5. Internet – Addressing the challenge

> "To deny people their human rights is to challenge their very humanity."
>
> *Nelson Mandela, Nobel Peace Prize laureate of 1993, anti-apartheid activist, President of South Africa 1994-1999*

> "The rights of every man are diminished when the rights of one man are threatened."
>
> *John F. Kennedy, President of the USA 1961-1963*

CHECKLIST FACT SHEET 19 – CYBERCRIME: SPAM, MALWARE, FRAUD AND SECURITY

Have you set up strong different passwords for your accounts and configured two-factor security?

Have you explored security settings for your devices/accounts?

Are your operating system and your applications up to date?

Have you made a backup of your most important data?

CHECKLIST FACT SHEET 20 – LABELLING AND FILTERING

Have you thought about the cultural and moral implications of filtering?

Do you know the difference between a "black list" and a "white list"?

Are you familiar with the most commonly used labelling systems for children's content, and what they signify?

CHECKLIST FACT SHEET 21 – ONLINE HARASSMENT: BULLYING, STALKING AND TROLLING

Do you have a clear family or school policy in place so that children understand the repercussions when they are involved in online harassment?

Do you protect your personal details sufficiently? Many online problems are caused through ill-advised sharing of photos and information.

Have you investigated how to build better social and emotional skills (otherwise known as social literacy) to overcome the anonymity and "facelessness" of online communication that facilitate bullying, trolling and harassment in general?

CHECKLIST FACT SHEET 22 – GETTING ASSISTANCE

Do you and your children/pupils know where to report illegal content?

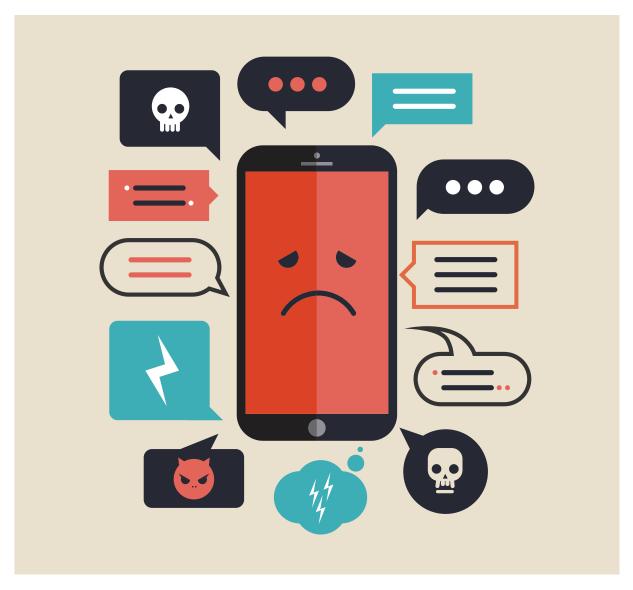Do you ever check statistics reported by helplines to understand emerging trends and risks?

What are the top five digital skills that will best protect you online?

Do you understand geolocation and Bluetooth sufficiently to use your mobile devices comfortably and safely?

M-learning and mobile wallets are areas in which the use of mobile devices is changing the way we learn, work and shop. What do you know about these recent evolutions?

Online harassment: bullying, stalking and trolling

As Internet and technology gain a broader reach, so do those people who wish to harm others by harassment.

▬ According to a 2014 study by the Pew Research Center among American adults, there are at least six different forms of online harassment: calling someone offensive names, making efforts to purposely embarrass someone, physically threatening someone, harassing someone for a sustained period of time, sexually harassing someone or stalking someone.In the same study, researchers found five key facts about online harassment:

1. Of those interviewed, 40% of Internet users have personally experienced online harassment.
2. Young adults are the most likely demographic group to experience harassment online.
3. Men and women have different experiences with online harassment.
4. Half of those harassed online do not know who is behind it.
5. Social media was most frequently cited as the scene of harassment.

▬▬ Online harassment involves directing derogatory or offensive comments at targeted individuals repeatedly. It can take various forms such as cyberbullying, cyberstalking, trolling or spreading hate, for example.

CYBERBULLYING

- The World Health Organization recognises bullying behaviour as "the intentional use of physical and psychological force or power, threatening or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation" (World Health Organization - 2002) *World report on violence and health: summary*[1].

- Bullying is an action which is taken against another person in order to cause harm, repeated in various forms over a period of time. Parents and children do not usually have the same perception of the scale of this problem.

