



***Taking Action Against Violence  
in Schools – A Training Manual  
for Trainers.***

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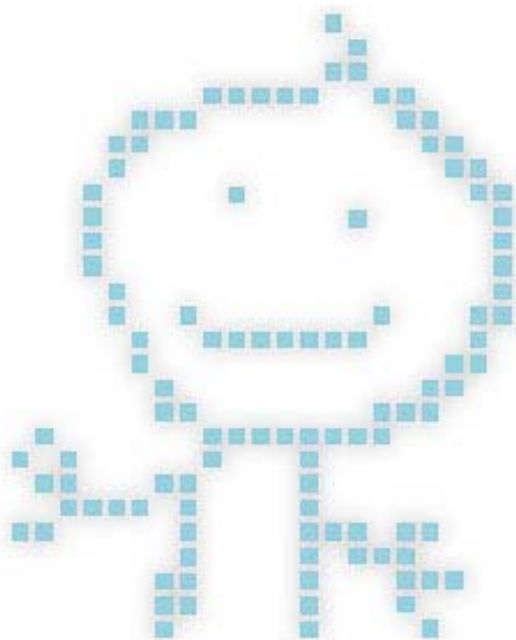


**Module 0**

# **Working with parents: principles and strategies for training**

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## Summary

- Parents have several needs, experiences, and doubts in terms of knowledge and skills to cope with the problem of cyberbullying.
- Therefore, a training course on cyberbullying for parents should be well planned, structured and developed in order to meet their several needs, and to be effective.
- An important step, before starting working with parents on the topic of cyberbullying, is the assessment of their needs and expectations related to this thematic and the course.
- The use of resources like cases and images in training should favour interactive learning.
- Training evaluation is essential for ascertaining whether the training actually produced the desired results.



## Introduction

The problem of cyberbullying, addressed in this training course for parents, is a multifaceted thematic. Considering the complexity and novelty of this subject, parents have several needs, experiences, and doubts in terms of knowledge and skills to cope with this problem.

Therefore, any training course which aims to equip parents with skills and strategies needed to help their children to cope with the risks and dangers of new media, and particularly with the problem of cyberbullying, must be well planned, structured and developed in order to meet their several needs, and to be effective. This module aims to introduce you to the training manual, and offers some practical guidelines on how to use it, in order to help you meet the requirements of an effective training course. Beyond this, we propose in this module some principles, strategies, and tools to prepare, implement and evaluate training.

## Objectives and learning outcomes

This module aims to provide you with a comprehensive framework for planning and developing a training course on cyberbullying for parents. The specific objectives of this module are:

- To provide some guidelines on how to use the training manual;
- To highlight some principles that may guide you when working with parents on the topic of cyberbullying;
- To suggest some guidelines and tools to help you to evaluate parents' training needs related to cyberbullying;
- To suggest some guidelines and tools to help you to evaluate parents' expectations with regard to the training course;
- To offer you advice on how to improve your communication skills for the work with parents;
- To recommend some strategies for working with parents using cases and images;
- To suggest some guidelines and tools for evaluating training.

# Guidelines and tools to plan, develop and evaluate training

## Principles of our training

When working with parents on the topic of cyberbullying (with the aim of developing skills, changing attitudes, meanings, values or beliefs), it is important to build the training on principles that are pedagogically effective:

- Parents' learning and changes must result from an intrinsic motivation <sup>(1)</sup>.
- The trainer should create a climate where parents feel free to express their opinions and reactions, without fear of "getting it wrong."
- Before initiating, you must be aware of parents' needs and expectations so that training meets their needs in terms of knowledge, emotions and attitudes.
- The development of training should be built on diverse activities that require parents' emotional, intellectual and physical involvement.
- Parents' knowledge and experience makes them important resources for learning, if you allow them to call on their experiences in the learning activities with others <sup>(2, 3)</sup>. When addressing the issue of cyberbullying and the risks associated with ICT use, their experiences as parents should be acknowledged and used as examples on which new knowledge can be built <sup>(4)</sup>.
- Although it is important to consider parents' personal experiences and use them in training, you must be careful and respect the privacy they may need. In your group of trainees, you may have parents with different experiences - parents of children who have been victims of cyberbullying, parents of children with an active role in a bullying situation – and so their different feelings, concerns and sensitivity must be taken into account.
- It is important that parents are given enough time to work on and restructure their prior experiences and accumulated knowledge. You may facilitate this work by giving them the opportunity to observe, to share, and listen to examples and explanations that help them to complement or restructure their prior conceptions.
- It is important that you exemplify with your own practice as a trainer, the set of interpersonal skills considered important in the relationship between parents and children (openness, active listening, empathy, etc.) <sup>(5, 6)</sup>.

## Before working with parents

### Needs assessment

Implementing an effective training course on cyberbullying requires a careful planning and involves different and complex tasks. An important step, before starting working with parents on the topic of cyberbullying, is the assessment of their needs related to this issue. Considering that the final aim of working with parents is to equip them with skills and strategies needed to help their children to cope with the risks and dangers of new media, and particularly with the problem of cyberbullying, it is important to identify the gaps between parents' current knowledge and skills and the desirable competencies they need to develop.

In your group of trainees you may have parents with different backgrounds, different strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, needs assessment is an opportunity to identify parents' different needs, to set priorities, and to make decisions that will benefit the whole group. In order to help you evaluate parents' training needs, we will briefly describe some activities and resources that you may apply <sup>(7, 8)</sup>.

Resource 0.1 – 'Parents knowledge about new media' provides you with a questionnaire that helps you get an overview of the participants' knowledge and level of experience in terms of new media.

Activity 0.1 - 'Parents' level of knowledge about cyberbullying' and Activity 0.2 - 'What do I know about cyberbullying?'. These activities are designed to help you evaluate what parents already know about cyberbullying, and also to facilitate their reflection about their needs in terms of knowledge and skills to deal with this problem. You may choose from these two activities, the one that is best suited to your specific training conditions and opportunities.



## Resource 0.1 - Parents knowledge about new media

### Purpose:

To address the topic of cyberbullying with parents, and to help them to develop skills to cope with the risks of nowadays digital world, you must be aware of their knowledge and level of experience in terms of new media. The following questionnaire is designed to give you a first idea about parents' knowledge and level of experience related to ICT. The results may help you decide how to use "Module 1- Introduction to New Media", by addressing questions, such as: What topics of Module 1 should be discussed in more detail?; what contents are parents' already familiar with?; how can you ensure that your group of parents know the basics of Internet and ICT, necessary to further address the problem of cyberbullying?

### Procedure:

We suggest that you send the questionnaire to parents prior to the course. In case you can't send it before the course you may use the questions as a guideline for a group discussion at the beginning of the session.

### Questionnaire 'Parents knowledge about new media'

1. How often do you use the Internet (mark a cross):

	Always	Very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1.1 For communicating with others?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2 To seek information?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3 To look for help and advice?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4 To publish/share photos, videos, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.5 For another purpose?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please specify_____					

2. How often do you use your mobile phone (mark a cross):

	Always	Very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
2.1 To make phone calls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2 To send text messages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3 To send photos, videos, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4 To access the Internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5 For another purpose?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please specify_____					

3. Please try to rate your knowledge on the following aspects of the Internet and its use.

	Very good	Good	Barely acceptable	Poor	Very poor
3.1 The basic functionality of the Internet, i.e., how it is structured and how it works	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2 Different ways of using the Internet, e.g., for searches, to retrieve and publish information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3 Different ways of using the Internet for communicating and interacting with other users	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4 Different services offered by today's Internet (social networks, video sharing websites, Chat rooms, Instant messenger)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.5 The role of the Internet in the development of young people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.6 The risks and dangers of the Internet in terms of exposure to harmful content	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.7 The risks and dangers involved in communicating and interacting with others on the Internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **Activity 0.1 - Parents' level of knowledge about cyberbullying**

### **Purpose**

This activity is designed to assess parents' level of knowledge about cyberbullying. It will help you to identify parents' different needs, to set priorities, and to make decisions related to the use of "Module 2: Introduction to cyberbullying", which will benefit the whole group.

### **Resource**

No extra resources are required for this activity.

### **Procedure**

In small groups, parents are asked to discuss and to write on a piece of paper everything they know about cyberbullying; then, each group should share the information with others, and deliver the paper to the trainer.

## Activity 0.2 - 'What do I know about cyberbullying?'

### Purpose

This activity is designed to assess parents' level of knowledge about cyberbullying. It will help you to identify parents' different needs, to set priorities, and to make decisions related to the use of "Module 2: Introduction to cyberbullying", that will benefit the whole group.

### Procedure

Ask parents to reply to the Questionnaire "What do I know about cyberbullying?" You can either send the questionnaire to parents prior to the course or use the questions as a guideline for a group discussion at the beginning of the session. If you send the questionnaire to parents prior to the course, analyse their answers and plan the development of the course according to the needs identified. If you use the questions at the beginning of the session, use the parents' discussion to form an initial concept of what they know about the problem of cyberbullying, and also to promote their critical reflection on their needs related to this subject.

### Questionnaire 'What do I know about cyberbullying?'

Please state how much you agree with the following statements. Circle a number from 1-5 where 1 states you strongly disagree and 5 states you strongly agree.

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
a) I have a clear idea of what cyberbullying is.....	1	2	3	4	5
b) I am familiar with the various methods used to cyberbully.....	1	2	3	4	5
c) I am aware of the impact cyberbullying can have on children and young people.....	1	2	3	4	5
d) I am familiar with the signs and symptoms of cyberbullying.....	1	2	3	4	5
e) I am aware of what I should do to prevent my child becoming involved in cyberbullying.....	1	2	3	4	5

f) I know how to help my child if he/she is being victimized.....	1	2	3	4	5
g) I know what to do if my child is cyberbullying others.....	1	2	3	4	5
h) I am confident and comfortable about my ability to guide my child in relation to safe, responsible use of ICT.....	1	2	3	4	5
i) I know whom I should ask for help, if my child is involved in a cyberbullying situation	1	2	3	4	5

### A quick checking, before initiating training

An important step before initiating training is to assure that all the conditions and resources are well organized and prepared. You must verify if the facility is arranged appropriately, if access to the Internet is guaranteed, if all the parents were informed in time about the schedule and location of the training sessions, among other relevant aspects. You can use the following checklist to verify if the conditions and resources are prepared for training. While planning the training sessions, you may add to this list other topics you find essential to verify before you begin training.

#### Checklist

Use the following checklist to verify if all the conditions needed to initiate training are met.

- Parents were informed in time about the location, schedule and length of the training sessions;
- Human resources are prepared and coordinated with regard to their tasks;
- Technical stuff is ready and working well;
- Internet access is guaranteed and working well;
- The facility is arranged in a way that is conducive to learning;
- The way trainees will be sitting, and the light are appropriate / can be adapted to the viewing of videos;
- All the documents (questionnaires, narratives, etc.) for parents are printed and ready to be used;



## Evaluation of expectations

Another important step, before starting working with parents on the topic of cyberbullying, is the assessment of their expectations relating not only to this thematic but also to the overall course, i.e., the course design, the role of trainers, the activities and the dynamic of the course, if parents are confident enough to talk about the kind of problems related to cyberbullying. It is important to identify the gaps between parents' expectations and the trainer's expectations regarding the design and development of the training.

Although an important objective of the course is to give information about cyberbullying, one of the greatest challenges is to create conditions in which parents have the confidence to share real and everyday problems. In order to help you evaluate parents' training expectations related to the training course on cyberbullying, we suggest you use Activity 3.

In order to help you evaluate parents' training expectations related to the training course on cyberbullying, we suggest you use Activity 0.3 - 'What do I expect from this course?'

### Activity 0.3 - 'What do I expect from this course?'

#### Purpose

This activity is designed to assess parents' level of expectations about the 'cyberbullying' course. It will help you to identify parents' different expectations, and to set priorities.

#### Procedure

Ask parents to reply to the Questionnaire "What do I expect from this course?". You can either send the questionnaire to parents prior to the course or use the questions as a guideline for a group discussion at the beginning of the session. If you send the questionnaire to parents prior to the course, analyse their answers and plan the development of the course according to the expectations identified. If you use the questions at the beginning of the session, use parents' discussion to make a first assessment of what they expect from the course, and also to facilitate their critical reflection on these expectations.

#### "What do I expect from this course?"

1. Please state how much you agree with the following statements. Circle a number from 1-5 where 1 states that you strongly disagree and 5 states that you strongly agree

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
a) I hope that the overall training will be worthwhile.....	1	2	3	4	5
b) The institution/group promoting the training is reliable.....	1	2	3	4	5
c) The location will be appropriate.....	1	2	3	4	5
d) The time will be suitable.....	1	2	3	4	5
e) The objectives defined are very relevant.....	1	2	3	4	5
f) The contents defined are very pertinent.....	1	2	3	4	5
g) I hope to learn more about cyberbullying.....	1	2	3	4	5
h) I hope to become more prepared to help my child.....	1	2	3	4	5
i) I hope training will be well organized .....	1	2	3	4	5
j) I hope the trainers will be experts in the contents.....	1	2	3	4	5
k) I hope trainers will be effective in their presentation					

methods.....	1	2	3	4	5
l) I hope the resources will be appropriate to facilitate learning...	1	2	3	4	5
m) I hope that the activities will help me to understand the different situations better.....	1	2	3	4	5
n) I will apply what I learned in this training to my family education.....	1	2	3	4	5
o) I will apply what I learned in this training to the way I communicate with my child.....	1	2	3	4	5
2. The three main things I would like to learn in this training course are:					
2.1 _____					
2.2 _____					
2.3 _____					

## When working with parents

### Communication skills

Effective communication is an essential skill if you are to work together with parents in a supportive way. For this reason, we will give you some tips to help you strengthen and improve your performance in this domain <sup>(9-11)</sup>:

- Listen intently;
- Don't lead too much;
- Be aware of your facial expressions and posture, i.e., display calmness, and do not overreact to the situation or problems stated;
- Allow parents to state opinions, feelings, and doubts, without interrupting with questions, criticisms or advice;
- Show interest by asking questions when the speaker stops;
- Avoid expressing a moralistic or overly dramatic approach;
- Provide reflective statements and validate parents' point of view;
- Show empathy, so parents feel you understand their feelings and thinking;
- Never downplay another person's feelings;
- Use a clear and explicit language in order to ensure that there is no misunderstanding in communication, and that everyone understands the message you want to convey.

### Use of cases and images

The resources and methods to be used when developing training activities for parents should favour their involvement and interactive learning. However, it is necessary to know how to use them properly, and in a well-grounded way. We will provide you with advice on two types of resources which are particularly helpful in addressing the problem of cyberbullying, and thus can be very useful to provide effective training on this topic for parents. These resources are cases and images (cartoons, videos, etc.).

## Training with cases

**A case** <sup>(12-15)</sup>:

- is a real situation with all its complexity.
- Engenders controversy
- can provide open-ended and challenging narratives.
- *can be a narrative* that describes what led up to the event, its consequences and can also describe how the participants in the event thought and felt.
- could be: a scene from a film, a chapter of a book, a picture, a story.

## Why use cases in training?

- A case, a story is “*one of the basic human forms of experience of the world*” <sup>(16)</sup>;
- It allows concepts and practice to be connected;
- It avoid over-simplifying;
- It allows the development of critical thinking.

### ***How to use cases in training:***

**a) Storytelling** – telling a story “inevitably” implies “taking a moral position”

Stories or cases are considered here:

- as examples, or illustrations of theories and skills;
- and as knowledge and context.

The reader or listener of a case or story constructs an interpretation or meaning by bringing “his or her experience to the narrative” <sup>(17)</sup>.

Objectives:

- Influence or change attitudes, feelings and behaviours.
- Promote critical thinking.



Activities:

- *Case selection* – it is important to work with appropriate cases.
- *Individual reading and reflection* through open questions.
- *Collaborative analysis* and discussion – brainstorming, role-playing, forums, etc.
- *Final synthesis* - it could be a table which displays a critical reading of the case.

**b) Storywriting** – or writing cases and stories. Using this strategy, fathers and mothers

has a doubly active role in that they not only observing reality but also writing what they perceive as real dilemmas within cyberbullying.

- Writing a case induces subjects to reflect on their own experiences of cyberbullying;
- Writing a story means learning to listen, to understand contexts

Objectives:

- Give subjects the emotional distance and time necessary to examine the experience;
- Understand the practice and experiences of cyberbullying “from the insider’s perspective”;
- Influence attitudes, feelings, and behaviours;
- Promote critical thinking.

Activities <sup>(18)</sup>:

- initial experience: to listen, observe or participate in an episode or series of events;
- reflected experience: the original episodes are developed into a written narrative. The role of the trainer is to create conditions that help subjects to select episodes that deserve further examination and analysis;
- collaborative discussed experience: the case continues to develop through dialogue and rewriting drafts. The writers are involved in reflective research on experiences. The trainer coordinates research and establishes conditions for positive changes in areas needing more clarity;
- common experience: we develop common experience by seeking feedback from other educators so that the cases become part of the community.

## Training with Images

The use of images<sup>1</sup> (e.g. cartoons, videos, etc.) in training on cyberbullying can have many benefits, related to their power to represent reality in a way that appeals to parents' sensibility and emotions.

Among other advantages, the use of still or moving images in training activities for parents promotes:

- the motivation and involvement of parents;
- the dialogue / discussion of a topic, leading to the construction of knowledge;
- the interaction between parents and trainers;
- parents' internal dialogue, during the analysis of images.

In order to take advantage of this potential when working with parents on the topic of cyberbullying, the use of images should be supported by some principles and methodological procedures. Photographs, cartoons or videos by themselves are not beneficial, unless they are subject to analysis, discussion, and reflection, in the context of activities which are planned in order to achieve clearly defined objectives. Therefore, we will outline some basic principles and offer you some methodological guidelines that can be helpful to take the best advantage of these resources when you work with parents.

### Some principles

- The work of observation, analysis, decoding, and structuring should be done by parents.
- You should take a guiding and creative role in order to facilitate the construction of knowledge by parents.
- You should provide a context that enables parents to integrate the audiovisual information with their own experience with their children, so that they can convert it into meaningful learning.

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<sup>1</sup> The concept of image that we will use here includes still (e.g. magazines, photographs) and moving images (television programs, videos, etc.)<sup>(19-22)</sup>.

## Methodology

Resources like cartoons, videos, etc., should not be regarded as a substitute for your role, but as a method of promoting the involvement / participation of parents in their own learning, through your catalyst action as trainer. Therefore, to use images in training you should adopt an active and reflexive methodology.

**Before the training session:** Before using any visual or audiovisual resource (e.g., cartoons, videos) you should first study the document carefully and analyse its elements and the content it addresses, in order to identify what aspects parents will need to focus on.

In preparing the activity, it is necessary that you answer some questions <sup>(23)</sup>:

- What are the objectives you want to achieve with the use of that resource?
- How should the space be organized for the proper use of the resource?
- What time is available for the work?
- What equipment is needed?
- Should the resource (e.g., video) be viewed entirely, should the viewing be divided in different phases, or should only a few scenes / be selected and worked on?

You need to arrange the space and placement of parents, organize and prepare the technical equipment (sound, light, etc.), when it is needed. Before presenting the images, it is important that you briefly describe the type of document that will be used and the subject it addresses, in order to engage and motivate parents.

