise*, and *journaling*. These last two are not aligned with expert advice, indicating that creators have identified some self-care routines that are considered helpful when enduring cyberbullying.

4.4.5 Preference for Personal Stories

To better understand how advice is most effectively communicated, we asked participants whether they preferred advice delivered as a personal story or as a structured list of rec-

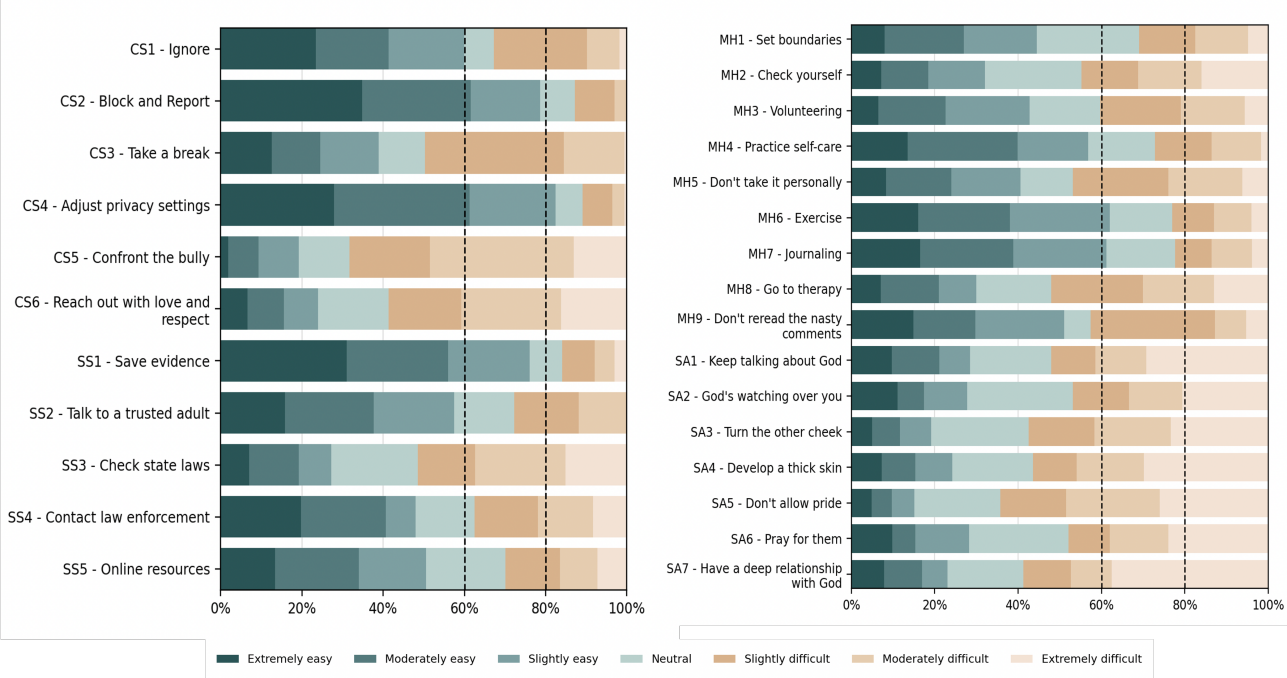


Figure 4: Likert plots showing the actionability ratings for 27 pieces of advice across 4 categories, from extremely easy to extremely difficult to act on. A majority of participants rated 37% of the advice as actionable.

ommendations. They shared their opinions after reading a random personal story with advice and a random structured list of advice, taken from a pool of 5 pieces each. Personal stories often provide context and relatability by showing how others have navigated similar experiences, whereas lists of advice are more direct and action oriented.

Our analysis shows the participants largely preferred personal stories, but there were a significant number who preferred lists. About 84 (17.0%) participants strongly preferred lists of advice, 64 (13.0%) moderately preferred lists, and 37 (7.5%) slightly preferred lists. Meanwhile, 43 (8.7%) participants expressed no preference. On the other side, 76 participants (15.4%) slightly preferred personal stories, 114 (23.1%) moderately preferred personal stories, and 75 (15.2%) strongly preferred personal stories. Overall, more participants leaned toward personal stories (54%) as compared to lists of advice (38%), suggesting that while both formats hold value, personal stories may be particularly effective in engaging audiences and sharing advice.