- Bullying can take many forms: physical bullying, verbal bullying, relational aggression, sexual bullying, prejudicial bullying, extortion and cyberbullying.

- Cyberbullying is bullying via the Internet or mobile phone, involving offensive or malicious messages, e-mails, chat room or message board comments or, even more extreme, websites built with harmful intent towards an individual or certain groups of people.

- Cyberbullies also use mobile phones to take embarrassing pictures of others or send hurtful SMS or MMS messages. All forms of online bullying have much greater impact than normal bullying since authors are strengthened by a feeling of anonymity and victims have no place to hide from the bully – they can be victims night and day, virtually wherever they are.

- Cyberstalking is the use of the Internet or other electronic means to stalk or harass an individual, a group or an organisation[2].

- Trolling is the act of causing problems on the Internet by starting arguments or upsetting people, by posting inflammatory, extraneous, or off-topic messages in an online community such as a news group[3] or blog.

- Trolling is done with the deliberate intent of provoking readers into an emotional response or of otherwise disrupting normal on-topic discussion[4].

- Since cyberstalking, trolling and bullying are generally considered under the broader umbrella of online harassment, the guidelines and information below can be adapted according to individual cases.

IMPORTANCE OF RESILIENCE AND SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

- Social and emotional resilience and well-being are crucial factors to help young people develop protection against bullying and other aggressive online behaviour.

- A positive school climate or a positive community can mitigate on- and offline bullying and, more generally, online harassment.

- Parents can help their children build resilience by helping them increase their self-awareness and self-esteem; by showing them that they are accepted and loved just the way they are; by teaching them to adapt to, handle and overcome tough situations; by inspiring positive emotions, finding pleasure and humour in life; by promoting problem-solving skills; by learning to be flexible in their responses; and by showing them the importance of empathy.

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1. http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/en/summary_en.pdf
2. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyberstalking
3. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Usenet_newsgroup>, forum, chat room <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chat_room
4. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_troll

⚠ ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RISKS

- Bullying and harassment in the classroom can lower the morale of the whole class, creating an atmosphere of fear and distrust, and making learning nearly impossible.

- For those who are bullied or are victims of harassment, the most frequent effects include depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, social adjustment difficulties and loneliness.

- For the perpetrators, the most frequent effects include increased anxiety, risk of school failure, and often delinquent behaviours and an increased likelihood of adult criminality.

- One preventive measure to help keep bullying or harassment from becoming a problem is to introduce social relationship management, anger-management and conflict resolution into your curriculum. Well-chosen programmes of this type will allow children and teenagers to discover their own talents as potential mediators in conflicts. In this way, the risk of minor conflicts developing into threatening behaviour will be reduced both offline and online.

- Your school should have an explicit policy in place – commonly called a responsible or acceptable use policy (RUP or AUP)[5] – to monitor when and how students and staff use the Internet and mobile phones at school. This document should explicitly explain that vulgar, bullying or harassing language and actions will not be tolerated. Direct consequences should be spelled out clearly for anyone who uses the Internet or their mobile phone in an inappropriate manner.

- There should be a procedure in place that can document Internet usage, including who is online, when and where, although this may pose some data protection issues.

- Students should be told to discontinue contact with anyone who is harassing them or making them uncomfortable in any way when online.

- Students should immediately tell a trusted adult what has happened and, if possible, show them the offensive material. Then the adult should follow the procedures spelled out in the school's AUP or RUP.

- The procedure is the same as in real life, were a child to be harassed by someone. They should discontinue contact with the offender and tell a trusted adult about the incident. They should not feel as though they are alone or have to deal with it themselves.

▬ In summary, school Internet and mobile phone use policy should include intervention methods such as conflict resolution, training of students and staff about what to do in the case of harassment online, provision of positive support to the targets of abuse and, wherever possible, help for the abusers in order to change their behaviour. With such a policy in place, schools should have little problem dealing with bullying or harassment.

❓ HOW TO

▬ Educators have always had to deal with bullying and harassment inside and outside of the classroom. It is imperative now to understand how this type of harassment involves the Internet as well.

- Students need to be able to take responsibility for their own actions, but bullying and harassment undermine confidence and self-esteem. When a person is being harassed or bullied, then learning is restricted because he/she is unable to focus, feels threatened and loses self-confidence.

- Students who feel threatened (either online or offline) need the help of a trusted adult. You should also remember that the person doing the bullying or harassing is also in need of guidance so that this behaviour is not repeated in the future.

- Handling bullying and harassment calls for a global approach through open discussion in the family or in class about the nature and potential cause of the unacceptable behaviour and remedial steps that can be implemented collectively.