**While watching:** You should pay attention and show interest as this is how you want the parents to behave. We suggest that you take the opportunity to observe the reactions and attitudes of parents and their degree of interest while observing the images <sup>(24)</sup>.

**After watching:** To ensure that the use of cartoons, videos, etc., result in parents' significant learning, it is essential to adopt a comprehensive approach. This consists of analysis and discussion of images in sequential steps, beginning with focus on its sensorial and emotional elements and introducing progressively more rational / cognitive elements <sup>(24-26)</sup>.

This process of analysis and discussion of images starts with a **first step**, which aims to promote parents' free expression of reactions and opinions, and the interaction between them. By starting

with a more sensory and emotional level, you will take advantage of the richness of an image and its ability to appeal to reason, sensitivity and emotions.

A **second step** consists of stimulating the debate among parents, and their critical reflection on the topic of cyberbullying, based on the reactions and questions raised by images. Encouraging the exchange of views and arguments is an opportunity for parents to find rational explanations, compare perspectives, interpretations and solutions. You should take special care to avoid offering explanations or answers, without giving an opportunity for parents to express themselves. In the case of narrative images, avoid making value judgments, saying which behaviour is right or wrong - let parents express their opinions and reach a conclusion by confronting ideas.

A **third and final step** aims to enable parents to summarize the information, ideas, and perspectives discussed, and to convert them into meaningful knowledge and experiences. This is a phase that should permit parents to integrate the knowledge/ideas presented in the images, and this integration must be mediated by their own experience. In this way, images allow parents to get involved in the process of knowledge construction.

### **After working with parents – training evaluation**

The evaluation is often the most forgotten feature of any educational practice. Nevertheless, it is essential, and constitutes a tool for ascertaining whether the training actually produced the desired results, and for stimulating a reorientation of the process.

Activity 0.4 - 'Learning and Satisfaction evaluation' is designed to help you assess Parents' satisfaction and learning.

## Activity 0.4 - 'Learning and Satisfaction evaluation'

### Purpose

This activity is designed to assess parents' learning and satisfaction with the course.

### Procedure

- a) Parents are asked to reply to the questionnaire "Learning and Satisfaction Evaluation".
- b) After responding to the questionnaire, parents are invited to share with the whole group their opinion about the way the training course responded to their needs and doubts, in terms of helping their children to cope with the risks and dangers of new media, and particularly with the problem of cyberbullying.

### Questionnaire 'Learning and satisfaction evaluation'

#### PART 1

Please state how much you agree with the following statements. Circle a number from 1-5 where 1 states that you strongly disagree and 5 states that you strongly agree

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
<b>1. I am more aware about:</b>					
a) The concept and types of cyberbullying.....	1	2	3	4	5
b) The causes and factors related to cyberbullying .....	1	2	3	4	5
c) The signs and symptoms of cyberbullying.....	1	2	3	4	5
d) The relationship between family context and cyberbullying .....	1	2	3	4	5
e) The importance of parental monitoring and supervision of children.....	1	2	3	4	5
f) What I can do to prevent cyberbullying.....	1	2	3	4	5
g) What I should do if my child is a victim.....	1	2	3	4	5
h) What I should do if my child is an aggressor.....	1	2	3	4	5
i) The legal issues related to cyberbullying.....	1	2	3	4	5



## PART 2

1. Please state how much you agree with the following statements. Circle a number from 1-5 where 1 states you strongly disagree and 5 states you strongly agree

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
a) The overall training course was worthwhile.....	1	2	3	4	5
b) The institution/group that promoted training was reliable.....	1	2	3	4	5
c) The location was appropriate.....	1	2	3	4	5
d) The time was suitable.....	1	2	3	4	5
e) The objectives were met.....	1	2	3	4	5
f) The contents were significant and well addressed.....	1	2	3	4	5
g) Training was well organized.....	1	2	3	4	5
h) The trainers were experts in the contents.....	1	2	3	4	5
i) The trainers were effective in developing training.....	1	2	3	4	5
j) The facility was appropriate to promote learning.....	1	2	3	4	5
k) The resources were appropriate to facilitate learning.....	1	2	3	4	5
l) The activities helped me to understand the different situations better.....	1	2	3	4	5
m) The activities stimulated sharing among trainees.....	1	2	3	4	5
n) The activities were valuable in helping me to apply knowledge to my relationship with my child...	1	2	3	4	5
o) I will apply what I've learnt to my child's education					
p) I would recommend this course to my friends.....	1	2	3	4	5

2. To improve the training course I suggest: \_\_\_\_\_



## Conclusion

This module intended to help you to take the best advantage of the training manual, by offering you a general overview of its structure, contents, activities, and resources. The aim of this module was also to demonstrate the importance of planning the training, namely with regard to carrying out a needs assessment, considering parents' expectations, and evaluating the training course. Moreover, we underline in this module the relevance, when addressing a topic like cyberbullying, of promoting learning experiences supported by a creative use of resources like cases and images. According to this, the module provides a set of principles and a few guidelines to help you improve your communication skills, and to create an appropriate use of strategies and pedagogical resources in the training course. Additionally, it offers a set of tools which can be used to evaluate parents' needs, expectations, as also training outcomes, in terms of learning and satisfaction.

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## Useful websites

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- International Bureau of Education: <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/services/publications.html>
- Kids Development: <http://www.kidsdevelopment.co.uk/VygotskySocioCulturalTheory.html>

- Developing the teaching instinct: [http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/nes\\_resources/ti/units.pdf](http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/nes_resources/ti/units.pdf).
- Key skill assessment: communication:  
<http://openlearn.open.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=2960>
- Bloom's taxonomy - learning domains:  
<http://www.businessballs.com/bloomstaxonomyoflearningdomains.htm>
- Exploring children's learning:  
<http://openlearn.open.ac.uk/mod/oucontent/view.php?id=397489>
- Training and learning development: <http://www.businessballs.com/traindev.htm>
- Learning and teaching: <http://www.learningandteaching.info/learning/about.htm>
- Principles and methods of training: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/w8088e/w8088e03.htm>
- Training or learning?: <http://www.businessballs.com/training.htm>
- Experiential learning: [http://www.businessballs.com/experiential\\_learning.htm](http://www.businessballs.com/experiential_learning.htm)
- Case Method Website: <http://www.soc.ucsb.edu/projects/casemethod/teaching.html>
- Using Cases in Teaching: <http://tlt.its.psu.edu/suggestions/cases/>
- Storytelling Activities & Language Arts Lesson Ideas:  
<http://www.storyarts.org/lessonplans/index.html>
- Storytelling: <http://downloads.cas.psu.edu/4H/StoryTelling.pdf>
- Case studies in Science Videos:  
<http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/projects/cases/teaching/videos/video.html>
- JISC Digital Media: <http://www.jiscdigitalmedia.ac.uk/>
- Images in education: <http://drscavanaugh.org/digitalcamera/images-in-education.htm>
- Digital video in the classroom: <http://techintegration.cciu.org/Digital%20Video/index.html>



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## Module 1

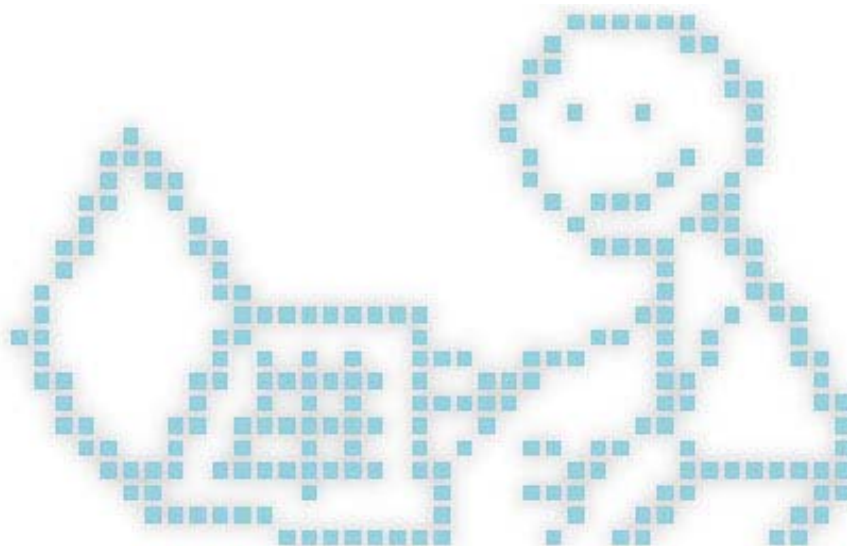
# Introduction to New Media

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## Summary

- Today's world is almost unimaginable without new media, especially the Internet. They have become constant companions, particularly for young people – so-called *digital natives* – and are influencing the development of children and young people all over the world.
- The Internet has continued to develop quickly during its brief history and so have the behaviours of its users. The so-called “Web 2.0” is the “new generation of the World Wide Web”. This term refers to the Internet-based services (weblogs, wikis, social networking sites or podcasts) that have been created in recent years and which make it much easier for users to publish self-generated content, work co-operatively and share knowledge.
- For most young people, the Internet and the many possibilities it offers for communication have become a fixture of everyday life. While teenagers often perceive their personal reality as a continuum of the offline and online worlds, adults usually differentiate very clearly between the “virtual” and “real” worlds.
- Social web applications, especially social networks offer young people spaces for action and experimentation. The nature of these spaces fulfils the specific needs of this particular phase of life. Young people use these opportunities to overcome challenges they face in their development, above all, in the search for their own identities.
- Although the Internet offers young people outstanding opportunities for communication, learning and entertainment, adolescents can also experience unpleasant situations, which go hand-in-hand with these new areas of experience. *Content, commerce, contact* and *conduct* are seen as the central areas of risk that young users can encounter. It is therefore particularly important to sharpen children's and young people's awareness of the risks and challenges presented by new media and thereby improve their media competence.

## Introduction

In recent years, the Internet has become a much more important feature of our daily lives. We use it in a wide range of different contexts and settings, e.g., at work, school or university, in public spaces and at home. We use the Internet to seek information, communicate and interact with other people, look for help and advice, play, shop online or watch videos, films and TV series, listen to Web radio or podcasts, plan our everyday lives and much more.

Well over half of all Europeans are now online, however, there are significant differences between the rates in individual European countries (e.g., in 2011: Moldova 31%, Norway 94% <sup>(1)</sup>). Young Europeans between 9 and 16 years old use the Internet most frequently, 93% of all young people in Europe go online at least once per week, and 60% of them go online either every or almost every day <sup>(2)</sup>. They most frequently use the Internet at school (63%) or at home (62%) and almost half of boys and girls surf in their own bedrooms. According to the study “EU Kids Online”, 85% of young people between the ages of 9 and 16 use the Internet for school work – which underlines the importance of the Internet in the context of school – 83% of those surveyed play games, 76% view products provided by other users on the Web and 62% communicate via social networks and instant messengers <sup>(3)</sup>. There can also be significant differences in patterns of use within countries. The Internet has become a phenomenon accompanying children around the world as they grow and develop. The age at which children start using the Internet is falling steadily. According to “EU Kids Online”, one third of 9 - 10 year olds already go online every day <sup>(4)</sup>.

The “EU Kids Online” study also investigated the relationship between the use of the Internet by parents and children. It was notable that in most countries, especially the Eastern European countries of Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, Lithuania and Turkey, children use the Internet more frequently than their parents <sup>(5)</sup>. It might be possible to conclude from this that these children have an advantage in terms of knowledge and competence over their parents and that parents or guardians therefore have a certain amount of catching up to do. Even though parents do not have to be media experts, they do require a certain level of knowledge about new media in order to talk intelligently with their children about these topics. This module aims to support parents in their efforts to find out more about new media and help them to guide their children to a better understanding of the cyber world.

## Learning objectives

The aim of this module is to give an insight into the landscape of new media and highlight the influence that modern communication media have on the lives of young people.

The detailed learning objectives of this section are as follows:

- Raise awareness of the importance of (new) media, both in your own life as well as in relation to the maturing generation.
- Outline and discuss the profound changes emanating from the growth of Web 2.0 and new media.
- Present and discuss the role taken by the new media, especially in the social networks so popular among young people, and the opportunities made available to young people as they develop their own identities.
- Discuss the key risk areas presented by new media.

## New Media and current challenges

### Changes in social conditions due to developments in technology and media

Young people are today growing up under different technological, media and social conditions compared with the current generation of parents. In 2001, Marc Prensky called the members of this young generation *digital natives* – as they have grown up with new media – in contrast to their parents' generation of *digital immigrants*<sup>(6)</sup>.

Children are born into a world where they experience media as a part of their everyday lives and deal with them accordingly in a very natural way. “Daily companions” are no longer restricted to classical media such as newspapers, TV and telephone. In particular, the Internet plays a major role and has taken a firm place in the lives of young people.

New media are media, which enable people to communicate in new ways using newly developed technologies. New media, however, should also be viewed in a historical context, as there was a time when radio and television were also thought of as new media. Today, the term is generally

understood to refer to technologies which are based on data or its transfer in a digital form. For example, emails, the World Wide Web, digital television or the MP3 player are still considered new media. The more narrow definition is used for services, which are used via the Internet<sup>(7)</sup>. New media help to fuse together a variety of different media and can be used interactively. This process is known as media convergence. For example: one can chat and send images at the same time, telephone via the Internet and see each other in video or conversely use a telephone to access the Internet. These technological advances are, in turn, stamping their mark on the generation of *digital natives* and their competence in using media. They appear completely at ease in using many media simultaneously; they quickly learn how to use new media applications and are skilled at networking with each other.



Resource: <http://20sec.tumblr.com/post/893074529/mum-im-a-digital-native-no-you-werent>

If we look at the technological changes in the world, in which young people are growing up and developing today, it should hardly come as a surprise that teenagers frequently perceive their personal reality as a continuum of the offline and online worlds, while adults usually differentiate clearly between the two.

“Mediatisation” is the word used to describe the process by which the media continuously increase in importance and penetrate everyday life. This process shapes what it means to be a young person and simultaneously alters this phase of development. It creates new challenges not only for parents, pedagogues and teachers, but also for young people themselves.

These challenges are apparent, for example, in the newly won freedoms offered to children and young people on the Internet – the opportunities to test boundaries away from the watchful parental



eye. And as there are no shop opening times or ID card checks at the entrance, age does not constitute a barrier on the Internet. What does this mean for young people? It means, among other things, that they experience fewer restrictions and enjoy less protection than they used to. Parents need to develop a new type of “watchfulness” as children can be in danger even in their own bedroom at home.

At first glance, there would appear to be a chasm between *digital natives* and *digital immigrants*. To people who have grown up in a different media world and feel they struggle to keep up with the breakneck speed of media development, bridging such a gap may appear impossible. This module is aimed at precisely this group. It shows that although the conditions of socialisation for adolescents and the challenges facing parents have changed, these need not be an insuperable barrier between the generations.

A brief look at the motives and needs associated with using media will act as an introduction to the topic. Media biography research shows that media have an important function in building an identity and biography. Today, however, recipients are no longer seen as passive consumers – they are given an active role in handling media. Adolescents are also active recipients, for whom media fulfil specific functions and the way they use media is influenced by a variety of factors. The results of reception research suggest that children have a bias towards certain media topics. They select the media against the backdrop of their own interests and particularly the type of content that relates to their own life situations <sup>(8)</sup>. Children's specific development tasks and problems as well as their guiding inner issues <sup>(9)</sup> play a decisive role.

For earlier generations, media use was confined primarily to television, radio or cinema. Today, the Internet is the most important medium that influences the world of young people. However, for every generation, the motives for and needs fulfilled by using media are very similar. Reflecting on our own media biographies helps us to understand the current media culture as well as the media world experienced by young people. This in turn will promote a better understanding between the generations.

Activity 1.1 – Self-reflection through a biographical media journey. The following exercise invites you to reflect on your own media biography and become aware of the differences between and also similarities shared by the various generations.



## **Activity 1.1 – Self-reflection through a biographical media journey**

### **Learning objective**

Reflecting on our own media biographies can help us to access the current media culture. At the same time, it can also help us to gain a better understanding of the media preferences expressed by young people and therefore of the world they inhabit. Through reflection on our media experiences as children and their relevance to our own personal development, we can also understand the importance and functions of media in the lives of children and young people today.

### **Procedure:**

This exercise invites you to take a journey through your own life in relation to the media you have experienced. It aims to help you think about the role that media have played in your life so far. So take your time in answering the questions. The questionnaire and subsequent discussion give you the opportunity to exchange your thoughts and experiences with others.

### **Notes for trainers:**

*This exercise aims to promote discussion with parents by getting participants to reflect on their own media experiences. It offers a way of accessing the topic of media. Once the questionnaires have been completed, a moderated discussion should follow. This allows parents to talk about their experiences and reflect on their own viewpoints. If you wish, you can also encourage parents to think about the aspects they would like to discuss while they are completing the questionnaire.*

## Questionnaire: Self-reflection through a biographical media journey

### My media and I - Childhood

1. Do you remember the first medium you used as a child?

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2. What feelings do you associate with this?

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3. Did you have a favourite medium as a child – perhaps a favourite book, cassette, song or programme? If so, why this medium in particular? What do you associate with it? What experiences? What feelings?

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4. As a child, did you have a favourite character, a media hero/heroine? What did you like about him/her? What was special about him/her?

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5. How did you experience using media as a child? Were you alone or were there specific rituals, e.g., evenings with the family in front of the television?

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6. Were there rules in your house about using media when you were a child? If so, describe them.

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7. Do you remember breaking these rules and the consequences of doing so (e.g., watching television in secret)?

8. Did you have difficulties with your parents in your childhood relating to your media preferences? If so, describe them.

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9. Do you remember unpleasant media experiences in your childhood (e.g., stories that worried you or pictures that frightened you)?

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10. Are there any special media experiences in your childhood that you remember (e.g., first trip to the cinema)?

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11. What was the most important medium for you during your childhood? What was the importance of this medium for you?

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### **My media and I - Adolescence**

12. Did you have a favourite medium as an adolescent – perhaps a favourite book, cassette, song or film? If so, why this particular medium? What do you associate with it? What experiences? What feelings?

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13. As an adolescent, did you have an idol or role model in the media? Perhaps a musician, actor or favourite character? What did you like about him/her? What was special about him/her?

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14. How did you experience using media as an adolescent? Were you alone or were there specific rituals, e.g., going to the cinema together/listening to music together?

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15. Were there rules in your house about using media when you were an adolescent? If so, describe them.

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16. Do you remember breaking these rules and the consequences of doing so (e.g., watching a “forbidden film”)?

17. As an adolescent, did you feel that your parents understood your media preferences? What are your memories regarding this?

18. Are there any special media experiences you remember (e.g., the arrival of a new medium)?

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19. What was the most important medium for you as an adolescent? What was the importance of this medium for you?

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20. Would you associate yourself with a specific media generation (e.g., the “colour TV generation”)?

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## **New Media and I**

21. Do you remember the first “new medium” you used?

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22. Do you remember how you felt the first time you (describe using an adjective)

- used a mobile phone?

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- used a computer?

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- used the Internet?

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- created a social network profile?