4.4.6 TikTok as a Platform to Find Advice

More than half of the participants (58.2%) expressed that TikTok can be a valuable platform for teens and young adults seeking advice. They highlighted that the app offers a wide range of short, relatable videos where people openly share coping strategies, personal stories, and resources related to cyberbullying in ways that feel accessible and easy to engage with. Several participants shared that TikTok's algorithm helps surface relevant content, making it simple to find advice and perspectives from others who have gone through similar situations. For many of our participants, the sense of community was important as TikTok connects a large number of people, offers encouragement, and provides a space that feels more personal than other platforms. Overall, these participants viewed TikTok as a popular, safe and supportive space where teens and young adults can find useful advice and emotional support.

About 17.6% of the participants equivocated, indicating that TikTok can sometimes be helpful, but it is not always a reliable platform for advice. Participants described it as a *double-edged sword*—while the platform can provide helpful tips, relatable stories, and emotional support, it can just as easily spread unreliable or misleading advice. Participants shared that because much of the content is based on personal opinions, advice should be taken with caution and ideally verified through trusted sources. Participants also pointed to drawbacks of the platform itself, such as the prevalence of misinformation, a toxic environment, and the normalization of cyberbullying in comments. For these reasons, some felt that TikTok should not be the only place teens and young adults look for advice; it can complement other resources but needs to be balanced with credible information and professional guidance.

In contrast, 23% of participants did not view TikTok as a platform for seeking advice. They argued that the advice found there is often poorly informed, attention-seeking, and ultimately unhelpful. Participants emphasized that such topics should be addressed by experts or therapists rather than influencers or everyday creators, since users on TikTok are

not trained experts and may even have financial incentives to spread misleading or harmful guidance. Concerns about the platform itself were also central, with no regulation on how truthful or helpful the information is, fake profiles, and videos that do not provide enough detail. Participants further shared that the algorithm tends to promote negative, dramatic, or sensational content for the sake of engagement, which makes harmful advice more visible.

5 Discussion

Our research builds on prior work that situates bullying within the wider landscape of hate and harassment [72], showing how victims may encounter support and advice in everyday platform spaces such as TikTok. In these spaces, they may find validation, emotional reassurance, and practical coping strategies from others who appear to have similar experiences.

Overall, our results demonstrate the nuances of TikTok as a place that has potential to be part of a support ecosystem victims may use when navigating online abuse, but also has numerous drawbacks. Our findings have identified advice that is considered both effective and actionable by 60% of participants, along with emotional support that is considered effective. Our participants generally preferred videos using personal stories, rather than those that had a professional style and featured lists of advice. Some participants were positive toward TikTok as a platform for teens and young adults to seek advice on cyberbullying, indicating they thought short, relatable videos featuring coping strategies, stories, and resources were accessible. This group also felt users of TikTok were able to build supportive communities and pointed to its popularity among young users. Those who disagreed indicated TikTok could be helpful but could also spread unreliable or misleading advice. They also referred to the environment on TikTok as toxic and said it could normalize cyberbullying through comments.

5.1 Social Media as a Support Network

Our findings build on social support theory, which highlights that emotional, informational, and instrumental support reduce stress and foster resilience [40]. Prior work shows that social media platforms often function as informal support networks, where users share vulnerable experiences and receive empathetic and practical responses [7, 35]. Studies of mental health discourse on Reddit highlight how anonymity, self-disclosure, and peer responses allow users to seek emotional and informational support from others [20, 80]. Related work on digital peer support further shows that online communities can provide accessible, relatable, and experience-based guidance, while also raising concerns about the quality and limits of peer advice [6, 34]. Importantly, perceived support is shaped not only by network ties but also by platform affordances that enable visibility and interaction [42].

Our findings suggest that TikTok has the potential to play a similar role in the context of cyberbullying. Rather than serving as a substitute for professional or institutional resources, the support and advice we identify can function as an early-stage community support space. Unlike formal reporting mechanisms or school-based interventions, which may feel procedural or emotionally distant, TikTok provides an interactive and highly visible space where users can process their experiences in real time. Many of the videos in our corpus related first-hand experiences with cyberbullying and the strategies that person used to recover. Moreover, creators often pushed back against self-blame by sharing their own experiences with cyberbullying. They shared personal stories to help normalize what happened and shift the focus away from the victim, emphasizing that it reflects harmful behavior by others, not personal failure. This kind of collective reframing can help victims rebuild confidence, reduce isolation, and think more clearly about what to do next.

