FACE YOUR PROBLEMS, DON'T FACEBOOK THEM

"Why whine online when you can just solve your problems privately?"

Rapid changes and advancement in technology has also changed our social values as a society in Vanuatu. The adoption of these technologies has changed how we find jobs, our future partners, information, or even how we communicate with each other. We all recall have fond memories of how life was back in the days without social media. Millennials knew too well that social media had somewhat became an outlet for people to share – and at times overshare their emotions such as ranting, and venting out frustrations about others on social media, with little notice that this act is an act of cyber bullying.

Cyber bullying is the act of posting, sending or sharing negative, harmful, false, or embarrassing content about someone else online. This occurs by way of a SMS, text, apps, posting on social media, forum, and gaming platforms, where users view, participate in, or share content. Common examples of Cyber bullying are when someone shares or sent personal and private information about someone else causing embarrassment, or humiliation. Other common cases include sending someone unwanted, or threatening messages, and even posting offensive status about someone. Though many posters do not understand the seriousness of what they are involving themselves in, it is important to note that such offenses are punishable by law. Victims of Cyber bullying cases, may press charges on posters and offenders, which may lead to fines and prison sentences.

There is a thin line between using social media to address an issue diplomatically and airing one's dirty laundry for public view. Sometimes posters may not differentiate between the two when they get carried away with emotions, which in most cases, leads to Cyber bullying. Though many users use social media as a coping mechanism during frustrating situations, such practice is dangerous. For users unknowingly put themselves in tough situations that might end up having serious heavy consequences.

The Vanuatu IGF encourages all users in Vanuatu who face personal problems, to be responsible and solve them outside social media. While posting it online seems easier and convenient, it does not solve the problem. Seek help from your parents, a chief, pastor, police, or seek counselling. Face your problems, don't Facebook them.

If you have been a victim of cyber bullying report to us using our online reporting form available on http://www.internet.org.vu/reportonlineabuse.html or email us on info@internet.org.vu