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- ordered something on the Internet?

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23. Which medium now plays the most important role in your life?

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## Further information

The short story in Resource 1.1 - Food for thought: “What does it mean to be social illustrates the difference between young people’s and adults’ understanding of ‘virtual-’ and ‘real-’ world.

Resource 1.2 - “A typical day in the lives of two digital natives” This story aims to help you reflect on what the everyday life of today’s young people – the ‘digital natives’ - looks like and how it differs from the everyday lives of older people who did not grow up with new media – the ‘digital immigrants’.

After completing this journey into our own media histories, the next section takes a look at the development of media over recent years and the new generation of the World Wide Web – Web 2.0.

### **Resource 1.1 - Food for thought: “What does it mean to be social?”**

#### **“What does it mean to be social?”**

As I was lecturing at a conference for teachers a while ago, I met another lecturer who told me a story related to different perceptions of social life and friendship. As a father of a teenager in secondary school, he met his son on a Friday afternoon in order to have dinner together.

During the dinner, the father asked his son about his plans for Friday night. ‘I will hang out with my friends’ the son replied. A quite normal and expected response. Dinner was over, and the boy went into his room, closing the door behind him. Afternoon became night, and as far as the father could see – the boy stayed in his room. Friday night went, and Saturday morning arrived. Then they met for a late breakfast.

The father was concerned about what he felt was his son’s lack of social life: ‘You told me yesterday afternoon that you were going to meet with your friends – and then you went into your room, turned off the light, and sat there all night staring at your computer?’ In the father’s mind, this was no Friday night at all, just lonely isolation.

‘But I did!’ his son replied. ‘I chatted with my friends all night long on MSN, and we played the game World of Warcraft together online. It was a very social evening, and great fun too!’

When the father told me this story from their everyday life, I realised how totally different the two generations perceived the same situation. The father: My son is lonesome and shows poor social skills, staring at an empty screen all night, this is getting serious. The son: Very social night, a lot of fun.

*(Provided by Kids and Media <http://www.kidsandmedia.co.uk><sup>(29)</sup>)*

## Resource 1.2 - "A typical day in the lives of two digital natives"

### A boy, 16 years old: My day

07.00: My mobile phone is playing my favourite music track. I get up, read the texts that have ticked in during the night while I make my way to the bathroom, music still playing on my mobile.

07.15: I log on to *Facebook*, updating my status and looking at some photos recently posted from a party. Checking who's on MSN at the moment, posting a few messages with classmates. Some of my mates in World of Warcraft had a long night, chasing a recently discovered dragon deep in the dark mountains of Azeroth. Sorry guys, I had to drop out early this time, logged out 1am.

07.30: Breakfast. My mother complaining at me for being up late again, playing games. She doesn't realize I actually quit early.

08.15: On the school bus. Sending a few text messages. Watching some new tutorial video clips on *YouTube* related to today's subject in English class.

08.45 – 14.30: School. Checking *Facebook* during the breaks. Catching up with my World of Warcraft mates, planning the evening's events.

14.45: School bus home. Talking to friends, a few texts.

15.30: Making myself some dinner, eating by my computer. Surfing, doing my homework and delivering it online, catching up on MSN and *Facebook*. A lunatic has posted some pretty wild photos of Nathan and Jenny taken on his mobile phone at Gerry's party on Saturday. The girls are going nuts online, trying to have him remove the pictures, ha ha great fun.

17.30: My parents are coming home; I'm going out for soccer training.

20.00: Back home. Going to the computer in my room, getting ready for tonight's mission on World of Warcraft, 22.00 p.m. is rally point. Watching some TV shows online, chatting, finishing my homework accompanied by some new music I've downloaded at Pirate Bay. Mum is dropping by, saying hello, asking me if I would like some supper, nice!

22.00: Let the show begin. 55 avatars in our guild are logged on including my best friends Tom and Mathew. They're two levels above me, I have to catch up. Tom spends most of his time during the weekends playing WoW. He's a bit over the top but really good though. Time to chase the dragon; hoping my mum will leave me alone tonight.

### **A girl, 14 years old: My day**

07.15: Crisis. I have just realised that somebody has texted rumours that I had oral sex with Nathan at the party. I get online, hoping my best friend Amy is on MSN. Thank God she is. Amy, have you heard of it? Do you know what the message says? She says no.

07.40: Walking to school, asking Susie if she has heard of the rumours. She has, but refuses to pass on the SMS to me. That bitch, I text my friends to let them know that Susie is an unreliable bitch, don't trust her. Perhaps she started the rumours in the first place.

08.15 – 14.30: School. Trying to get an overview of who has received the SMS with the party rumours about me and this Nathan guy. I wonder what the girls in my class think of me. Bet it was Susie. I post a message on MSN, never trust Susie, she is a lying bitch. Today's math test went well, and I got an excellent grade in English. Talking to my friends in the breaks: Have they received the SMS? Do they know Susie is a lying bitch?

15.00: Home, doing homework. Chatting on *Facebook* and MSN. Dumping Susie as a friend in all my networks, suggesting that my friends do the same thing.

17.30: Family dinner, 'I've had a good day. Math went well and excellent results in English.'

18.10: World crisis!!! Somebody has posted a picture of Nathan and me from the party as I've been eating! Disastrous, it even looks as if I am kissing his nipple, which I definitely did not. It's the angle and timing of the photo taken. Who took it? Who has posted it? Who has seen it? It is posted on Joachim's profile site, but he seems to be offline at the moment. I hardly know him and he doesn't answer when I try to message him!!!! I text message my friends asking them to contact him and urge him to remove it. Messages start appearing on his wall, also comments on the picture.

19.00: Dance class. I cannot concentrate. My mind is on the picture. Bet Susie is happy now. Damn that creep Joachim, too.

20.30: Back home. Mum is asking me if I am alright, 'Yes, sure. Close the door please'. Alone in my room. Don't know what to do. Calling Amy, could she come over? She is busy with homework. Joachim is still offline, is he dead or what? He hasn't been online for hours, probably scared. My friends have posted numerous messages on his wall. I read some of the comments, disastrous. Somebody even says Nathan is together with Mary, bet she is furious at me if she has seen it, she's one year older than me. What if somebody has copied the picture? It looks too real. I don't know if I'll make it to school tomorrow.



## Web 2.0: from the static to the dynamic web

### Technological boom

The history of the Internet is still brief but has been dramatic and traces its roots back to the 1950's. The Internet was created by networking existing computer networks. A number of universities and the U.S. military had the idea of building a scientific electronic network that would make it easier to exchange data. However, it was not open to the public. Internet technology capable of handling mass Internet access only became available in the early 1990s with the World Wide Web. Since then the Internet has developed quickly. Today, it connects many millions of computers all over the world via telephone wire, cable or satellite.

To what extent has this development boom continued? The key aspect to highlight here is the impact of digitalisation in this technological transformation. As we have already mentioned, the technological possibilities in terms of the speed and range of services offered by the Internet have grown rapidly over the last two decades.

The Internet is no longer only available via home PCs but also via mobile phones, games consoles or iPod touch. Internet-compatible mobile phones – so called smartphones – are also ever more popular among young people. According to the “EU Kids Online” study, 31% of children in the EU already access the Internet using smartphones<sup>(10)</sup>. As well as these technological advances, there have also been changes in the ways people can and do use the Internet.

 <b>1996 :</b> The first version of the Instant Messaging software "ICQ" was launched	 <b>1969 :</b> "ARPANET", the predecessor of the internet, went online.
 <b>1998 :</b> The search engine "Google" was launched	 <b>1972 :</b> Introduction of the first email programme
 <b>1999 :</b> Wi-Fi, wireless internet technology, was standardized	 <b>1973 :</b> Invention of "Ethernet", an important aspect in developing Local Area Networks (LAN)
 <b>2001 :</b> The collaborative online-encyclopedia "Wikipedia" was launched	 <b>1978 :</b> The first spam mail was sent
 <b>2003 :</b> Apple launched the "iTunes"-store	 <b>1984 :</b> Introduction of "Domain Name System" (.com, .org, .edu, .mil, .gov)
 <b>The internet telephony software "skype" was developed</b>	 <b>1989 :</b> The first commercial dial-up internet was offered by "The World", an Internet Service Provider
 <b>The "BlackBerry"-smartphone was introduced, supporting wireless information services like push-email and Web-browsing e.g.</b>	 <b>1991 :</b> "European Organization for Nuclear Research" (CERN) released the World-Wide Web
 <b>2005 :</b> The video-sharing website "YouTube" was launched	 <b>1993 :</b> The first graphical webbrowser "Mosaic" was developed
 <b>Tim O'Reilly's article: "What is Web 2.0 ?" was published and caused a rise in popularity of the term "Web 2.0" describing interactive elements of the internet</b>	 <b>1995 :</b> The electronic commerce company website "amazon.com" was launched
 <b>"Earthviewer 3D" was re-released as "Google Earth"</b>	 <b>The online auction website "ebay" was launched</b>

## The passive user turns active

In the early days of the Internet, the primary functions available to users were concerned with information. Users could visit pages and absorb their contents. By the end of the 1990s, this aspect of the Internet had been supplemented by services to facilitate communication, leading to e-mails and chatrooms assuming a new importance in daily communication between people. Today, the focus has broadened to include entertainment and communication services. The ability to view content remains an important part of using media – but the nature of the content has changed radically.

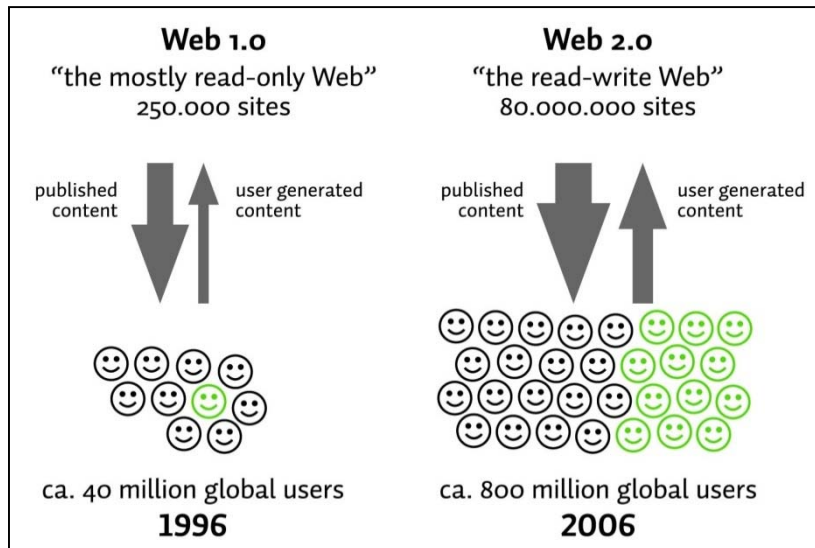
Alongside the media content supplied by commercial providers, which was already available in the early days of the mass Internet, the Internet today offers content and materials produced by private individuals, such as, user websites, messages in forums, photos and videos produced by users themselves and posted online.



## Web 2.0

The possibilities offered by today's Internet go far beyond the ability to view and absorb media content. The new technological possibilities allow all users to design their own content, publish this on the Internet and share it with others. These Internet-based services include weblogs, wikis, social networks or podcasts and are often perceived as the "new generation of the World Wide Web"<sup>(11)</sup>. "Web 2.0" has become the buzzword for this phenomenon.





The name is intended to underline two aspects of this technology. Firstly, “Web 2.0” reflects the convention used when naming software products implying that new technological components have been developed to offer more possibilities. The name also aims to show that business models on the Internet have changed. It is no longer just about offering a product – it is also possible to do business that incorporates user participation. For example, online shops allow users to offer their products for sale and pay a fee to the site's operator for the service just as they would at a local market. The phenomenon of “Web 2.0” is now frequently referred to in the context of “social media” or the “social web”. These, in particular, include social networking platforms such as Facebook or YouTube.

Activity 1.2 - Knowledge check The following exercise now gives you the opportunity to look at Web 2.0 applications in more detail and test or expand your own knowledge about these services.

## Activity 1.2 - Knowledge check

### Purpose:

You are almost certainly familiar with some Web 2.0 applications already. This knowledge check aims to help you test and/or expand your existing knowledge about these services.

### Procedure:

In this exercise, you can assign websites you already know such as *Facebook* or *ebay* to the category of service they offer, e.g., social networks, blogs, etc. Take your time with the exercise. First try to complete the tasks by yourself. The enclosed answer sheet will help you to check your knowledge. You can find further information and references at the end of the section under: Further information > Popular Web 2.0 services.



Blog	
Instant messenger	
Social network	
Video-sharing website	
Photo-sharing website	
Micro blogging	
Online encyclopaedia	
Online store	

### Further information

The video clip “State of the Internet” presents more facts and figures about the Internet.



The video clip “**Social media revolution 2011**” illustrates the phenomenon of social media and the dynamic of the Web 2.0.



### Resource 1.3 - “State of the Internet”



This video is intended to show you how the Internet has grown in recent years and give you an initial insight into the dynamic of the WWW. You are specifically requested to take note of the facts and figures. Moreover, you can also think about what the Internet used to be used for and the extent to which this has changed.

Watch this video on the Internet. If you are in a group of parents, discuss the contents and exchange your thoughts. You can use the “lightning feedback”<sup>(12)</sup> method. How did you feel? What were your thoughts? If you are doing the exercise alone, first note down your initial thoughts and keep them for reference. You may find it interesting to reflect on them again later.

Quelle Source: <http://vimeo.com/9641036>

#### Resource 1.4 – “Social media revolution 2011”



This video is intended to take you closer to understanding the phenomenon of Web 2.0, about which you have so far only been given factual information.

Watch this video on the Internet. If you are in a group of parents, discuss the contents and exchange your thoughts. You can use the “lightning feedback” method. How did you feel? What were your thoughts?

If you are doing the exercise alone, first note down your initial thoughts and keep them for reference. You may find it interesting to reflect on them again later.

Source: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3SuNx0UrnEo>

Having shone the spotlight on media development in general, the next section focuses once again on the media world of adolescents. It looks at the question of why social networking websites hold such appeal for young people and the role they (can) play in the genesis of an identity during this phase of life.

## Connection between the fascination of the Internet and development tasks during adolescence

The Internet creates a deep fascination and many young people cannot imagine living without it. It is the major medium for youth and has become a fixture in the lives of children and young people. Adolescence is a special time of life during which young people face a wide range of development tasks – above all the search for one's own identity. The following section highlights the challenges that confront young people in this special phase of development and the role that social networking websites – particularly popular among young people – assume in this context.

In terms of developmental psychology, today's adolescents are attributed with taking an active role in shaping their own development. The search for one's own identity is particularly important with questions like: Who am I? How do I see myself and what do others say about me? What kind of person do I want to be? Peers are particularly important during this stage of development. Social recognition by a *peer group* helps in the search for one's own identity. Being popular, having friends, feeling excluded, being different, looking different and feeling that way too – these are feelings that dominate adolescence. Gaining the actual or desired attention of others is a valuable currency during this time of life. Other development tasks we face during adolescence, and which characterize this phase, include anticipating our professional futures, developing our own world view and values as well as making plans for the future.

The following table shows an overview of the important development tasks which occur during adolescence.



### **Development tasks in adolescence<sup>(13)</sup>**

- Peer: Building a circle of friends, i.e., making new, deeper friendships among people of the same age and of either gender.
- Body: Accepting the changes in our bodies and our own appearance.
- Role: Adopting the behaviors appropriate to those of a man or woman in our society.
- Relationship: Making a closer relationship with a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- Independence: Breaking away from our parents, i.e., becoming independent of our parents.
- Profession: Thinking about our training and professions: thinking about what we want to become and what skills/knowledge we need to learn in order to do so.
- Partnership/family: Developing a picture of how we want to shape our own future families or partnerships.
- Self: Learning to know ourselves and knowing how others see us, i.e., achieving a clear self-concept.
- Values: Developing our own world view and understanding which values we represent and the principles upon which we want to base our own behavior.
- Future: Developing future prospects: planning our lives and working towards goals, which we believe we can achieve.

The three central development tasks facing young people as they create their identity are understanding oneself, society and the material world. The focus of understanding oneself is of developing a self-image, looking at our own wishes, hopes and ideas as well as learning how to present ourselves. This is closely connected to understanding society, or in other words “working on relationships”. This means making contacts, maintaining existing friendships or entering the first romantic relationships. Understanding the objective world, on the other hand, concerns developing our own image of the world based on our knowledge of it and experiences we have already had<sup>(13)</sup>.

Social websites, especially social networks, offer a wide variety of options that accommodate the needs of adolescence and which young people can use to overcome the development tasks they face. Here we can identify three central components of action, which correspond to the

development tasks described above: management of identity, relationships and information. Identity management means providing access to aspects of our own personality, such as telling others about our own personal experiences or presenting ourselves in social networks. This goes hand-in-hand with understanding ourselves. Relationship management corresponds to understanding society. This aspect therefore deals with making new contacts and keeping in touch with existing friends and acquaintances, e.g., confirming friendship requests or inviting people to become friends in social networks. The third component is information management which supports development tasks involving understanding the objective world. Ultimately, this deals with selecting and organising information, e.g., conducting research using Wikipedia or Google <sup>(15)</sup>.

The following table provides an overview of the central development tasks of adolescence and the corresponding services offered to young people by social web applications <sup>(16)</sup> :

Development task	Behavioural component	Activities	Examples
Understanding oneself	Identity management	Providing access to aspects of your own person	Completing a profile page; making a podcast of your own; uploading a self-produced video
Understanding society	Relationship management	Maintaining existing and forming new relationships	Commenting on a friend's wall; making or accepting friendship requests; posting links to blog entries
Understanding the objective world	Information management	Selecting, filtering, evaluating and managing information	Evaluating a video by awarding points; subscribing to an RSS feed

The key words identity, relationships and information have already been identified as important elements of the phase of adolescence. Social web applications accommodate these needs by offering young people a place to act and experiment and which they can use to overcome the special challenges they face during adolescence. Social networking sites are particularly important in this area both because of their popularity and the services they offer for identity and relationship management. But what are the specific possibilities that these services offer young people? And which functions do young people use to conquer their own particular developmental tasks?

The following section will use the example of social networks to investigate these questions in more detail by presenting the most popular social networking websites and their functions with reference to the development tasks facing young people.

## Social networks

### Description

Social networks are Internet platforms, which allow users to create their own profiles containing as much personal information as they choose, e.g., hobbies, interests, current life situation, family, and relationship status, etc. Profiles are comparable with virtual friendship books or poetry albums, except that they can generally be read by many people, especially if you do not take care when setting the security options.

Users express their personalities in many ways, including uploading their photos (of the latest party or holiday) and joining groups. They can add the latest videos and clips to their own profiles and also comment on them to reflect their views. They communicate via walls, e-mail and chat functions. The structure of the profile and the functions available are similar in most networks. Users seek out old friends, find new contacts and primarily communicate with other users who have the same interests, belong to the same peer group or have other things in common. Social networks function through the self-presentation of their users, but also through networking via lists of friends. You can access a user's page via a comment he leaves on your own page. You can link people to photos and thus create new connections. "Friendships" or network connections are created by sending invitations to other users to become friends. If these are confirmed by the recipient, the invited user is added to your list of friends.