5.2 Opportunities for Experts

Our findings also build on prior work showing that health-related content on social media often involves a tension between credibility and authenticity: expert advice may be more reliable, but creator-style content can feel more personal, relatable, and useful to viewers [32, 48]. Our results indicate many young adults prefer advice that uses a personal or narrative style. The vast majority of creators in our corpus were *not* experts, and the few that did post on this topic tended to create the more professional, scripted videos. In contrast, more typical TikTok creators frequently used conversational language, personal stories, and visible emotion, which made their advice feel immediate and accessible.

This opens a number of opportunities for experts to use TikTok more effectively to provide support and advice for victims of cyberbullying. One avenue for experts is to simply show up and be more visible in social media communities with advice. While the more personal advice style was considered more effective, participants did see value in the more professional videos. Rather than ceding these spaces to creators or informal coaches, experts could take a more active role in engaging on platforms like TikTok.

Experts could also consider adapting their tone, format, and delivery to better match what users expect. One way to do this could be partnering with teens and young adults who are open to sharing their own experiences, or with content creators who know how to make videos engaging. At the same time, protecting victims is essential. In some cases, stories could be told by actors or creators who are trained to share expert-recommended advice in a safe and respectful way. Blending expert knowledge with the storytelling style of TikTok could make advice both trustworthy and engaging, while still protecting those most at risk.

5.3 Opportunities for Researchers

While our survey focused on young adults with prior experiences of cyberbullying, future research should directly engage teens and young adults who actively use social media to seek advice. Interviewing or surveying this group would provide richer insight into how they interpret advice, what formats resonate with them, and what barriers they face in applying it. However, such work is difficult to carry out, given the difficulty of recruiting teens who seek a particular kind of advice online, as well as the challenges of ensuring both their privacy and safety as well as that of creators. Even so, these perspectives are critical for designing interventions and platform features that truly meet the needs of the population most affected by cyberbullying.

Researchers also have an opportunity to connect work on online safety advice with prior research on co-designed interventions [1, 5, 8, 9, 26, 38, 43, 67]. This body of work provides an important foundation for designing online safety interventions that are age-appropriate and grounded in the lived experiences. Our study highlights a gap between these co-designed interventions and the types of support that cyberbullying victims encounter online. While prior work has produced promising prototypes, educational materials, and design guidance, many victims still rely on informal advice from platforms such as TikTok, where the quality of advice may vary. This gap points to a need for security and privacy researchers to study not only how to design better interventions, but also how to deploy them in ways that reach victims at the moment they seek help.

6 Ethical Considerations

Our study uses videos that are publicly available on TikTok. However, there are still important ethical considerations when using public data that was not intended for research and for which consent for use in research is not obtained. We acknowledge that public creators may not anticipate their work being analyzed in an academic context. We were influenced by research that discusses ethical use of Reddit data [24], implementing the following measures. To protect the privacy of people in our dataset, we had participants read transcripts of videos, rather than watching them. While this decision means participants could not pick up on some verbal and emotional cues, we felt that sacrificing this was required to ensure that participants could not identify and thus potentially harass creators. Second, we will not publicly release our corpus of videos, instead providing them to individual researchers on request who have a track record of ethical research practices.

The second part of our study involved a survey of sensitive topics related to online safety. To protect participants, we avoided collecting any personally identifying information such as names or contact details, so that responses remain fully anonymous. We also limited the scope of our questions to participants' perceptions, experiences, and preferences, rather than probing into potentially distressing or private details. These measures were taken to minimize risk, preserve confidentiality, and create an environment in which participants could share their perspectives openly and without concern for privacy. The complete study protocol was approved by our institution's IRB.

7 Limitations

Our study should be interpreted relative to its limitations. First, the survey included only one example of each type of support or advice. While our approach allowed us to systematically have participants rate each example of support or advice, and we did our best to find a representative example for each type, it may not fully capture the diversity or nuance within each type. In addition, participants rated text transcripts rather than original videos, so our findings on tone and delivery may not fully capture how the support or advice was presented.

