

# There's No Erasing What You've Done

**Time needed:** 10 minutes

**Recommended Level:** Grade 5-8

**Categories:** Awareness, Cyberbullying

**Common Core Standard(s):** Speaking & Listening

**Purpose:** Students will understand what they post online has a long-term impact.

## **DISCUSSION:**

Before you begin, you will need pieces of paper cut into 3" x 3" squares, one for each student.

Discuss with students the idea of communicating online. How is it different than communicating in real life?

## **ACTIVITY:**

Have students rub a pencil on a scratch piece of paper. Instruct students to rub their finger in the graphite until their finger is coated.

Provide each student with a square of paper and have the students place their fingerprint on the paper.

Have the students examine their fingerprint on the paper. Ask them what comes to mind. What connections do they make with fingerprints? Possible responses:

- Police dust for fingerprints to find a culprit. Correlation to cyberbullying: Each post on the web is like a digital fingerprint that can be traced back to the owner.
- Each fingerprint is unique. Correlation to cyberbully's victim: Behind each print there is a person; it's the same with avatars and usernames; behind each is a person with feelings.

Ask the students to erase their fingerprint so that it can't be seen. (They will not be able to erase all traces of the lead.) At this point, you can discuss how every post on the web leaves a mark even after it has been erased. Emphasize that messages sent out over the Internet can spread instantly to networks of people and that it can be impossible to take them back once they are posted.

## **FOLLOW-UP:**

Ask students to think about what they've learned to create a slogan against cyberbullying/inappropriate activity online. Have them write these slogans under their fingerprints and display them in the classroom.

Watch the NetSmartz video: "You Can't Take It Back" and discuss as a class. <http://www.netsmartz.org/RealLifeStories/CantTakeItBack>



Helping Everyone with Anti-Bullying,  
Respect & Tolerance

*Duplication and distribution of this lesson plan is permitted and encouraged.*

*For more information about HEART, please visit [www.cypressevansville.org](http://www.cypressevansville.org)*