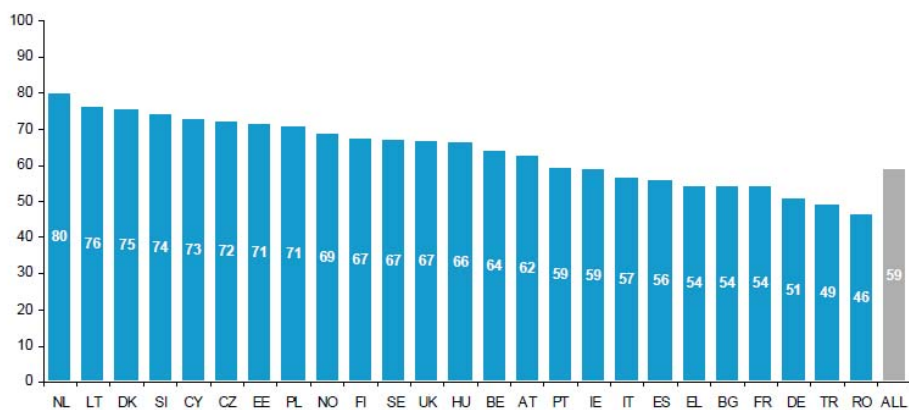


Example of a profile page in a social network

## User statistics

60% of girls and 58% of boys in the EU have a profile on a social networking site although there are differences in prevalence across the member countries. For example, 80% of boys and girls in the Netherlands and 69% of young people in Norway are registered with social networks. In Ireland and Portugal, the figure is 59%, whereas in Germany it is 51% and in Romania 46%<sup>(17)</sup>.

Figure 23: Children who have a profile on a SNS, by country



Source: EU Kids Online, p. 37

There are also considerable differences not just between countries but, even more markedly, between age groups. For instance, one quarter of 9-10 year olds have a profile page on a social network, whereas for 11- 12 year olds this figure rises rapidly to 49%. The percentage continues to rise with age, with 82% of 15- 16 year olds reporting that they are already users of social networks <sup>(18)</sup>.

% who have...	9-12 year old		13-16 year old		All
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
Visited a social networking profile	40	42	80	81	62

Source: EU Kids Online p. 34

When social network users were asked where they met their acquaintances, 78% of all users indicated that they knew their contacts from real life, i.e., they had met them “face-to-face” at least once, and 34% of “virtual friends” are friends of friends/family members. However, 12% of acquaintances are known to the user only through the Internet.



Source: EU Kids Online p. 42

Within just a few years, Facebook has become the world's largest and most popular social network. In April 2011, Facebook recorded 674.1 million users around the world. In Europe, 173.6 million people are members. This compares with 155.2 million members in the USA. The network is aimed at users over the age of 13. However, no checks on age are performed during registration. This means that significantly younger users can and do join the network. The problem is that the security regulations are inadequate for this younger age group. The largest user group is that of 18 – 34 year olds, although Facebook is also used by both very old and very young users. The gender distribution of Facebook is very even. It is used by almost exactly the same number of men as women <sup>(19)</sup>.



## Relevance to development tasks

Social networks are notable in that they appeal to the interests of young people and serve many of the needs relevant during this stage of development especially those of understanding oneself and society, as described above.

Self-presentation is important in this phase: young people are burning for the opportunity to present themselves to the wider world and in turn gain the recognition of others. After all, their interests and social sphere are a reflection of their personalities. Social networks are spaces in which young people can experiment – without, for example, having to fear judgement or sanctioning by their parents. Here it is very easy to meet with and talk to other people with the same interests. Young people are no longer dependent on the local conditions in the places where they live or on their immediate environment.

Profile pages are a reflection of the way young people see themselves, think and feel about themselves and the things that are important to them. Despite their popularity, a counter-trend is also being observed in connection with social networks. The pressure to show your best side at all times and present yourself constantly on *Facebook* & Co. is now also leading to “performance fatigue” among teenagers<sup>(20)</sup>. In 2010, the sociologist Sherry Turkle, interviewed adolescents and adults about their digital user behaviour and was especially interested in finding out if social behaviour changes with social web applications. In her study she found behavioural patterns indicating that internet and technology can become *escape points* to avoid real communication. Some participants of her study reported that they have come to avoiding telephone conversations because they there reveal too much of themselves. Social Communities and SMS offer the possibility of hiding emotions and avoiding conflicts. An apology via digital communication services allows excluding the underlying emotions and thus controlling the communication. But, part of an apology also is bearing the other one’s reaction, being confronted with his or her emotions and taking the consequences.

Communicating and shaping relationships? All social networks now offer a variety of options for communication, e.g., via e-mail, groups, chat rooms or forums. These accommodate the need of young people to communicate with their peer group, which is an area of great importance. By networking on social networks with the help of virtual friendships you can make friendships just as you can in real life. Furthermore you can maintain existing contacts or organise them – especially where these friends are separated by long distances. The number of friends – even if these are just



passing acquaintances – is also important. This shows how popular a user is and may influence his/her position in the peer group. “Knowing a lot of people” has become a new type of value.

Designing your own profile page and joining certain groups is one of the important forms of identity management. In practice, it is difficult to find a clear separation between the management of identity and relationships. Understanding oneself and society are interwoven. This soon becomes apparent when we see that self-presentation in social networks is usually accompanied by making contact and communicating with other users. Relationship management in social networks is evidenced by the fact that social relationships here need a clear structure, i.e., friendship enquiries must be either rejected or confirmed, contacts assigned to categories (such as friends or work colleagues) or a relationship status kept up-to-date.

At first glance it would appear that understanding the objective world takes a back seat to understanding oneself and society in social networks. However, for young people it is immensely important to find information about other users and their interest groups, especially when they want to be able to assess a person, e.g., before confirming him/her as a friend. We have already seen above how important peer groups are for adolescents – knowing what they are thinking, feeling or what they care about. So if we view the need to find group-related information as an information management task, the level of understanding the objective world is also represented here – although the focus here is clearly on the aspect of relationships rather than that of pure information<sup>(21)</sup>.

Social networks offer many tools for young people to use and also present them with new challenges. What aspects of my personality do I want to show to others? How do I present myself? Who should be allowed to see what is on my page? Who's business is it what happened at the last party or who is having stress with their parents at home? How can I get the good-looking boy in the year above me to add me to his Facebook list? Should I confirm the friendship request from my old boy/girlfriend from primary school?

These are all questions facing young people. Here it is important not only to think about what aspects of yourself you want to reveal but also the various people who could visit your profile. As well as your peer group, and even here there are great differences in the closeness of friendships, these could also include future employers.

Self-presentation and management of relationships within social networks are just a few of the challenges that confront young in their media world. So it is impossible to exclude the possibility that young people may also experience unpleasant situations associated with these new areas of

experience. They can encounter harmful content, cyberbullying or experience the dark side of the Internet through fraud and data theft. The following section now looks into the dangers and risks facing young people on the Internet.

### **Further information**

Resource 1.5 - 'Internet jargon – part I' provides an overview of typical ways of using the Internet to retrieve and publish information.

Resource 1.6 - 'Internet jargon – part II' provides an overview of typical ways of using the Internet for communication and interaction.

Resource 1.7 - 'Internet jargon – part III' defines some terms used in relation to Web 2.0.

Resource 1.8 - 'Popular Web 2.0 services' provides a description of a selection of Web 2.0 services.

## Resource 1.5 - 'Internet jargon – part I'

### Internet jargon:

**Hypertext / hyperlinks:** 'An element in an electronic document that links to another place in the same document or to an entirely different document. Typically, you click on the hyperlink to go to the website/page identified in the link. Hyperlinks are the most essential ingredient of all hypertext systems, including the World Wide Web.'

**Website:** 'A place on the World Wide Web. Every website has a homepage, which is the first thing the user sees when he looks at the website. The site usually contains additional documents or files. Every website belongs to an individual, a company or an organisation, which is responsible for its operation and content.'

**Search engine:** 'A program that searches documents for specified keywords and returns a list of the documents where the keywords were found. Although the term "search engine" really refers to a general class of programs, the term is often used to describe systems like *Google*, *Alta Vista* and *Excite* which enable users to search for documents on the World Wide Web and *USENET* newsgroups.'

*(Excerpts from definitions provided by [Webopedia](#), [Wikipedia](#), and [NetLingo](#))*

## Resource 1.6 - 'Internet jargon – part II'

### Internet jargon:

**Email:** 'Short for electronic mail, the transmission of messages over communications networks.'

**Chat:** 'Real-time communication between two users via computer. Once a chat has been initiated, either user can enter text by typing on the keyboard and the entered text will appear on the other user's monitor. Most networks and online services offer a chat feature.'

**Virtual community:** 'A virtual community (or online community) is a social network of individuals who interact through specific media, potentially crossing geographical and political boundaries in order to pursue mutual interests or goals.'

**VoIP:** 'Short for Voice over Internet Protocol, a category of hardware and software that enables people to use the Internet as the transmission medium for telephone calls. One advantage of VoIP is that the telephone calls over the Internet do not incur a surcharge beyond what the user is paying for Internet access, much in the same way that the user doesn't pay for sending individual emails over the Internet.'

*(Excerpts from definitions provided by [Webopedia](#), [Wikipedia](#), and [NetLingo](#))*

### Resource 1.7 - 'Internet jargon – part III'

#### Internet jargon:

**User-generated content:** 'User-generated content (UGC), also known as consumer-generated media (CGM) or user-created content (UCC), refers to various kinds of media content, publicly available, that are produced by end-users. It is used for a wide range of applications including problem processing, news, gossip and research reflecting an expansion in the production of media content through new technologies that are accessible and affordable to the general public. Examples include: question-answer databases, digital video, blogging, podcasting, mobile phone photography and wikis.'

**Tagging / social bookmarking:** 'Commonly used in blogs, site authors attach keyword descriptions or labels (called tags) to identify content or images within their site as a categories or topics. Tags can be created using words, acronyms or numbers. Tags are also called tagging, blog tagging, folksonomies (short for folks and taxonomy), or social bookmarking.'

**Virtual world:** 'A virtual world is a genre of online community that often takes the form of a 3D environment, through which users can interact with one another and use and create objects. Virtual worlds are intended for its users to inhabit and interact. Today, the term has become synonymous with 3D virtual environments, in which users can act and interact with each other in virtual bodies, known as avatars, which are visible to other participants.'

*(Excerpts from definitions provided by Webopedia, Wikipedia, and NetLingo)*



## Resource 1.8 - 'Popular Web 2.services'

### Popular Web 2.services

- **Weblogs** or **blogs** are Internet sites with articles reflecting a personal view, like entries in a diary, and usually written by the same author. Writing a blog is known as "blogging". The entries are sorted chronologically and can be commented on by other users (see *blogger.com*),  
*e.g., I am on a 6-month journey through Africa and keep my family and friends up-to-date with photos and articles, which I post in my blog.*
- **Instant messaging:** A message typed on PC 1 immediately appears on PC 2, free-of-charge form of communication. *icq*, *msn* and *skype* are instant messengers and very popular among young people, e.g., to arrange times/places to meet or discuss school or mutual friends  
*e.g., I would like to meet up with my friend and send him a message, which he receives immediately, on icq.*
- **Social network:** Internet community in which every user creates a personal profile containing photos and personal information. This information allows friends or other users with similar interests to come together. Facebook, xing and myspace are social networks. They offer many individual options for designing your page,  
*e.g., I create a profile on Facebook and can find my friends there and send messages to them.*
- **Video-sharing communities** are virtual communities. Members can upload, rate and exchange videos. *YouTube* is a video-sharing community, in which users can search for and watch all kinds of videos using a key word search – and even upload their own,  
*e.g., I am looking for a specific piece of music and enter the title into YouTube. There I find the uploaded piece of music performed by a number of different artists.*
- **twitter** is also a social network – a usually public diary (micro blog) kept using a website and/or mobile phone; it enables users to enter and send text message of max. 140 characters; entries frequently take the form of the "first person",  
*e.g., "I am totally exhausted, finally moved into my new house!"*

- **Flickr** is a photo-sharing community, which works in a similar way to video communities
- **WIKIPEDIA:** Online encyclopaedia, in which every user can explain terms and post articles, even anonymously,  
*e.g., I would like to know what “blog” means and enter the word in Wikipedia. There I find an explanation.*
- **Podcast:** Download of media files, e.g., radio broadcasts, to a PC or I-Pod; programmes are provided on a website and can therefore be listened to at any time,  
*e.g., I have missed my favourite radio programme and download it from the radio station's website.*
- Educational websites such as netzcheckers help children to navigate the Internet safely, i.e., to become media competent

Sources: [www.zeix.ch](http://www.zeix.ch) (Internet encyclopedia)

## Dangers and risks on the Internet

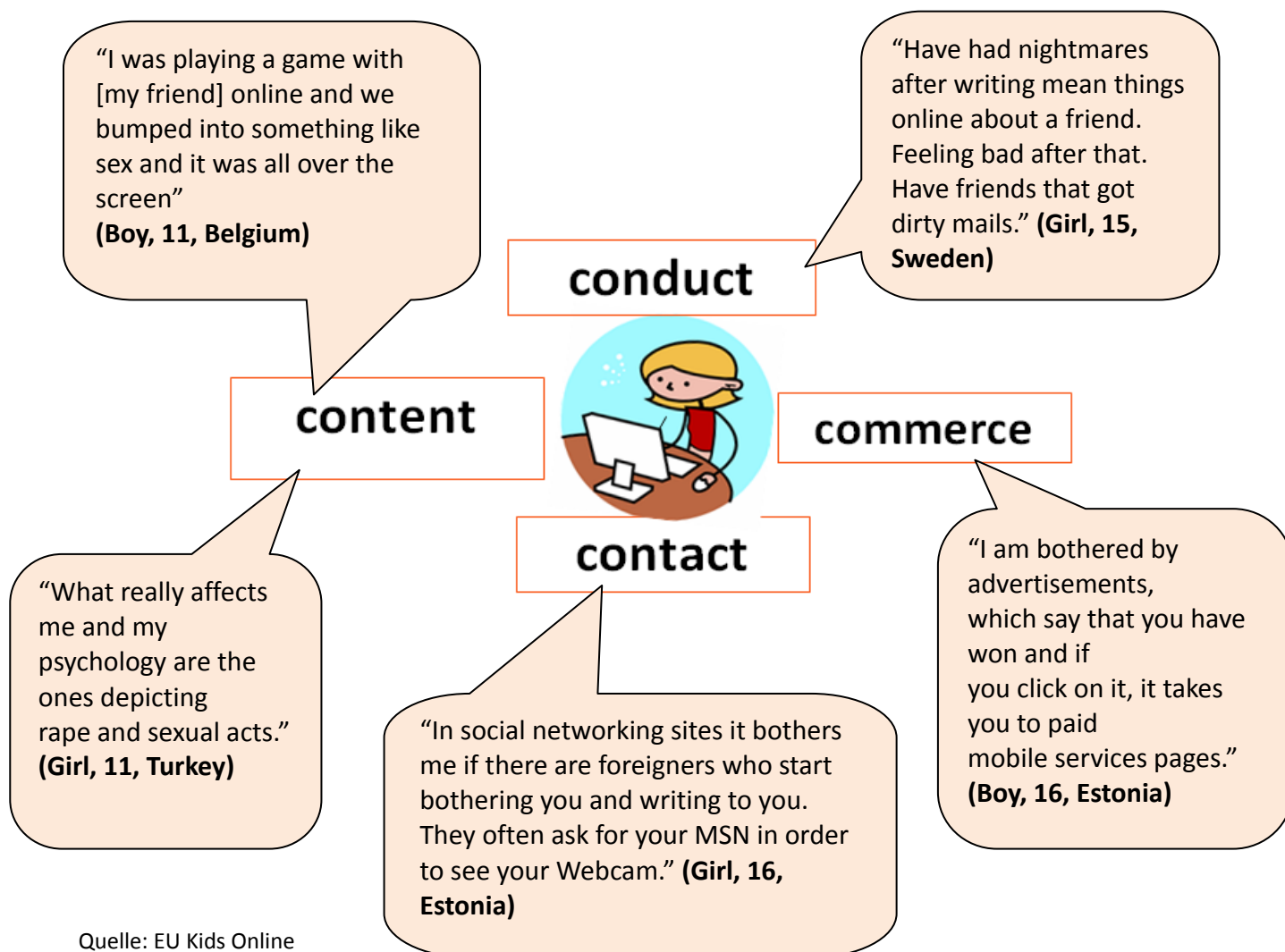
Unlike children, adults have usually gained a certain amount of experience that makes them aware of potential dangers and are more able to assess what will harm them. This ability also guides their behaviour on the Internet. Children and young people surf very differently, in that they do it in a more playful and less focused way than adults. For them, the Internet is one big playground. Children lack the compass of experience, are more easily tempted to click on links and unintentionally stray onto unsuitable websites. They are in greater danger as many websites include content which is harmful to minors without this being highlighted beforehand.

Current studies, such as *EU Kids Online*, show that ever younger children are starting to use the Internet and that, on average, children gain their first experience with the Internet at nine years of age <sup>(22)</sup>. This is why it is also important to create appropriate websites and content for these age groups. In Germany, the development of websites suitable for children is being promoted, e.g., by the initiative “Ein Netz für Kinder” <sup>(23)</sup> (“*A Net for Children*”). On the European level, this need has been recognised by the founding in 2011 of the European Award for Best Children's Online Content <sup>(24)</sup>.

Children are often overwhelmed by the challenge of selecting the “right” links among the many offered because the structure of the Internet is complicated. Even adults fall victim to tricks or attempted frauds <sup>(25)</sup>. The convergence of the Internet and mobile phone is particularly dangerous for children as they can now be exposed to harmful Internet content even away from the home PC.

So far, we have focused on describing the benefits of the Internet. Now we also need to take a look at the possible dangers and risks, which result from using Web 2.0 and the changes it has introduced.

The study “EU Kids Online” specified possible online risks in more detail. A system of classification has been developed that identifies four areas of risk: *content*, *contact*, *conduct* and *commerce* <sup>(26)</sup>. These can be divided into two further sub-categories: in the first of these, the danger stems from the content (content, commerce); and in the second it is through the process of interaction (conduct, contact).



## Content

Problematic content in the media has always existed, even before the advent of the Internet. It includes websites that feature, pornography, violence, the glorification of violence, racism or themes that endanger the health of the user. Children can find their way to these sites either unintentionally or intentionally, although the former is much more frequently the case.

Make a typing error when entering a search term in a standard search engine without security settings or a filter, or enter the web address incorrectly in your browser and you can soon be unintentionally confronted with this type of content. For example, if you are looking for Disney cartoons and enter this search term as an address and you will reach a website with pornographic content. The other route (intentionally seeking out these sites) is often a question of “coolness” among young people in the sense of a dare, to see how much disgusting content or violence you can bear to watch. This problem has been observed more widely since advanced mobile phone technology has become more generally affordable and accessible. Swapping popular videos via Bluetooth in the school playground during breaks has been the subject of recurring concern and discussion in the media in recent years. These videos may feature content, which is not suitable for children or young people, such as pornography or “snuff” videos<sup>(27)</sup>. Another version of video violence is to be found in “happy slapping” films – footage of real or staged scenes of violence. These are then sent from mobile to mobile via Bluetooth or posted to a video sharing website immediately. As well as pornography and the glorification of violence, content created by political extremists is also increasingly “finding its way” into young people’s mobile phones and therefore presents a daily burden and threat.