Our recruitment relied on participants' self-identification of cyberbullying experiences after showing them a definition, which may have led to misclassification, but we chose this approach to respect participants' perspectives and avoid potentially harmful probing into their past experiences. We also used a convenience sample recruited on Prolific, and this sample is not necessarily representative of the broader population of young adults in the U.S. that have experienced cyberbullying. The ratings reflect the perspectives of the participants we surveyed, and these perceptions may vary across different populations, cultural contexts, or social media environments.

8 Conclusion

Our study collects cyberbullying advice on TikTok and then uses a survey of young adults to evaluate that advice. This allowed us to surface 6 pieces of advice that participants consider both highly effective and highly actionable, with some additional emotional support that is also considered highly effective. Much of the effective and actionable advice aligns well with expert advice, with TikTok containing additional emotional support and some more specific strategies for mental health. Opinions on TikTok as a platform for advice are mixed. While many believe TikTok can make advice more accessible and relatable, others argue it also can be toxic or provide unhelpful advice. Our work contributes to the emerging literature on how to prioritize security and privacy advice, demonstrating how limiting advice to a particular context can lead to promising avenues for surfacing effective and actionable advice. Social media can play an important role in advice and support, but there is a clear need for additional research and engagement from experts to help teens and young adults cope with cyberbullying.

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Search Queries Used to Collect Videos	
Cyberbullying prevention	What to do if I'm being cyberbullied?
Handle cyberbullying	How to report cyberbullying?
Cyberbullying advice	What to do if I'm being bullied online?
Safety tips cyberbullying	How to stop someone bullying me online?
Coping with cyberbullying	Who can help me with cyberbullying?
Cyberbullying resources	How to protect myself from cyberbullying?
How to get help for cyberbullying	How to stop online bullies from bothering me?
Overcoming cyberbullying	Online bullying help
Tips facing online bullying	Ways to handle online bullying
How to deal with cyberbullying	Managing online bullying

Table 2: Search queries used to gather videos containing cyberbullying advice on TikTok

A Search Queries

Table 2 shows the queries we used to identify videos on TikTok containing advice related to cyberbullying.

B Categories of Advice from TikTok with Examples

Tables 3 and 4 show the categories and types of advice that we identified by coding the TikTok videos. The examples column includes the example transcripts that we used in our survey when asking participants to rate the advice.

C Ratings of Advice

Table 5 shows the mean ratings of the efficacy, actionability, and comprehensibility of each piece of advice or support. Rows in green are advice or support that matches expert recommendations. Note that we did not ask participants to rate the actionability of emotional support as this was not intended to be followed but to offer comfort.