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5. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acceptable_use_policy

- Bullying and harassment are social problems. It is the responsibility of teachers and parents to investigate any allegation of this behaviour and to work in the family or in class to provide the best learning environment possible, whether in the classroom, on the playground or working online.

- Educate teachers on the dynamics of the bullying and harassment process and the ways in which the Internet and mobile phones are used for this. Teach them how to read signals from victims as well as the person responsible for the offensive behaviour, and how to react when they notice such signals.

- Schools should have specific guidelines in place. It would be a good idea to incorporate precautionary measures in your school's Internet policy to deal with bullying and harassment.

- Students should be taught the four golden rules for dealing with cyberbullying or cyber-harassment:

  1. Make a copy of the offensive material if possible.

  2. Do not forward the offensive material to others.

  3. Switch off the receiving device (computer or mobile phone).

  4. Report the incident to a trusted adult.

IDEAS FOR CLASSROOM WORK

- Role play: students participate in a mock conflict resolution process. The teacher assigns the roles and organises groups in which students are responsible for settling a dispute. The next step is to reverse the roles, allowing students to approach the issue from a different perspective.

- Discussion groups: students participate in discussion groups to evaluate their participation in group work, their impressions on topics such as bullying in general, do's and don'ts on the Internet and responsibilities.

GOOD PRACTICE

Here are some ideas on how to handle online bullying and harassing e-mails or messages of any kind:

- Students should be instructed not to open e-mails from unknown sources.

- If an e-mail or text message is opened and found to be offensive, make a copy of the offensive material to show to a trusted adult. However, a victim should never react to offensive messages as this only encourages the other person to continue the offensive behaviour.

- If a person keeps sending offensive or harassing e-mails or messages and it is possible (by means of the e-mail address) to find out where they are being sent from, contact that service provider[6] or mobile operator immediately to report the harassment.

- A school's policies on bullying and/or acceptable user policy should have provisions on how to handle online harassment by students.

- Students should know that they can go to a parent, teacher or other trusted adult anytime they are harassed online or via their mobile phone. It is the role of that trusted adult to take the story seriously and to reassure the victim.

- Deal with bullies or those responsible for the harassment by explaining that their behaviour cannot be tolerated and should stop immediately, but also find out what you can about their motives. Would they dare say or do the same things in real life?

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6. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_service_provider

- Always endeavour to ensure that parents are aware if their child is being bullied or is a bully him/herself. When a bully uses the Internet or mobile phone to bully, the offensive behaviour does not usually stop at the school gate and will probably continue from home.

- ENABLE[7] (European Network Against Bullying in Learning and Leisure Environments) is a project funded by the European Commission and provides in-depth information on the most successful approaches to tackling bullying, as well as social and emotional learning, and it provides parent packs and peer training toolkits for schools.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- The Council of Europe web page "Beat bullying" offers tools against bullying: <www.coe.int/en/web/edc/beat-bullying>.

- NoBullying.com offers bullying and cyberbullying resources: <http://nobullying.com/>.

- The Smile of the Child website, based in Greece, offers help with the daily problems children encounter: <http://www.hamogelo.gr/1.2/home>.

- "Stomp Out Bullying": <http://www.stompoutbullying.org>"Stop bullying now!" is a US website aiming to reduce bullying: <http://www.stopbullyingnow.com/>.

- "#DeleteCyberbullying" is an interactive Android app giving advice on cyberbullying: <https://deletecyberbullying.wordpress.com/app/>.

- "Know the risks: challenging cyber bullying" is aimed at parents and teachers: <http://web.archive.org/web/20100923133231/http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/teachers/wa_teachers/safe_passage_teachers/risks_bullying.cfm>.

- "What is cyber bullying?" is an Australian Government website giving advice to families: <http://web.archive.org/web/20090703064421/http://www.netalert.gov.au/advice/risks/cyber-bullying/What_is_cyber_bullying.html>.

- Report bullying and harmful content to the Insafe network: <http://www.betterinternetforkids.eu>.

- Pew Research Center has published their 2014 summary of findings on "Online harassment": <http://web.archive.org/web/20160703044152/http://www.pewinternet.org/2014/10/22/online-harassment/>.

- The No Hate Speech Movement is a youth campaign of the Council of Europe: <http://www.nohatespeechmovement.org/>.

- Find out more about bullying and download lesson plans, parent packs and peer-training kits: <http://enable.eun.org>.

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7. http://enable.eun.org