## Commerce

“Commerce” covers all areas, which serve to enrich others through commercial means, including advertising (e.g., via spam mails), Internet rip-offs (e.g., through agreement of illegal and expensive contracts) and data theft (e.g., through passing on personal data to third parties without the permission of the user).

The second big area of risk is that of content based on the user’s participation in an interactive process. This includes contact with other users and the conduct of the user him/herself.



## Contact

Young people like to communicate, make lots of new friends in chat rooms or social networking sites and make conversation. And it does not take long for personal information to find its way into the dialogue. Young people, in particular, if they unwittingly communicate with people who use false nicknames and lie about their identity, can quickly fall prey to sexual harassment. For example, the nickname of a 13 year old girl could also conceal an adult man. Harassment and invective in chat rooms are not rare.

Social networks also show how people can become victims of unpleasant patterns of abuse by others, including hurtful or degrading messages, salacious photos or shaming comments posted on other people's walls. These behaviours are all aspects of what is known as "*cyberbullying*" which is defined as deliberately insulting or threatening behaviour, humiliation or harassment using modern communication tools – usually over a longer period of time <sup>(28)</sup>. The behaviour of others can therefore also present a source of danger.

## Conduct

Internet users, however, can not only become victims of attacks by other people. They can also become accomplices, perpetrators or offenders. "Conduct" refers to the user's own behaviour on the Internet and can refer to situations in which young people intimidate or abuse other users in chat rooms or social networks. The phenomenon of *cyberbullying*, already mentioned above, is discussed in more detail in Module 2.

Illegal downloading of films and music also fall under the heading of *conduct*. Internet users in general and young people in particular also become perpetrators where they provide content harmful to the health of others. For example, these could be sites supporting a disease, such as "pro Ana" and "pro Mia" websites. On these sites, sufferers of diseases such as anorexia and bulimia give each other tips on how they can maintain their eating disorders. In suicide forums, people at risk of committing suicide principally discuss their psychological states – but it is not uncommon for the conversation to turn to methods and means of committing suicide.

"EU Kids Online" classified the risks systematically. Here is an overview in table format:

**Table 1: Risks relating to children's internet use  
(exemplars only)**

	<b>Content</b> Receiving mass-produced content	<b>Contact</b> Participating in (adult-initiated) online activity	<b>Conduct</b> Perpetrator or victim in peer-to-peer exchange
<b>Aggressive</b>	Violent / gory content	Harassment, stalking	Bullying, hostile peer activity
<b>Sexual</b>	Pornographic content	'Grooming', sexual abuse or exploitation	Sexual harassment, 'sexting'
<b>Values</b>	Racist / hateful content	Ideological persuasion	Potentially harmful user-generated content
<b>Commercial</b>	Embedded marketing	Personal data misuse	Gambling, copyright infringement

Source: EU Kids Online p. 13

According to the study, an average of 12% of 9-16 year old children in Europe have already had unpleasant experiences on the Internet. 14% of young people unintentionally saw pornographic content online. Only 53% of them told others about this experience. Furthermore 6% percent of children said they had received mean or hurtful messages during the past year (cyberbullying), whereas 3% of children had sent messages of this type to others, i.e., they were perpetrators. In addition, 15% of 11- 16 year olds have already received unwanted messages with sexual content (sexting)<sup>(29)</sup>.

Considering the possible dangers and risks that children and young people can encounter on the Internet, it is important to prepare young people and to develop their media competence. In order to achieve comprehensive protection of minors in the media, it is also important to take account of the corresponding age groups and their differing (development) requirements. While avoiding risk should be the main focus for children of primary school age, reducing risk should gain in importance as children grow older. For example, parents should ensure that younger children primarily visit areas where they can surf and communicate safely and that these provide appropriate technological safeguards. At the same time, younger children should also be taught elementary media skills even if

these are limited due to their age. In contrast, the prime focus for older children is on communicating media competence. For instance, adolescents (from approx. 12 years old) should already be able to recognise online risks and avoid them, i.e., operate their own risk management. As they grow older, technological safeguards become less and less important, which also reflects the fact that they can usually be circumvented quite easily by adolescents as their media competence improves. Just as children are expected to learn strategies to cope with risk in the real world, they must learn strategies for the cyber world and must be given an opportunity to develop resilience.

### Further information

Resource 1.9 - “Princess”. This video clip shows how easily children, in particular, can underestimate anonymous communication on the Internet.

Resource 1.10 - “Stop cyberbullying”. The video clip **“Stop cyberbullying”** shows how cyberbullying can affect victims.

### Resource 1.9 - 'Princess'



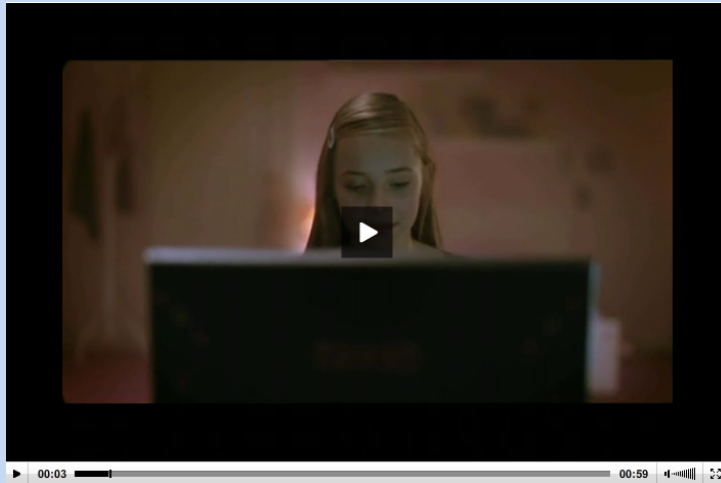
The video clip “Princess” shows how easily children, in particular, can underestimate anonymous communication on the Internet and encourages you to find out more about the risks of communicating online in order to sharpen your own awareness of the problem.

Watch this video on the Internet. If you are in a group of parents, discuss the contents and exchange your thoughts. You can use the “lightning feedback” method. How did you feel? What were your thoughts?

If you are doing the exercise alone, first note down your initial thoughts and keep them for reference. You may find it interesting to reflect on them again later after completing the module.

Source: <https://www.klicksafe.de/ueber-klicksafe/downloads/weitere-spots/rumaenien-prinzessin-deutsch.html>

### Resource 1.10 - 'Stop cyberbullying'



The video clip “Stop Cyber-Mobbing” shows what cyberbullying on the Internet does to victims and can be used as an introduction to the theme of “cyberbullying”, which is considered in the next two modules.

Watch this video on the Internet. If you are in a group of parents, discuss the contents and exchange your thoughts. You can use the “lightning feedback” method. How did you feel? What were your thoughts?

If you are doing the exercise alone, first note down your initial thoughts and keep them for reference. You may find it interesting to reflect on them again later after completing the module.

Source: <https://www.klicksafe.de/ueber-klicksafe/downloads/weitere-spots/eu-spot-cyber-mobbing.html>



## Conclusion

This module has given us an insight into the media world inhabited by young people and has clearly shown the importance of new media for the maturing generation. It has also demonstrated why they hold such allure for young people and the functions they offer them as they develop their sense of identity.

While for previous generations music and film were the major influences during formative years, acting as role models, offering landmarks for orientation and drawing boundaries to separate young people from the adult world, today it is the new media that have above all taken on this function and accompany young people in their everyday lives as they mature into adulthood.

If we as members of the *digital immigrant* generation want to gain access to the world of *digital natives*, it is essential that we take an interest in the (cyber) worlds that young people inhabit. Only then can we hope to understand the special place they hold for the coming generation. This module has provided an overview of this topic and invites you to find out more and talk about it with young people.

The module has also shown that new media not only offer many positive aspects but also present dangers and risks, which must not be neglected. Adolescents must be empowered to develop the skills and competences to deal even with problematic content. The module has also highlighted the central risk areas of content, commerce, contact und conduct.

The phenomenon of *cyberbullying* is problematic, and will be addressed and investigated in detail in the following modules. The focus of these modules will be on definitions, forms and consequences (Module 2), as well as the possibilities available for parents to take action (Module 3).

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- <http://kidsandmedia.co.uk/what-is-social-life/>



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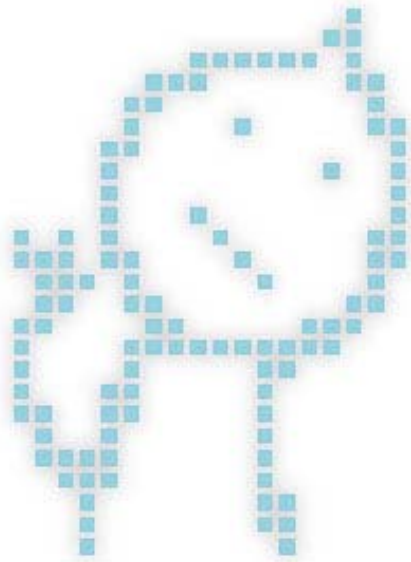


## Module 2

# Introduction to Cyberbullying

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### ***Some Questions to Begin***

- 1. How would you define cyberbullying (Try to capture it in one sentence.)*
- 2. What do you think the main differences are between cyberbullying and more traditional forms of bullying (such as physical or verbal bullying in school)?*
- 3. In what ways do you think cyberbullies can attack their victims?*
- 4. Does cyberbullying ever have serious effects on a victim? If so, how do you think cyberbullying affects children and adolescents?*
- 5. In what ways do children and adolescents try to cope with cyberbullying?*



## Summary

- Since the birth of the Internet a new form of bullying behavior has emerged. Bullying has converged with the cyber world, producing the phenomenon we now call cyberbullying.
- Cyberbullying can be classified in two ways: by the channel through which the abuse occurs and by the nature of the abuse itself.
- Tactics used by cyberbullies to victimize their targets include bashing, harassment, denigration, exclusion, impersonation, flaming, trickery, outing, cyber stalking, and posing.
- It is thought that around 10% of children are involved in cyberbullying. This is based on European studies to date.
- Victims of cyberbullying express negative feelings such as rage and frustration with 10% of victims stating that they felt stressed by their experiences. Cyberbullying has also been linked to low self-esteem, loneliness, depression, self-harming, and difficulties with attending and functioning at an optimal level in school. In some cases cyberbullying has been a contributing factor in incidents of adolescent suicide.

## Introduction

As discussed in Module 1, the last 15 years have seen changes in how we communicate with others which were previously unimaginable. The boom in the use of information and communication technologies (henceforth referred to as ICT's) has created a whole new environment in which we can develop positive personal relationships.

For further information about the use of ICT's by children and young people, please see [Module 1: Introduction to New Media](#).

These changes have drastically altered the way in which adults communicate with each other, but they have had an even greater impact among those young enough to have grown up in an age dominated by ICT's. Social Networks, Chats, Forums and SMS are all habitually used by adolescents to communicate with each other when face-to-face communication is not possible. Indeed, for some, these may be preferable to face-to-face communication.

On the other hand, bullying is evolving towards new forms of aggression. Its path has converged with that of the ICT's, producing the phenomenon we now call cyberbullying. A simple definition of cyberbullying would refer to it as bullying conducted through electronic communication devices, such as computers with Internet access or cell phones. Recent advances include cell phones with 'smart' technology (e.g., the iPhone). Although cyberbullying is a relatively new issue, we have already gained a lot of insight into the problem through increased interest from researchers. Research highlights that cyberbullying has the potential for very serious repercussions among children who are victimized. Research, along with increased media spotlight on a number of public cases of cyberbullying which have lead to adolescent suicide, have made society more aware of this new phenomenon and have raised demands for preventative measures to be taken. This manual is intended as a step in that direction, with this Chapter providing an introduction to the phenomenon, its nature, patterns, potential impact and coping strategies.

For further information about bullying, please look at the webpages of The Anti-Bullying Centre and The Anti-Bullying Alliance<sup>2</sup> which you can find in the section 'Useful Websites' at the end of this chapter.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

## Objectives and learning outcomes

The aim of this Chapter is to give you a good understanding of the nature of cyberbullying. This will be achieved by focusing on two major areas.

- *Defining cyberbullying.* It would be helpful for you to know what cyberbullying is and to be aware of its nature and its peculiarities. Since the phenomenon has evolved recently, society is not yet fully familiar with it. With the continual advances in technology, the nature and definitions of cyberbullying are constantly being revised. This chapter is, therefore, intended to serve as an introduction. By the end of the chapter you should have a clear understanding of cyberbullying and the various methods used to cyberbully.
- *Recognizing the potential effects of cyberbullying.* Cyberbullying is often perceived as a childish prank, or something which cannot cause its victims any real harm. Using examples, this chapter will also address the potential consequences of cyberbullying.

These objectives will be achieved by:

- Introducing you to the cyberbullying phenomenon;
- Addressing how cyberspace differs from the real world;
- Helping you to understand the various methods used to cyberbully;
- Raising awareness of how cyberbullying can affect children and adolescents.

Activity 2.1 **‘What is cyberbullying?’** is planned to help you to become familiar with the term cyberbullying and its meaning, the defining characteristics of it, and the ways in which it occurs.

Resource 2.1 - Video ‘Let’s fight it together’. A film on cyberbullying from Childnet International.

### **Activity 2.1 'What is cyberbullying?'**

Before you begin to read this chapter, watch [Resource 2.1 - Video 'Let's fight it together'](#) and try to answer the following questions:

- What happened in the story?
- What forms of cyberbullying were used?
- What happened to Joe? And what happened to the bullies?
- How did Joe feel?
- How would Joe be affected by this - both in the short-term and in the long-term?
- How would Joe have been affected in the short-term and long-term had the cyberbullying not been reported?
- How do you think the bullies felt when the cyberbullying came to light?
- Would you have done something different if you were Joe's mother or father?

## Resource 2.1 - Video 'Let's fight it together'

Created by Childnet International: <http://www.childnet.com>



Full Film - URL: <http://old.digizen.org/cyberbullying/fullFilm.aspx>

In addition please watch interviews with the various characters of the story:

- Interview with Kim (the bully): URL: <http://old.digizen.org/cyberbullying/kim.aspx?video=1>
- Interview with the teacher: URL: <http://old.digizen.org/cyberbullying/teacher.aspx>
- Interview with Mum: URL: <http://old.digizen.org/cyberbullying/mum.aspx>
- Interview with Rob (the bystander) - URL: <http://old.digizen.org/cyberbullying/rob.aspx>



# Summary of current knowledge and thinking

## Bullying and Cyberbullying

### Traditional Bullying

Over the last 40 years, researchers have been studying the phenomenon described in the 1970's as 'bullying'. Dan Olweus, who was the first researcher to carry out scientific research on bullying defines bullying in the following way <sup>(1)</sup> -

We say a student is being bullied when another student, or a group of students:

- Say mean and unpleasant things or make fun of him or her or call him or her mean and hurtful names;
- Completely ignore or exclude him or her from their group of friends or leave him or her out of things on purpose;
- Hit, kick, push and shove around, or threaten him or her;
- Tell lies or false rumours about him or her or send mean notes and try to make other students dislike him or her;
- And things like that.

Most experts <sup>(1-4)</sup> agree that in order for behaviour to constitute bullying, it must meet at least three conditions: (i) intention to cause harm to the victim, (ii) repetition of the abusive behaviour over a period of time, and (iii) an imbalance of power between the victim and bully/bullies. However, some experts argue that if severe enough, one instance of abuse can be deemed to constitute bullying especially if it serves to intimidate on an ongoing basis<sup>(5)</sup>.

There are five main types of traditional bullying - physical, verbal, gesture, exclusion, and extortion. All forms of bullying are associated with the very real potential for psychological harm and impaired educational and social achievement. Bullying is often shrouded in secrecy which exacerbates the effects of the abuse and this is commonly referred to as the *code of silence* <sup>(6)</sup>. The code of silence prevents the reporting of cases of bullying to adults through fear of how the perpetrators or the peer group may react. This 'code' is also present in an online environment as victims often fail to report abuse to their parents or teachers.

So why are some children singled out by bullies? O'Moore [5] describes how bullies will choose a victim for any number of reasons, such as: speaking with a different accent; wearing different clothes; being a different religion; coming from another country; having a different social or economic background; having a learning difficulty; or being gifted. And if there is no reason, the

bully will often invent one. Furthermore, she describes the characteristics of a child who is more likely to be victimized. These young people tend to display some of the following characteristics: an anxious, sensitive, shy, insecure and cautious temperament; few good friends; low self-esteem; a passive, non-aggressive, or non-assertive manner; an emotionally reactive manner; and clumsy behaviour when attempting to enter or join a peer group. On the other hand, the typical bully is described as having: a need to dominate others; low self-control; an impulsive nature; low anxiety; a tendency to blame the victim for their own bad behaviour; tough poise; a positive perception of aggression; a lack of sensitivity and empathy; a tendency towards other anti-social behaviour; a loud manner; and sometimes they have also been victims themselves. There is much disagreement as to the reasons why some children engage in bullying behaviour. O'Moore [5] believes that bullying is an attempt to manipulate relationships with the aim of meeting one's psychological needs, e.g., desire to control, assertion of dominance, attention seeking, showing off, or improving one's social status.

Salmivalli and colleagues [7] investigated bullying behaviours within a group context. They took the perspective that bullying is a group process which also includes bystanders, and is not merely a relationship involving only the bully/bullies and the victim/victims. They identified six main roles, as follows: bully; victim; reinforcer (of the bully); assistant (of the bully); defender (of the victim); and outsider (who does nothing). This shows how bystanders can react in diverse ways and also highlights their importance in terms of how they can influence bullying. Research [8] carried out in 2004 indicated that children who held anti-bullying attitudes or expressed moral disapproval of bullying, were more likely to defend victims or to stay outside of bullying completely. By contrast children who displayed opposing attitudes were more likely to engage in bullying behaviour or to give support to bullies.

Bullying has been linked to a number of negative effects, both short-term and long-term. Irish-based research [9] found that children in both primary and post-primary education who were involved in bullying behaviour as victims, bullies, or both had lower self-esteem compared with children who were uninvolved in bullying. Children who were both bullies and victims (bully-victims) displayed the lowest self-esteem of all groups. In addition, more frequent bullying or victimization were associated with lower self-esteem. Furthermore, research conducted in Finland indicated a higher prevalence of depression and suicidal ideation among both bullies and victims [10]. Victims of bullying have also been linked with health problems. One study [11] indicated that children who were victimized by bullies at the start of the school year were at greater risk of developing new health related symptoms during the school year, including depression, anxiety, bedwetting, abdominal pain, and feeling tense. These studies highlight the potential repercussions of bullying.