Categories of Advice	Themes	Examples Used In Survey
Coping strategies Immediate actions or long term behaviors to respond, prevent and mitigate the effects of cyberbullying	Don't respond	Don't respond. Usually, people who are trying to bully you online are just trying to get a rise out of you and they feed off of the negative energy that they produce and the reaction that they get out of people. So simply, don't respond and you take a lot of power away from them. (Video 12, Query 1)
	Block and report	Report the bullying. Social media has a system for reporting any bullying or harassment. They may or may not take action. Next, try blocking the person. I know they can keep on creating fake accounts, but every time they do it, just block them. Just block them. They'll eventually get bored. (Video 11, Query 1)
	Take a break from social media	Take a break. Delete that app, put your phone down. Just just take a break. It can be addicting to argue with people or even to defend yourself, but it takes a toll. (Video 10, Query 6)
	Adjust your privacy settings and avoid oversharing	Change your privacy settings. You can have a private page - friends only. You can block or unfriend people. Don't give those people access to you online. Keep personal details off the internet, your home address, your phone number, your school name. If they go to your school, they already know that, but you know that stuff shouldn't be online anyway, for obvious reasons, but keep that off the internet, because some bullies will take it off the internet and take it to real life. (Video 10, Query 4)
	Confront the bully	You can confront the bully. Now I'm not saying you fight the bully like you was back in school. You can confront the bully and have a conversation with the bully and address the issue, talk about what's really going on. (Video 19, Query 11)
	Reach out to them with love and respect	Try to reach out to them with love and respect, because everyone deserves love and respect as that is inherent and not earned. Most of the time, that goes pretty well. They either say I'm sorry or delete the comment, and it becomes a very teachable moment for everyone. (Video 4, Query 12)
Seeking support Guidance, emotional reassurance, or practical assistance in navigating cyberbullying	Talk to a trusted adult	Don't be afraid to reach out for help. Whether it's a trusted adult, a friend, or a professional counselor, talking about what you're going through can offer emotional support and practical guidance. Remember, it's completely okay to ask for help when facing something as serious as cyberbullying. (Video 9, Query 6)
	Keep evidence	Take a moment to collect evidence. This might include screenshots of harmful messages or records of offensive content. Be sure to note important details like dates, times, and usernames. This information can be very helpful when reporting the incident to appropriate authorities. (Video 9, Query 6)
	Check your state laws	Check your state laws. For example, in some states if someone harasses or cyberbullies a person under the age of 18, they can face up to three years in prison. (Video 2,Query 15)
	Contact law enforcement	If you ever feel that your safety is at risk, contact your local police immediately. (Video 1, Query 1)
	Resources for support	If you need more help, here are some places you can call: Stop bullying now: (U.S.A) 1-800-273-8255 SPANISH: 1-888-628-9454 BULLY HOTLINE: 1-866-488-7386. (Video 8, Query 1)
Emotional support Empathy and reassurance	The bully is projecting their insecurities	I remind myself that what they are saying is not true about me, so it has nothing to do with me. It's a projection of their own insecurities, and I imagine that they're talking about themselves. (Video 4, Query 2)
	Bullying is not acceptable	Cyberbullying is not okay. I am really sick and tired of the bullying. Like it is not okay, it's not acceptable, and in no world is it ever gonna be something that I think we should be participating in, because I don't support it. (Video 15, Query 11)
	Empower yourself	Remember that it's the 1% of negativity that cannot overshadow the 99% of love and support that you receive. And when you do choose to focus on the positive, you empower yourself to rise above the hate. Let that support fuel your passion. Keep shining and sharing your light, because the world needs more of what you have to offer. (Video 1, Query 11)

Table 3: This table (continued in Table 4) presents the different categories of cyberbullying advice and related themes with examples from TikTok

Categories of Advice	Themes	Examples Used In Survey
Emotional support Empathy and reassurance	Their opinions are irrelevant and don't matter	Their opinions are irrelevant. They don't matter. They do not hold space in my head. (Video 3, Query 11)
	Remind yourself of your worth	Take a minute to remind yourself of your worth. Write it down, maybe say it out loud. Believe it. Believe what? I matter, because you truly do. (Video 5, Query 11)
	You have haters because you are making an impact	The way I like to think of it is, if you have haters, then you are making an impact or standing out in some sort of way. (Video 5, Query 11)
Mental health advice Techniques that help manage stress and improve well-being	Set boundaries	It's always good to have a healthy boundary when it comes to a bully, because we're recognizing that right now, in the space that this person is in emotionally or mentally, it's not healthy to have them within my personal space. (Video 19, Query 11)
	Practice self-care	Practice self care. It's so important to take care of yourself when you're getting bullied. Make sure you're eating well, getting enough sleep and finding time to do those things that make you happy. (Video 11, Query 1)
	Check yourself	Check yourself, because regardless, I feel like accountability is important. So anytime a statement is made about me, I always check and reflect and just to see if it's true or not. (Video 16, Query 2)
	Volunteering	When I was cyberbullied, I started isolating myself away from people. I quickly realized this is not the way forward, so I pushed myself to try and get out the house, and found that volunteering was really useful. Volunteering has allowed me to get my confidence back by connecting with new people, and it gives me a safe space to talk about different problems I might have while doing different activities. (Video 20, Query 3)
	Don't take it personally	They don't care about you. They don't even know you, so don't take what they say personally. (Video 7, Query 11)
	Exercise	Consider getting some movement in, because movement is going to help get some of the physical stress out of your body. Exercise is a good way to keep yourself physically and mentally healthy. (Video 19, Query 3)
	Journaling	Consider journaling about how it felt, like what kind of buttons it pushed for you. (Video 19, Query 3)
	Go to therapy	Go to therapy and you can find out why it was hurting the way it was, process it, and then hopefully move on. (Video 19, Query 3)
	Don't reread the nasty comments	Don't reread those nasty comments over and over. We all do it but don't, we all need to stop. (Video 6, Query 11)
Spiritual advice Support through faith and personal beliefs	Keep talking about God	Keep talking about God. Fill your heart with God. Let the Holy Spirit shine. (Video 8, Query 12)
	God's watching over you	God's watching over you, and he's got you, so don't worry about them. Let God take care of them. (Video 8, Query 12)
	Turn the other cheek	Turn the other cheek. Jesus taught us to turn the other cheek when someone slaps us on the right cheek, meaning we should not resist or retaliate against personal offenses. This shows our transformation, mercy, and love for others, and reflects the spirit of the kingdom of God. (Video 8, Query 12)
	Pray for them	Pray for them. The Bible is very clear, he who does not love does not know God. People that are talking to you like this, they do not have a revelation of the love of God. So just pray for them. (Video 7, Query 12)
	Don't allow pride	Do not allow Pride. Pride has two spectrums. One spectrum is I'm better than everybody else. A lot of people think that way and they are projecting their insecurities. And then there's a pride of, I'm not good enough, I'm not. Just get over yourself. You're doing this for God. (Video 7, Query 12)
	Develop a very thick skin	Develop a very thick skin. You're just going to have to but you can do it because you can do all things through Christ. (Video 7, Query 12)
	Have a very deep relationship with God	Have a very deep relationship with God. I have a very deep relationship with God. God is my Vindicator. God is my judge. (Video 7, Query 12)