## Cyberbullying

By contrast, cyberbullying is still a relatively new phenomenon and researchers have yet to reach a consensus on many aspects of this issue. Due to its unique nature, it has been necessary to provide a different definition for cyberbullying. The various communication channels, immediacy and the lack of face-to-face contact bring differential characteristics <sup>(12)</sup> to cyberbullying. Peter Smith and colleagues <sup>(13)</sup> define cyberbullying as an aggressive intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him/herself. Nancy Willard <sup>(14-15)</sup>, focussing especially on the social dimension of the problem, considers that cyberbullying is being cruel to others by sending or posting harmful material or engaging in other forms of social cruelty using the Internet or other digital technologies. Bill Belsey <sup>(16)</sup> states that cyberbullying involves the use of ICT's as a platform for intentional, repetitive, hostile conduct by a group or individual aimed at causing harm to others. More recently, cyberbullying has been defined in the following way by Tokunaga [<sup>17</sup>], who attempts to combine the main elements put forward by various definitions:

**Cyberbullying is any behaviour performed through electronic or digital media by individuals or groups that repeatedly communicates hostile or aggressive messages intended to inflict harm or discomfort on others.**

Cyberbullying is structured by a relational dynamic with at least two well defined roles: aggressor and victim. Although witnesses of cyberbullying may take on a type of bystander role, the characteristics of the various types of 'cyber bystander' requires further investigation. Research conducted in Canada <sup>(18)</sup> has indicated that witnesses of cyberbullying often react in diverse ways, with some bystanders joining in, some cheering on the cyberbully, others watching but not participating, some leaving the online environment, some objecting to others but not to the cyberbully, others objecting directly to the cyberbully, some trying to help or befriend the victim and others reporting to someone who might help. This is certainly indicative of the capacity of the bystander to help the target of cyberbullying, to do nothing, or to increase their suffering.

Unlike traditional bullying behaviour, the element of repetition takes a different form in cases of cyberbullying. For example, a cyberbully may post a humiliating video clip only once. However, each time it is viewed or posted elsewhere, it can be perceived as a repetition of the victimization

[<sup>19</sup>]. Cyberbullying differs from traditional forms of bullying in a number of ways. For instance, the power imbalance in cyberbullying, as highlighted by Vandebosch and Van Cleemput [<sup>20</sup>], is not based on physical size and may be based more on superior technological skills or on the ability to conceal one's identity. Technology also affords bullies the opportunity to harass a victim no matter where they are and no matter what time of the day or night it is (<sup>21</sup>). Therefore, cyberbullying transcends the limitations that the physical environment of the school places on traditional bullying. In cases of face-to-face bullying<sup>3</sup>, a bully can often see the victim's reaction to an incident. However, in the cyber world this is rarely the case, and so a cyberbully may be detached from the victim and as a result will be less likely to feel guilt (Batheja, 2004 as cited by Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007 (<sup>23</sup>)). Although there is a need to differentiate between bullying and cyberbullying, the behaviour is essentially the same in both cases, and this should become clear as you learn about the forms and the impact of cyberbullying.

## Overlap between Bullying and Cyberbullying

There is abundant evidence demonstrating a close relationship between involvement, in the same role, in traditional forms of bullying and in cyberbullying (<sup>21, 24-27</sup>). In other words, a child who is victimized in school is more likely to be victimized online. Over two thirds, for example of cyber-victims were found by O'Moore and Minton (<sup>21</sup>) to be traditional victims. Similarly two thirds of cyber-bullies were also traditional bullies.

You can find further information about the characteristics of bullying and cyberbullying in, [Resource 2.2 'Differences and similarities between bullying and cyberbullying'](#).

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<sup>3</sup> Some researchers (<sup>22</sup>) distinguish between 'traditional' bullying and 'f2f' (face-to-face) bullying. As the name suggests, f2f bullying only refers to bullying which is done in a face-to-face manner and could be considered to be a category within traditional bullying.

**Resource 2.2: 'Differences and similarities between traditional bullying and cyberbullying'**

	Bullying	Cyberbullying
Intentionality	The perpetrators must act in a deliberate and wilful manner: spontaneous or casual acts are not considered cases of bullying.	The perpetrator must deliberately intend to harm or annoy the victim if a situation is to be described as a case of cyberbullying.
Repetition	If an individual's behaviour is to be considered bullying it should occur more or less consistently over a period of time. However, if one incident is particularly severe it can be considered bullying. provided that it serves to intimidate on an ongoing basis.	The repetition may be quantified in terms of the number of times a certain incident (e.g., image, video, text, web post, etc.) is sent, posted, or viewed.
Imbalance of power	A power imbalance, either real or imagined, is created between the victim and the perpetrator. This occurs whether the aggression is physical or psychological.	Cyberbullying also involves an imbalance of power. However, the imbalance could be a result of the bully's superior skills with technology, or their ability to hide their true identity with their advanced computer skills or through the use of pseudonyms. The power imbalance can be caused by the fact that the victim does not know his/her bully, and therefore cannot locate the bully or defend him/herself against their attacks.
Number of	In some cases, only the bully/bullies and	



bystanders	victim/victims are aware of an episode of bullying. At other times it is also known by the rest of the class, and on rare occasions, is known throughout the school.	This type of abuse may take two very different forms: actions open to public scrutiny, such as denigrating a victim in a video posted on the Internet, or private situations known only to the bully/bullies and the victim/victims, such as exchanges of emails or communication via instant messaging.
Anonymity	Generally, the victim knows the bully/bullies. Only with specific forms of bullying, such as spreading rumours, or damaging of personal belongings could a bully remain anonymous.	Some bullies are able to remain anonymous due to the ease with which one can conceal their identity in cyberspace. This can increase the bully's sense of impunity and at the same time intensify the victim's sense of vulnerability.
24/7	In more 'traditional' forms of bullying, victims can only be subject to abuse during school hours or on the way to or from their school. This is due to the limited physical access a bully has to the victim.	A victim of cyberbullying can be targeted at any time of day or night and in virtually any location. Timetables and safe physical spaces are eliminated, and aggression can even occur during the school holidays. In other words, cyberbullying does not recognise the normal 'physical' boundaries of traditional forms of bullying.

## Methods of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can be classified in two ways: by the medium/media through which the abuse occurs, such as SMS, MMS, phone calls, email, chat rooms, instant messaging, or websites (including social network sites such as Facebook and Twitter), and by the nature of the abuse itself, such as flaming, harassment, denigration, impersonation, outing, trickery, exclusion, cyber stalking, bashing, or posing. These methods of cyberbullying are presented in greater detail in [Resources 2.4 - 2.11](#). It is important to remember that these classifications are provisional because they could vary in the future due to technological advances. For example, smart phones now allow users to surf the net as they would with a computer.

[Resource 2.1 - Video 'Let's fight it together'](#) provides an example of cyberbullying amongst students.

[Resource 2.3 'Classification of cyberbullying'](#) will help to familiarize you with the various methods used to cyberbully.

Resource 2.4 '[Lucy posts her holiday photos](#)' offers an example of impersonation and bashing.

Resources 2.5 - 2.11 are available at the end of the chapter under [Resources](#).

### Resource 2.3 - 'Classifications of cyberbullying'

**By Media:** (cp. Smith et al, 2008):

**SMS:** Sending or receiving abusive text messages by mobile phone;

**MMS:** Taking, sending or receiving unpleasant photos and/or videos using mobile phones (e.g., happy slapping);

**Phone calls:** Making or receiving upsetting phone calls (e.g., malicious prank calls);

**Email:** Malicious or threatening emails sent directly to a victim, or about a victim to others (See [Resource 2.6 - Narrative 'Email to a girl'](#));

**Chat rooms:** Intimidation or abuse when participating in chat rooms (See [Resource 2.8 - 'Chatroom discussion'](#));

**Instant Message:** Abusive instant messages (MSN, Yahoo, AIM, etc.) (See [Resource 2.7 - Narrative 'Three girls chatting'](#));

**Websites:** Where secret or personal details are revealed in an abusive way or where nasty or unpleasant comments are posted. May also involve uploading humiliating photos or videos on a webpage or posting degrading polls (See [Resource 2.9 Narrative 'Critical comments on Facebook'](#)).

**By Behaviours:** (cp. Willard, 2007):

**Flaming:** An intense, short-lived argument that often includes offensive, rude and vulgar language, insults, and sometimes threats. Flaming can occur via text or instant messaging, in blogs, on social networking sites, in chat rooms, discussion boards, or online gaming sites (See [Resource 2.4 - 'Lucy posts her holiday photos'](#));

**Harassment:** Repeatedly sending nasty, mean, and insulting messages (See [Resource 2.9 Narrative 'Critical comments on Facebook'](#));

**Denigration:** "Dissing" someone online. Sending or posting gossip or rumours about a victim to damage his or her reputation or friendships;

**Impersonation:** Pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material to get that person in trouble or danger or to damage that person's reputation or friendships (See [Resource 2.4: 'Lucy posts her holiday photos'](#));

**Outing:** Disclosing secrets or personal and private information about the person that embarrasses or humiliates him/her. A common way to “out” someone is to forward a message from the target that contains intimate or personal information to others (See [Resource 2.10 - Narrative 'Pictures out of hand, out of reach'](#));

**Trickery:** Talking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing information, then sharing it online (See [Resource 2.5 – Narrative 'Broken promises'](#));

**Exclusion:** Intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group. Being excluded from participating in online activities with their peers, which can bring on feelings of rejection (See [Resource 2.11 – 'Narrative Social exclusion in virtual world'](#));

**Cyber stalking:** Repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear (See [Resource 2.4: 'Lucy posts her holiday photos'](#));

***Bashing and Posing** are also terms which are used to describe forms of cyberbullying.*

**Bashing** – Using the Internet or a mobile phone to commit direct verbal or visual attacks at any time. Cyberbullies may post comments on blogs or send text messages from a phone. They may also take photos of targets or steal a photo from an online source to alter images in demeaning ways or add derogatory comments and post them online for others to see. One particular trend (happy slapping) is the videoing of students being beaten, which are then uploaded online (See [Resource 2.4: 'Lucy posts her holiday photos'](#), [Resources 2.6 Narrative 'Email to a girl'](#), and [2.7 'Three girls chatting'](#), and [2.8 'Chatroom discussion'](#));

**Posing** – A form of indirect attack where a cyberbully creates online content pretending to be the target. Alternatively they might use the target’s user access information to engage in abuse, such as, posting defamatory comments. When the cyberbully pretends to be the target and says mean things about the target’s friends, it can cause those friends to reject them (See [Resource 2.4: Lucy posts her holiday photos](#)).

## **Resource 2.4: Lucy posts her holiday photos**

### **Example of impersonation and bashing**

Lucy is a 16 year old girl who went on a holiday to a marvellous beach resort in Andalusia with her friends. When she got back, she decided to post the photos from her holiday on the web page of her social network so that her other friends could see what a good time they had. She uploaded pictures of her sightseeing, her parties in the evening and her days on the beach. A few weeks later she began to find herself in strange situations. Men she didn't know greeted her in the street and made comments about her. They said she was prettier with fewer clothes and things like that. Some of them even made sexual advances.

A few days later she began to receive similar comments at school. Lucy was very surprised. She didn't understand why all this was happening and she began to get very worried. One of her friends asked her why she had posted her photos on a contacts page on the Internet. Lucy told her she knew nothing about that, and she asked her friend to give her the Internet address where she had seen her pictures. When she went onto the page she discovered the photos of herself in her swimsuit which she had posted on her social network site, but they were alongside comments about what she liked, what she didn't like and how she was looking for relationships with anyone who might be interested. Lucy couldn't believe what she was reading. Someone had posted her photos on that site. It was horrible. Lucy could find no explanation. She had disabled the photo download option on her social network site. Nobody could download her photos. Lucy then logged onto her social network account and started to leave insulting, derogatory messages on all her friends' pages. She was furious about what was happening to her.

After writing the messages she saw that she had received a private message from a stranger called Blue Air, thanking her for the marvellous beach photos. She then realized that it had not been her friends who had posted her photos on the other site, and she regretted the comments she had written. But it was too late. Her messages had been sent and now she couldn't edit them. Lucy's friends turned their backs on her for all the insults she had sent them, and, even though she tried to apologize, her words were still there on the social network pages. Every time her friends saw them they got angry with her again.

And how did Blue Air get the photos? Easy: Lucy had her social network page configured to allow anyone to see its content. Blue Air saw her profile and decided to download her photos. Although Lucy had the download option in her account disabled so that nobody could download her photos, there are still many easy ways to access and save images accessible to anyone with a good knowledge of computers.



## Some data about cyberbullying

### How many children are involved in cyberbullying?

Several studies have investigated the number of children and adolescents who are involved in cyberbullying, as bully or victim. However, findings differ from one piece of research to the next due to variations, such as, the changing nature of the cyberbullying phenomenon (media used etc.), and how the research was conducted (different definitions used, different sample sizes, age groups studied, instruments used to measure bullying behaviour, cultural differences, etc.). Despite such differences, researchers are working hard to reach a consensus on these issues (e.g., the work being done in COST IS0801 Cyberbullying: coping with negative and enhancing positive uses of new technologies, in relationships in educational settings). The prevalence of victimization through cyberbullying has been very wide ranging in Europe, with percentages fluctuating between 1% and 50%. In most studies, however, and with a small number of exceptions, prevalence found has been around 10% <sup>(19-21, 24, 26, 28-</sup>

<sup>41)</sup>**Fehler! Textmarke nicht definiert..** However, there is some evidence that this trend is on the increase.

A recent study conducted across 25 countries in Europe - 'EU Kids Online' <sup>(42)</sup> investigated children's experiences of bully-victim problems in the previous year. A total of 25,142 children between the ages of 9 and 16 who use the Internet along with one of their parents were interviewed. The research indicated that **13% of 9 to 16 year olds had suffered bullying in a face-to-face (f2f) environment, whereas 6% were bullied on the Internet and 3% were bullied using mobile phones.** Further findings indicate that:

- A total of **10% of children surveyed admitted that they had engaged in bullying others in an f2f environment, whereas 3% had abused someone online and 2% had done so via mobile phones.**
- When focusing on those children who reported receiving nasty or hurtful messages on the Internet, 29% of their parents reported that the child had been cyberbullied. However, the majority of these parents reported that the child had not been bullied online and 15% said they did not know whether their child had been cyberbullied.
- The parents with the greatest awareness of their child's victimization were those who were either parents of a girl, or a child aged between 11 and 14 years.
- Of those children who had been bullied online, the majority (77%) talked to somebody about the experience, with 52% reporting that they talked to a friend about it, and 42% reporting that they told a parent what had happened.

- Children who had suffered online bullying reported various feelings regarding the incident. However, 85% of victims were upset by the episode.

### Further information

The percentages victimized by bullying both online and offline across European countries as reported by the EU Kids Online report are displayed in [Resource 2.12 'Prevalence of online and offline bullying in Europe'](#).

#### **Additional resources:**

[Resource 2.13 - 'Cyberbullying in Europe: Research'](#) provides an overview of the situation in the partner countries of the [CyberTraining project](#)<sup>4</sup> - Germany, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, and the UK. (These resources are only available in English).

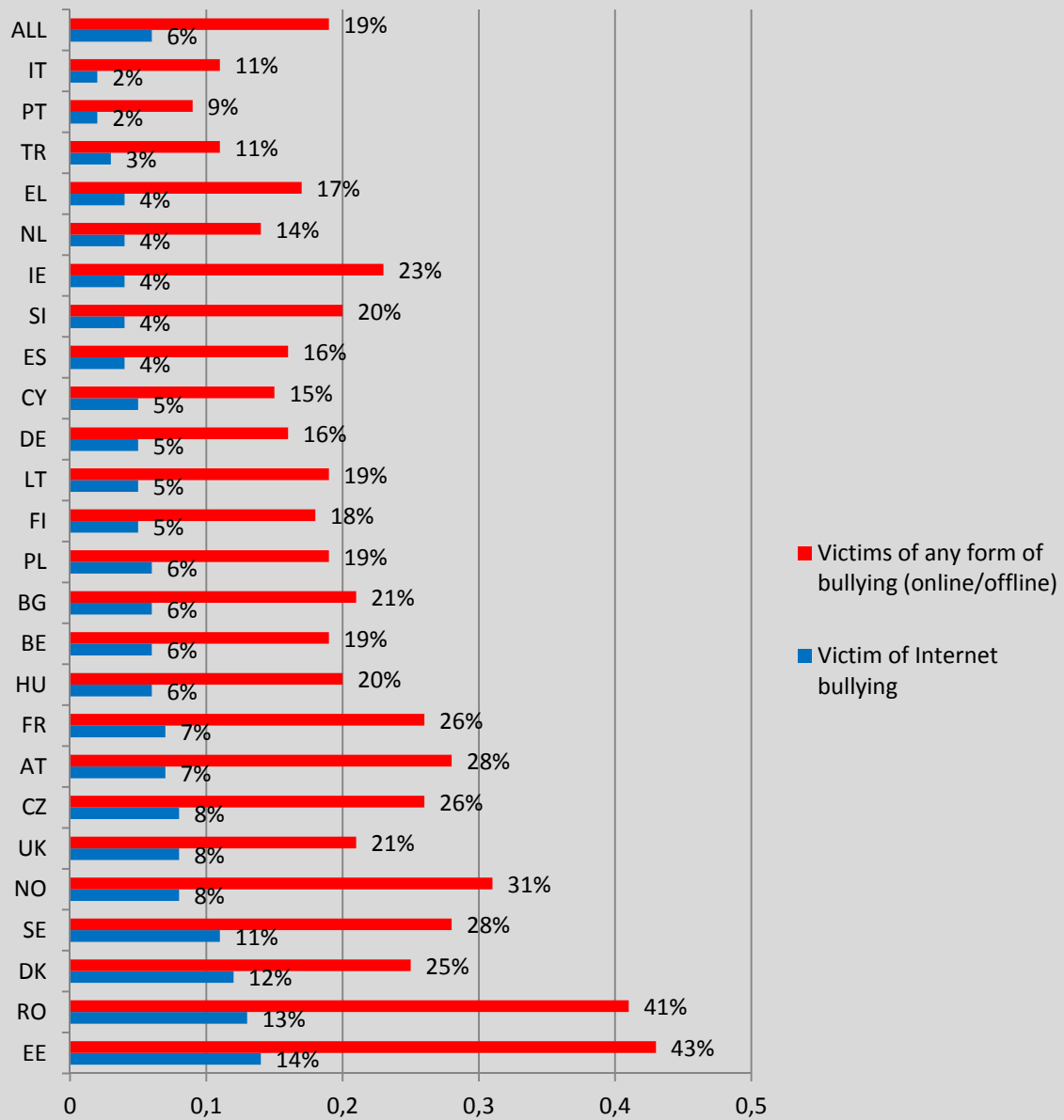
[Resource 2.14 - 'Transnational comparative analysis: The situation in Europe \(English\)'](#) will also provide some insight into the bullying problem in Europe.

[Resource 2.15 - 'Cyberbullying: A cross-national comparison'](#) can also be availed of to provide an overview of cyberbullying research in 16 countries.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.cybertraining-project.org/>

**Resource 2.12 - 'Prevalence of online and offline bullying in Europe' (EU Kids Online report)**



## Factors which may contribute to cyberbullying experiences

Some research has investigated the impact of parental mediation on experiences of cyber victimization. One study <sup>(43)</sup> indicated that parental monitoring, with an emphasis on which websites a child is allowed to access was an effective protection strategy against cyberbullying. It was also suggested that cyber victimization was associated with having an active profile on a social network site, participation in public chat rooms, and participation on YouTube and yet victimization was not associated with playing games online. Cyber victims were also linked to greater use of the Internet and mobile phones and were also more likely to disclose personal information in cyberspace. Other research <sup>(44)</sup> indicated that children who had poor parental relationships, involving a lot of conflict (in the case of girls) and poor communication (in the case of boys), were more commonly engaging in intimate online friendships. These intimate relationships could leave adolescents open to exploitation.

Whilst a number of studies suggest that girls tend to be cyber victims more often than boys <sup>(21, 24, 29, 33, 45)</sup>, some have found either no difference between sexes <sup>(46-47)</sup> or that, on the contrary, boys are more involved than girls <sup>(26)</sup>. Therefore, there is little clarity so far in relation to gender differences.

With regard to the age of victims, the importance of this factor is not clear at present. Prevalence levels seem to remain stable during adolescence before declining from the age of 16 onwards <sup>(19, 37)</sup>. However, the EU Kids Online research <sup>(42)</sup> which is the most comprehensive overview of cyberbullying in Europe to date, indicates that being bullied online is more common among older children. One researcher <sup>(17)</sup> claims that cyberbullying can occur at any age but that those aged 12 -14 may be at greater risk. There is a real concern that cyberbullying will begin to emerge even earlier due to the fact that children are now using mobile phones and the Internet at such a young age (as highlighted in Chapter 1).

## Impact of Cyberbullying

Opinions are mixed as to whether cyberbullying is as harmful as, or indeed more harmful than, traditional forms of bullying. Research carried out in the UK <sup>(13)</sup> indicated that young people feel that the impact of cyberbullying depends on the method used to cyberbully. For instance, children reported that humiliating photos, videos, and nasty phone calls were more damaging than traditional forms of bullying. They considered abuse on a web page or a nasty text message to be equally as harmful as traditional forms of bullying. However, cyberbullying via chat rooms, emails and instant messaging were deemed to be less harmful than traditional bullying. Regardless of which type of bullying is 'worse,' experts agree that cyberbullying can have tremendously damaging effects on children regardless of whether they are a bully or a victim.

Research has linked victims of cyberbullying with **poor self-esteem, feelings of frustration, anger, sadness, hopelessness, loneliness and depression, with some victims expressing an inability to concentrate at school, and others feeling that they are forced to stay offline** <sup>(36, 47-49)</sup>. Victims also often feel **suspicious of others**, as they are unaware of the identity of the bully <sup>(23)</sup>. Other studies indicate a link between suicidal thoughts and behaviours and cyber victimization. Recent research <sup>(50)</sup> found that involvement in cyberbullying, either as a bully or a victim was linked to increased likelihood of suicidal ideation. However, victimization was more likely to predict suicidal thoughts and behaviours than perpetration. Cyber victimization has also been linked to increased likelihood of self-harm <sup>(51)</sup>.

In the short time since the emergence of cyberbullying, there have already been a number of **suicides** linked to cyber victimization. These cases of "cybercide" are explored in resources 2.18 - 2.19. However, it should be remembered that these are extreme and rare occurrences. Ongoing cyber victimization has more potential for long-term problems and more severe cases of cyberbullying are more strongly associated with poor mental health and social difficulties <sup>(17)</sup>.

**Activity 2.2 'Cyberbullying isn't a game'** aims to generate some reflection on the potential impact of cyberbullying, highlighting the fact that cyberbullying is "not merely a childish prank."



## **Activity 2.2 - 'Cyberbullying isn't a game'**

### **Purpose**

Many people underestimate the potential for harm in relation to cyberbullying. However, cyberbullying can have far-reaching effects. In this activity we would like you to think about the consequences of cyberbullying.

### **Resources**

Resource 2.16 - Video 'Polish Spot: Cyberbullying'

Resource 2.17 - 'Guide for discussing the story'

### ***Additional resources:***

In addition to these resources you can also use Resource 2.18 – 'A Cyberbullying Suicide Story - Ryan Halligan age 13' or Resource 2.19 – 'Israeli teen kills himself following Facebook chat' that you can find in the resource section at the end.

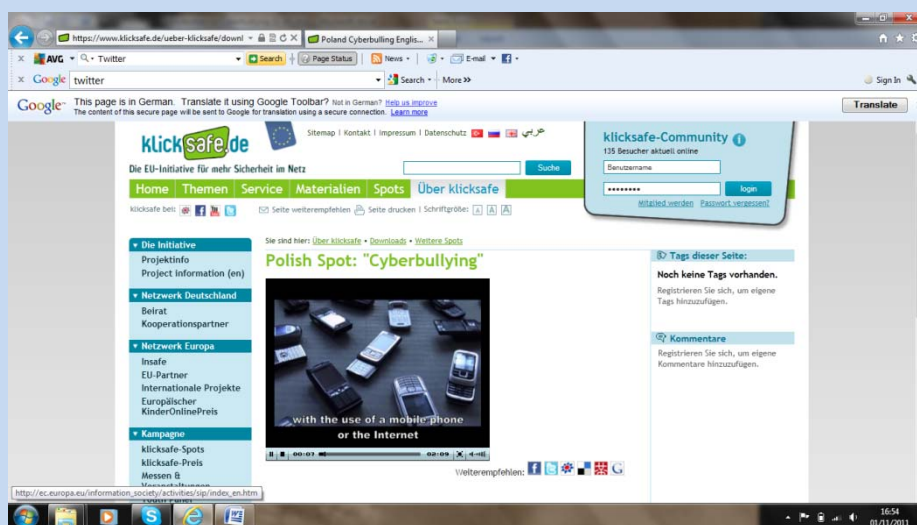
### **Procedure**

Watch the video 'Polish Spot: Cyberbullying' and discuss it in terms of the impact it has on the victim. Now reflect in your team about the effects of cyberbullying on Dominika and other children like her who suffer cyberbullying (for this you could use the guide that we propose: Resource 2.17).

**Note:** Cases of suicide following cyberbullying are extremely rare.

## Resource 2.16 - Video 'Polish Spot: Cyberbullying'

Provided by: Klicksafe



URL: [www.klicksafe.de/ueber-klicksafe/downloads/weitere-spots/poland-cyberbullying-englisch.html](https://www.klicksafe.de/ueber-klicksafe/downloads/weitere-spots/poland-cyberbullying-englisch.html)

## Resource 2.17 - 'Guide for discussing the story'

The session organizer should facilitate the discussion by posing the following questions:

- Has this video affected your perception of cyberbullying?
- Did you think cyberbullying could have serious consequences?
- How would you have reacted as Dominika's parent?
- Do you think there was something Dominika could have done to counteract the abuse?
- Did anything else strike you while watching this video?

## Coping with Cyberbullying

A number of studies have investigated how young people attempt to cope with cyber victimization. One researcher [17] has highlighted that victims often use technological coping strategies to prevent further bullying, such as strict privacy settings, changing usernames or email addresses. However, little is known about the effectiveness of these strategies. Passive reactions are also sometimes employed, such as ignoring the cyberbully. It has also been suggested that approximately 15-35% of victims confront cyberbullies and request that they stop their behaviour, and this is sometimes combined with the threat of telling an adult. However, it is rare that victims do inform an adult as some youths consider seeking help from a parent as a reaction used by 'kids'. It has also been suggested that adolescents do not tell an adult about their victimization because they feel that they "need to learn to deal with it themselves" or that they are worried that parents might restrict their Internet access <sup>(27)</sup>.

Researchers in Germany <sup>(52)</sup> have identified four coping strategies employed by cybervictims:

1. Aggressive coping: e.g., "I threaten to beat him/her up";
2. Helpless coping: e.g., "I don't know what to do";
3. Cognitive coping: Victims do not seek help from stronger individuals and do not resort to aggression, but try to address the problem themselves, using a diplomatic approach. They attempt to reason with the bully or to understand the bully's motive;
4. Technical coping: e.g., "I switch off my computer," "I change my email address or nickname and only give them to people I can trust," and "I show the messages to a grown-up."

In the USA researchers [53] also identified different coping strategies that could be used in response to cyber victimization. High school students were interviewed about the different ways that a cybervictim could cope with the bullying. Three types of response emerged from the interview: Reactive coping; Preventive coping; and No way to prevent cyberbullying. Reactive coping was broken down into four sub-categories: Avoidance; Acceptance; Justification; Seeking social support. Preventive coping also included two sub-types: Talk in person; and Increased security and awareness.

Avoidance referred to avoiding the cyberbully or the cyberbullying situation, with the aim of protecting oneself from the negative effects. Examples of avoidance coping include deleting messages, blocking contact, or ignoring the problem completely. Acceptance involves accepting cyberbullying as part of life and concentrating on the positive. Justification refers to coping methods where the victim focuses on reasons why the cyberbullying should not upset them. These students often felt that cyberbullying (as opposed to face-to-face bullying) should not be taken seriously, e.g., because it showed a lack of courage. Seeking social support refers to looking to others for help and includes getting advice from

others, and asking someone with authority to put a stop to the bullying. Students could seek social support from a variety of people, including other students, parents, or police.

In terms of preventive coping strategies, students were discussing ways of reducing the chance of being victimized. Talk in person was a coping strategy which required students to talk to someone in person, as opposed to talking in cyberspace. This would help them to avoid misperceptions due to lack of intonation, something which can often occur in cyberspace. For example, sarcastic comments are sometimes misinterpreted due to the lack of intonation, which can then trigger an aggressive response. Students can also prevent an argument from descending into cyberbullying by discussing the issue in person. Increased security and awareness is a coping strategy whereby cyberbullying can be prevented if students take safety precautions (e.g., protect their password, limit how much personal identifying information they share) and have general awareness about security (e.g., knowing which websites might be unsafe).

Finally, some students felt that there was no way to prevent cyberbullying. These students believed that it was too easy for cyberbullies to continue the bullying. Further research is required to reach a consensus on the most effective coping methods.

## Cyberbullying and the law

In some instances, very severe cases of cyberbullying have led to perpetrators facing prosecution (e.g., the trials of Phoebe Prince's bullies - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suicide\\_of\\_Phoebe\\_Prince](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suicide_of_Phoebe_Prince)). Indeed, there have also been efforts to create legislation which directly addresses cyberbullying (e.g., see [http://www.ibls.com/internet\\_law\\_news\\_portal\\_view.aspx?id=2095&s=latestnews](http://www.ibls.com/internet_law_news_portal_view.aspx?id=2095&s=latestnews)). Although there is currently no such legislation in Ireland, there is existing legislation which indirectly addresses specific cyberbullying behaviours. An overview of the relevant Irish laws is provided in resource 2.21.

An overview of the relevant Irish laws is provided in [Resource 2.20](#).

### **Resource 2.20 - 'Cyberbullying and the Law in Ireland.'**

#### **a. Criminal Damage Act, 1991:**

Section 5(1) deals with the unauthorized accessing of data:

A person who without lawful excuse operates a computer

(a) within the State with intent to access any data kept either within or outside the State, or

(b) outside the State with intent to access any data kept within the State,

shall, whether or not he accesses any data, be guilty of an offence. On summary conviction, that person can be imprisoned, fined or both.

#### **b. Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act, 1997:**

Section 10(1) says that:

Any person who, without lawful authority or reasonable excuse, by any means including by use of the telephone, harasses another by persistently following, watching, pestering, besetting or communicating with him or her, shall be guilty of an offence.

Section 10(2) says that a person harasses another when:

(a) he or she, by his or her acts intentionally or recklessly, seriously interferes with the other's peace and privacy or causes alarm, distress or harm to the other, and

(b) his or her acts are such that a reasonable person would realize that the acts would seriously interfere with the other's peace and privacy or cause alarm, distress or harm to the other.

As well as imprisonment, a fine or both, whether on summary conviction or conviction on indictment, a court may also, or as an alternative, order under section 10(3):

that the person shall not, for such period as the court may, specify, communicate by any means with the other person or that the person shall not approach within such distance as the court shall specify of the place of residence or employment of the other person.

#### **c. Post Office Amendment Act, 1951:**

Section 13 (1) of this Act, has been amended a number of times, including by the Communications



Regulation (Amendment) Act 2007, Part 2. It now says that:

Any person who

(a) sends by telephone any message that is grossly offensive, or is indecent, obscene or menacing or

(b) for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience, or needless anxiety to another person

(i) sends by telephone any message that the sender knows to be false, or

(ii) persistently makes telephone calls to another person without reasonable cause, commits an offence.

On summary conviction or conviction on indictment, that person can be imprisoned, fined or both.

## Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted five main types of traditional bullying, including physical, verbal, gesture, exclusion, and extortion. Cyberbullying is any behaviour performed through electronic or digital media by individuals or groups that repeatedly communicates hostile or aggressive messages intended to inflict harm or discomfort on others. Cyberbullying can be classified in two ways: by the medium/media through which the abuse occurs, such as SMS, MMS, phone calls, email, chat rooms, instant messaging, or websites, and by the nature of the abuse itself, such as flaming, harassment, denigration, impersonation, outing, trickery, exclusion, cyber stalking, bashing, or posing. The prevalence of cyber victimization in Europe is estimated to be around 10%. Cyber victimization has been linked to negative outcomes such as: low self-esteem; loneliness and depression; and decreased ability to concentrate at school. Research has indicated that children and adolescents use a variety of coping strategies following a cyberbullying incident. However, it is vital that parents play an active role in guiding their children's online behaviour and help them to prevent and counter risk. The next chapter will give advice on how parents can address cyberbullying with a number of strategies.

**Go back to the questions at the very start of this chapter. How would you answer these questions now?**

## Resources

The following resources provide all additional resources not included in the 'Summary of current knowledge and thinking' section above. In the additional resources you can find further information and examples regarding the topics within the module. Use these to research the relevant themes found in this module interactively, independently and in more detail.

### Overview

[Resource 2.5 - Narrative 'Broken promises'](#)

[Resource 2.6 – Narrative 'Email to a girl'](#)

[Resource 2.7 - Narrative 'Three girls chatting'](#)

[Resource 2.8 - Narrative 'Broken discussion'](#)

[Resource 2.9 - Narrative 'Critical comments on Facebook'](#)

[Resource 2.10 - Narrative 'Pictures out of hand, out of reach'](#)

[Resource 2.11 - Narrative 'Social exclusion in virtual world'](#)

[Resource 2.13 - 'Cyberbullying in Europe: Research'](#)

[Resource 2.14 - 'Transnational comparative analysis: The situation in Europe \(English\)'](#)

[Resource 2.15 - 'Cyberbullying: A cross-national comparison'](#)

[Resource 2.18 - 'A Cyberbullying Suicide Story -- Ryan Halligan age 13'](#)

[Resource 2.19 - 'Israeli teen kills himself following Facebook chat'](#)

## **Resource 2.5 – Narrative ‘Broken promises’**

### **Example of trickery**

15 year old ‘Sarah’ was sitting in front of her computer at home, chatting with her boyfriend ‘Tom’. He asked her to undress in front of the web camera; he would like to watch her. Tom promised her he was alone, and that he would not record it. She went along with it.

It turned out that Tom was not alone though; he was sitting by his computer together with his friend ‘Byron’. Tom and Byron watched Sarah’s webcam session, and Tom also broke his other promise to his girlfriend, as he recorded Sarah’s act.

Tom then published the video on the Internet.

The video clip of Sarah undressing in front of her webcam spread like wild-fire among the youngsters in their hometown. Sarah was considered ‘loose’ and called a bitch. Many of the teens argued that she was the one to blame because she should have known better.

Sarah needed professional help from psychiatrists to handle this. She changed her name, and the family decided to move to another part of the country in order to enable her to start over again. Her boyfriend’s request, broken promises and fatal publishing, in addition to her peers’ judgment, left her with emotional scars for life.

## **Resource 2.6 - Narrative ‘Email to a girl’**

### **Example of a negative use of emails**

‘Hi Rita!

Enclosed a few photos I took of you and Nathan at the party. U seem pretty keen on him, uh?! Bet his girlfriend would be interested looking at this stuff ... I’m considering uploading them on Facebook, any comments or suggestions? I’m ready for anything U know.

Cheers,

Timmythecool’

### **Resource 2.7 – Narrative ‘Three girls chatting’**

#### **Example of a negative use of instant messages**

Narrative log from MSN, three girls (14 years) chatting. Nicknames: Sugarlizz14, Ritababe and AlwaysonAmy

Sugarlizz14: Hi Ritababe, considering changing your nickname from Ritababe to Ritabitch? ☺

Ritababe: What u mean?

AlwaysonAmy: Hi Rita! Hear u tryin hook up with Mary’s boy, Nathan? ;-P

Ritababe: I’m not! Don’t know what u talkabout!!!!

Sugarlizz14: Heard somebody took pictures at the party.....??

AlwaysonAmy: Heard u were quite tight, Rita oh yeah!!!!!!

Ritababe: Where did u get this crap from?

Sugarlizz14: Bet everybody but Mary knows by now, .....

### **Resource 2.8 - Narrative ‘Chatroom discussion’**

#### **Example for a negative use of chatrooms**

Nightrider15: Hi Timmythecool! Ure cool, I’ve seen ur sexy pics from the party hahaha! :-D

BlondwithIQ15: U r an idiot Nightrider, only idiots upload such stuff and only brainless applaud it!!!!

Timmythecool: Who r u f\*\*\* b\*\*\*\*?? Doesn’t like the truth? Whats ur problem?!!

BlondwithIQ15: All Im tryin to say is that it aint cool to publish private pics and they do not tell the truth, bet u manipulated them too before posting them.

Timmythecool: F\*\*\*\* brainless Blondie, send me your picture and I’ll manipulate U too!

Nightrider15: Haha, Blondie, not so smart anymore? Hi Timmy, I know who she is, Amy in B-class. I’ll email u her picture, hahaha.

BlondwithIQ15: You don’t, you f\*\*\*\*!

Timmythecool: Great Nightrider thanXX!!!!!! I’ll \*\*\*in turn u into a b\*\*\* Amy, I know who u r now!!!!!!!

### **Resource 2.9 - Narrative 'Critical comments on Facebook'**

#### **Example of a negative use of social networking sites**

'Mary', a thirteen year old girl took some pictures of herself at the beach during her summer holiday, wearing a bikini. She liked the pictures and posted them on her Facebook profile.

Comments from her Facebook friends started to pop in, and some of them were clearly impolite. The numbers of comments grew, and with them an increasing number of negative responses on her body and looks.

The comments on her pictures became very troublesome for Mary, to the degree that she did not show up at school when the holiday was over. After a few days, the school started to search for her, and it became clear that the reason she did not go to school was that she couldn't stand to see the people who had written comments to her on Facebook.

### **Resource 2.10 - Narrative 'Pictures out of hand, out of reach'**

#### **Example of a negative use of a digital camera and an image sharing site**

Two girls, 'Lisa' (14) and 'Tracey' (16) were friends. Suddenly, something happened between them which broke up their relationship. Because of this, Tracey decided to seek revenge on her friend Lisa. A while ago, pornographic pictures of Lisa were taken at a party. Tracey decided to publish these pictures and created a website where she posted the photos, including photos of Lisa's face. Posting the website was a quick and easy thing to do, but the consequences became severe – for Lisa, and herself. The police came to know of a private website where someone had posted pictures of a nude minor girl - images of sexual abuse of children - which is a very serious matter. They tracked the computer that had created the website and published the pictures.