Table 4: This table (continued from Table 3) presents the categories of cyberbullying advice and related themes with examples from TikTok

Advice	Efficacy	Actionability	Comprehensibility
Coping Strategies			
CS1 - Ignore	5.7	4.8	5.4
CS2 - Block and report	5.3	5.6	5.7
CS3 - Take a break	5.4	4.1	5.3
CS4 - Adjust privacy settings	5.9	5.6	5.3
CS5 - Confront the bully	3.6	3.0	5.7
CS6 - Reach out with love and respect	3.3	3.3	5.8
Category mean	**4.9**	**4.4**	**5.5**
Seeking Support			
SS1 - Save evidence	5.9	5.4	6.2
SS2 - Talk to a trusted adult	5.9	4.7	5.7
SS3 - Check state laws	4.2	3.5	6.1
SS4 - Contact law enforcement	4.7	4.4	6.3
SS5 - Online resources	4.7	4.4	6.1
Category mean	**5.1**	**4.5**	**6.1**
Emotional Support			
ES1 - The bully is projecting their insecurities	5.5	-	6.4
ES2 - Cyberbullying is not acceptable	3.6	-	5.8
ES3 - Empower yourself	5.1	-	5.6
ES4 - Their opinions are irrelevant	4.8	-	6.2
ES5 - Remind yourself of your worth	5.2	-	5.9
ES6 - You have haters because you are making an impact	3.9	-	6.2
Category mean	**4.7**	-	**6.0**
Mental Health Advice			
MH1 - Set boundaries	4.5	4.3	5.5
MH2 - Check yourself	2.9	3.7	5.8
MH3 - Volunteering	5.2	4.0	6.2
MH4 - Practice self-care	5.0	4.7	5.9
MH5 - Don't take it personally	4.5	4.0	6.3
MH6 - Exercise	4.5	4.8	6.1
MH7 - Journaling	4.6	4.8	6.2
MH8 - Go to therapy	4.1	3.6	6.2
MH9 - Don't reread the nasty comments	5.3	4.4	6.0
Category mean	**4.5**	**4.2**	**6.0**
Spiritual Advice			
SA1 - Keep talking about God	3.2/4.6	3.4/4.7	6.2
SA2 - God's watching over you	3.7/5.0	3.6/4.4	6.4
SA3 - Turn the other cheek	3.3/4.6	3.1/3.4	5.8
SA4 - Develop a thick skin	3.1/4.6	3.1/4.4	6.0
SA5 - Don't allow pride	2.9/3.6	2.9/3.4	4.3
SA6 - Pray for them	3.3/4.8	3.4/4.5	5.9
SA7 - Have a deep relationship with God	2.9/4.5	3.0/4.3	5.9
Category mean	**3.2/4.5**	**3.2/4.2**	**5.8**

Table 5: Mean ratings of the efficacy, actionability, and comprehensibility of each piece of advice. For spiritual advice we list first an efficacy rating over all participants, then for only those who consider themselves Christian. Rows in green are advice that matches expert recommendations.