The website had been up and running for 24 hours, and had almost 700 hits until it was closed down. When the police arrived at Tracey's home, they found all the evidence they needed in order to charge her with publishing child pornography. The case ended in court. 14-year old Lisa came to know about the pictures through rumors among local youngsters. The exposure has been a great burden for her and her parents. According to newspapers, Tracey severely regrets her acts. Creating the website was an easy thing to do, removing the pictures and the damage they caused afterwards is impossible. The moment the pictures of Lisa hit the World Wide Web, the damage was done. Irreversible.

## Resource 2.11 – Narrative 'Social exclusion in virtual world'

### Example for a negative use of a virtual world

A female participant is being socially excluded by other avatars online. Posting in a forum:

'Hi everybody! Important message: Keep RitAvatar out of everything, she is a bitch and deserves no better. It's Rita's avatar u know. Don't chat with her, don't interact with her and dump her from all your friend lists! Spread this all over!'

## Resource 2.14 - 'Cyberbullying in Europe: Research'



The screenshot shows the 'Research' page of the CyberTraining project website. The page has a header with navigation links: 'En Es Pt De Bg', 'About CyberTraining', 'Partners', 'Contacts', and 'Intranet'. The main title 'Research' is displayed in a large font. Below the title, there is a sidebar with links: '> Cyberbullying in Europe', '> Needs Analysis', '> Training Manual', 'News Blog', 'Experts' Forum', 'Trainers' Forum', 'Cyberbullying-Wiki', and 'Facebook group'. The main content area is titled 'Cyberbullying in Europe Research:' and contains a paragraph about the project's first year output, followed by a list of links to country-specific reports: 'The Situation in Germany (English)', 'The Situation in Spain (English)', 'The Situation in Ireland (English)', 'The Situation in Portugal (English)', 'The Situation in the UK (English)', and 'Transnational comparative analysis: The situation in Europe (English)'. A disclaimer at the bottom states that all country reports outline the situation in each partner country and cover the following issues.

Created by: The CyberTraining project <http://www.cybertraining-project.org/>

URL: <http://www.cybertraining-project.org/page.php?lang=En&page=8>



### **Resource 2.14 - 'Transnational comparative analysis: The situation in Europe (English)'**

'Transnational comparative analysis: The situation in Europe (English)' will also provide some insight into the bullying problem in Europe .

Created by: The CyberTraining project <http://www.cybertraining-project.org/>



URL: <http://cybertraining-project.org/reports/Transnational%20comparative%20analysis%20The%20situation%20in%20Europe.doc>

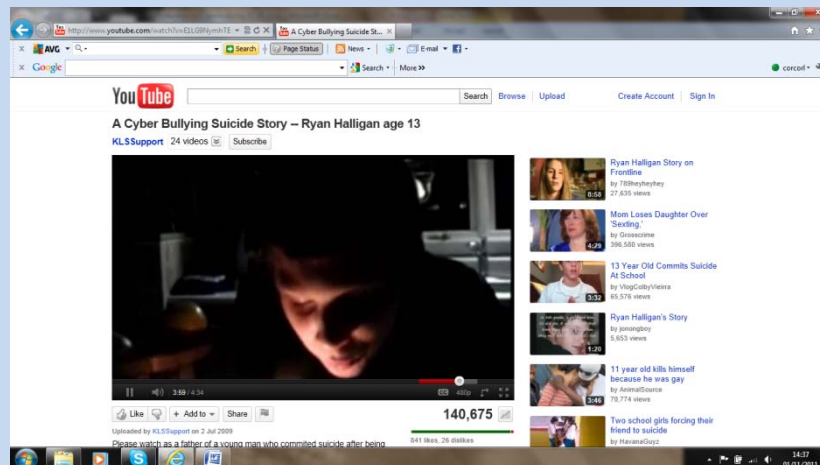
### **Resource 2.15 - 'Cyberbullying: A cross-national Comparison'**

'Cyberbullying: A cross-national comparison'

(<http://www.alphagalileo.org/ViewItem.aspx?ItemId=98996&CultureCode=en>) can be availed of to provide an overview of cyberbullying research in 16 countries.

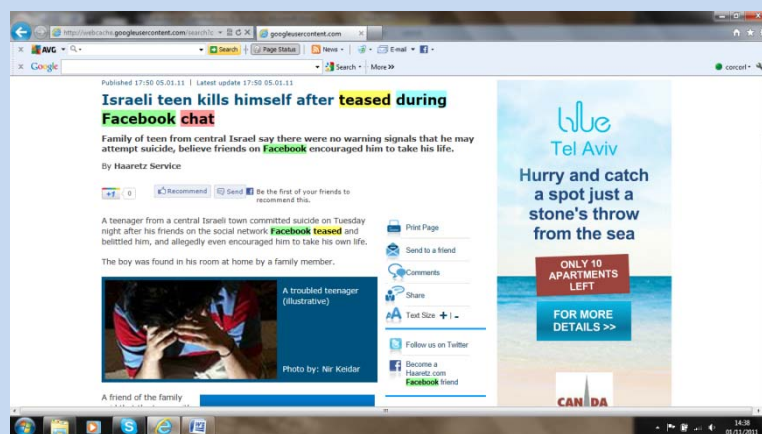
URL: <http://www.alphagalileo.org/ViewItem.aspx?ItemId=98996&CultureCode=en>

## Resource 2.18 - 'A Cyberbullying Suicide Story -- Ryan Halligan age 13'



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1LG9NymhTE>

## Resource 2.19 - 'Israeli teen kills himself following Facebook chat'



[http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?client=gmail&rls=gm&hl=iw&q=cache:f37d9v\\_WqB0J...](http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?client=gmail&rls=gm&hl=iw&q=cache:f37d9v_WqB0J...)  
<http://www.haaretz.com/news/national/israeli-teen-kills-himself-after-teased-during-facebook-chat-1.335400+teased+during+Facebook+chat&ct=clnk>

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## Useful Websites

- Anti-Bullying Centre. <http://www.abc.tcd.ie>
- LAECovi: Laboratorio de estudios sobre convivencia y prevención de la violencia (Laboratory of studies on convivencia and violence prevention), <http://www.laecovi.es>
- Anti-Bullying Alliance. <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>
- In Brief (Free legal information about cyberbullying), <http://www.inbrief.co.uk/cyberbullying.htm>
- WiredKids, <http://www.stopcyberbullying.org>
- Webpage of Bill Belsey, "www.cyberbullying.ca - Always On, Always Aware!", <http://www.cyberbullying.ca/>
- Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use, <http://csriu.org/cyberbully>
- Bullying UK, <http://www.bullying.co.uk/index.php/make-a-poster.html>
- CyberSmart, <http://cybersmart.org/>
- <http://www.internetsafety.ie/website/ois/oisweb.nsf/page/DPCY-7K2LKD1649222-en>
- EU Kids  
Online: [www2.lse.ac.uk/.../EUKidsOnline/EUKidsII%20\(2009.../EUKidsOnlineIIReports/D4FullFindings.pdf](http://www2.lse.ac.uk/.../EUKidsOnline/EUKidsII%20(2009.../EUKidsOnlineIIReports/D4FullFindings.pdf)  
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- Get With IT!: [http://www.internetsafety.ie/website/ois/oisweb.nsf/page/DPCY-7LYJ4V1343473-en/\\$File/Final%20-%20Low%20Res.pdf](http://www.internetsafety.ie/website/ois/oisweb.nsf/page/DPCY-7LYJ4V1343473-en/$File/Final%20-%20Low%20Res.pdf)



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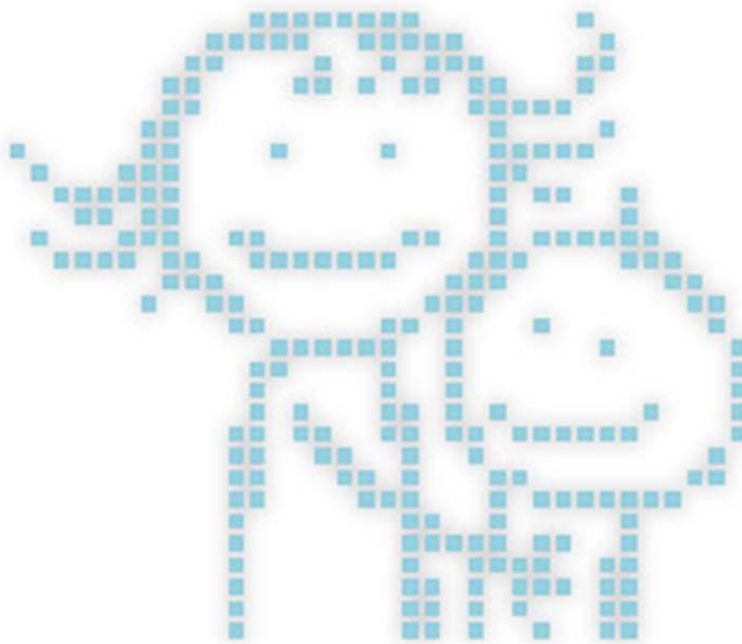
## Module 3

# How parents can Detect, Intervene and Prevent Cyberbullying

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## Summary

### **A: Parents opportunity to prevent and deal with cyberbullying**

- Parents play a vital part in the prevention and intervention of cyberbullying.
- Research indicates that bullied young people are more likely to report having been bullied to their parents rather than to staff at their school. A similar trend has been found in relation to cyberbullying.
- Because parenting in cyberspace is much the same as parenting in the real world, the principles of prevention and intervention programs should be much the same for traditional and cyberbullying behaviour. However, there are strategies that are specific to cyberbullying.

### **B: Detection**

#### **Signs that may indicate that a child is being victimized:**

- Loss or withdrawal from friends
- More frequent health problems
- Behavioral changes
- Poor or deteriorating school work
- Emotional, angry or upset when online or coming off line

#### **Signs that may indicate that a child is involved in bullying others:**

- Being secretive and hiding media use from parents
- Negative/hostile expressions during or after using social media
- Is quick to get into conflict or fights with peers and is quick to blame others
- Makes fun of cyberbullying incidents
- Being friendly with peers who bully others

## **C: Intervention**

**If a child is being cyberbullied, parents can:**

- Block communication with the “cyber-bully”
- Teach cyber-safety
- Do not reply when upset or angry
- Save the message or do a screen save
- Get an overview of what’s wrong
- Stress the fact that the aggressor has the problem, not the victim
- Create an atmosphere of safety
- Build self-esteem
- Report the problem

**What parents should do if their child is involved in cyberbullying others:**

- Create an accurate awareness of ‘what cyberbullying is
- Find out what is causing the cyberbullying behavior
- Discuss the rules for responsible Internet and Computer use; (i.e. social contract)
- Monitor and supervise internet use appropriately
- Teach skills of empathy at home
- Build self-esteem at home
- Facilitate energetic children’s ‘catharsis’ (i.e. letting off steam in a positive way)

## **D: Prevention**

**Parents can prevent their children from taking part in cyberbullying or being hurt:**

- Develop a sound self-confidence
- Increase the child’s resilience
- Increase the child’s empathy
- Learning to value others
- Give feedback in a positive way
- Talk to your child about safe and conscious use of digital media
- Talk to your child about how legislation sets guidelines for behavior on social media
- Invite your child to share things that worries them

## Introduction

In this module, we present information and a series of activities that can be useful both for parents in the first place, and also trainers who work directly with parents.

We would contend that in order to work effectively with parents who are concerned about cyberbullying, preparation is needed to:

- Understand and empathize with the parent's unique position in the process of countering and preventing cyberbullying (or, to rephrase it as a potential parent's question, 'What do I think as a parent?');
- To meet the concern of parents that exists around understanding and recognizing the patterns of behaviour that result in young people having been victimized ('How will I know as a parent?');
- To meet the concern of parents that exists around helping and supporting a child / teenager who reports having been victimized ('What should I do as a parent?');
- To meet the concern of parents that exists around helping and supporting a child / teenager who has been involved in victimizing others, either as a perpetrator or bystander ('How will I cope?').
- Providing parents with input on how they can work at home in order to prevent their child from taking part in bullying and develop a resistance from being hurt by others.

## Overview

The module starts with a short introduction of the unique opportunity parents have in order to prevent and deal with bullying. It also displays different positions and concerns parents can find themselves in related to the challenge of cyberbullying (Section A: 'Understanding the parent's position and concerns').

Further activities include looking at how victimization may manifest itself behaviorally in the home (this is approached in the activities in Section B: 'How will I know my child is involved in cyberbullying'). This is an important component because of the veil of secrecy that surrounds all forms of bullying problems amongst young people.

Section C 'Intervention: How to intervene?' addresses the question: what can or should parents do if they find out that their child / teenager has been victimized? Section C also addresses the question that is far less frequently asked, but no less important to consider: what can or should parents do if they find out that their child / teenager has been involved in bullying, either as victim or bully or both with the help of electronic devices?



It is essential that one understand the concerns parents have around cyberbullying, with an emphasis on those aspects parents can take to prevent cyberbullying and the potential impact of being bullied or of bullying others (this is approached in the activities in Section D: Prevention: How to prevent victimization and hurt?).

It is essential that one understand the concerns parents have around cyberbullying, with an emphasis on those aspects parents can take prevent cyberbullying and the potential impact of being bullied or of bullying others (this is approached in the activities in Section D).

## **Objectives and envisaged learning outcomes**

- To understand and appreciate the key role that parents have in promoting the safe use of cyberspace amongst their children and teenagers;
- Activities and points of reflections that will support parents in taking their part in the promotion of a culture that does not accept cyberbullying;
- To motivate and support parents in developing an understanding of the central role that they themselves and young people play in countering and preventing cyberbullying;
- To enable parents to work productively at home with their children / teenagers in promoting responsible and respectful use of electronic devices;
- To provide parents with knowledge related to:
  - How to detect cyberbullying;
  - What to do if your child is being cyber bullied
  - What to do if your child is targeting or bullying others
  - How to prevent cyberbullying;

## **Summary of current thinking and knowledge**

As cyberbullying has become a prominent form of bullying, it follows that increasing attention will need to be paid to prevention and intervention programs which deal with this form of bullying.

However, as parenting in cyberspace is much the same as parenting in the real world the principles of prevention and intervention programmes should be much the same for traditional and cyberbullying behavior.

Research to-date into bullying behavior indicates that bullied young people are more likely to report having been bullied to their parents rather than to staff at their school <sup>(1)</sup>. A similar trend has been found in relation to cyberbullying <sup>(2)</sup>. Parents, therefore, are in a very good position to help their child or teenager to counter the abusive and damaging behavior involved in cyberbullying.

Parents also need to know the best way to deal with allegations of bullying. However, in order to do so adequately they need to have the knowledge and skills to do so.

## **Understanding the Parent's position and concerns**

### **Position of possibilities**

In view of the widespread nature of cyberbullying, and its ill-effects on the mental and physical health and academic performance of those involved, there is little doubt that parents have a great opportunity but also critical role to play in the countering and prevention of cyberbullying. It is therefore important to try to understand the problem of cyberbullying from the parents' own perspective.

## Parent's possible concerns

Five potential parenting positions or concerns are likely to occur in terms of cyberbullying. These five possible concerns are:

- a parent whose child has been subjected to cyberbullying;
- a parent whose child has been indisputably identified as having been involved in having cyberbullied others;
- a parent whose child has been accused of having victimized others, although the parent is unsure as to the accuracy of the allegations
- a parent whose child is a bystander/witness to a bullying incident;
- a parent whose child is not involved in problems of cyberbullying, although remains concerned about such problems due to the child's use of social media.

This module will seek to provide parents with awareness and advice on how to tackle concerns which they may have in relation to cyberbullying. By naming the possible concerns and providing advice, we seek to equip parents to intervene and handle situations that may occur.

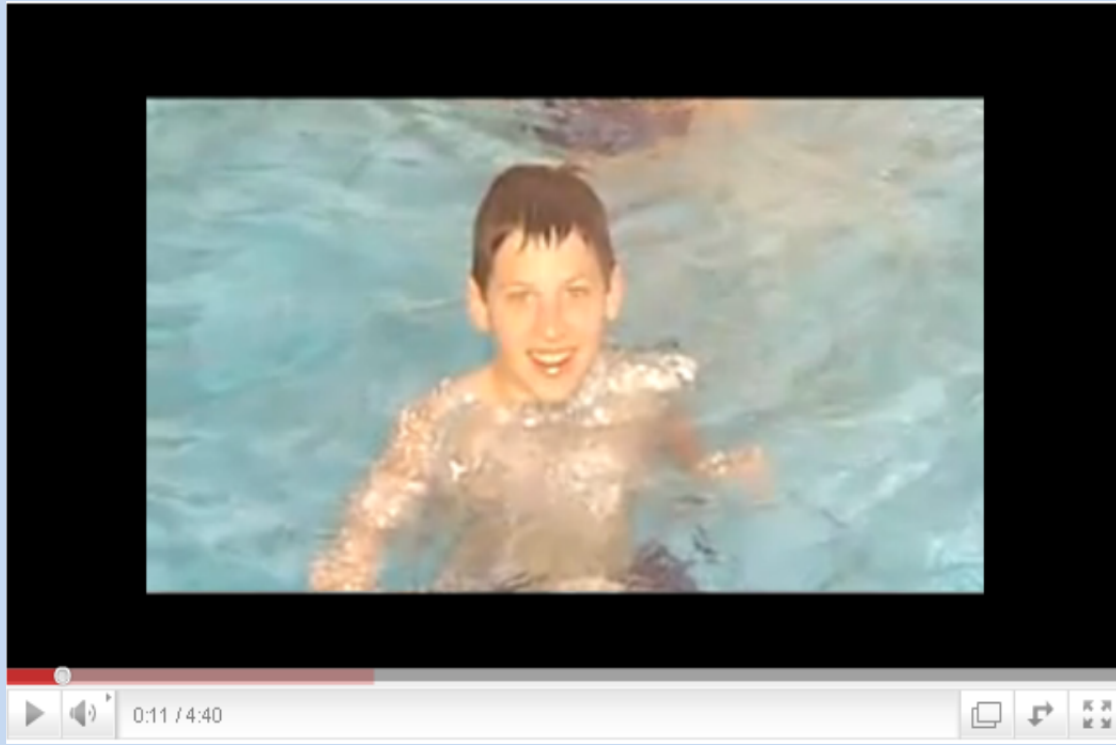
## The ultimate fear of a parent

While stories are told of children and teens committing suicide as a result of cyberbullying a child or teen would very seldom commit suicide as a direct result of cyberbullying. In cases where a child or teen chooses to end its life, there will often be s other adverse aspects that cause the decision. Watching the resource "A Father's story" provides way to get the attention of the audience toward the topic, and most importantly create openness for reflections and discussions further on in the module.

Resource 3.1 'A father's story' was produced by Safe Passage Media LLC and presents a real-life story of a young boy who was relentlessly bullied on the Internet and at school. The video represents his father's story.

### Resource 3.1 - 'A father's story'

Produced by: Safe Passage Media LLC



URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDBiqUWRtMo> (Available at YouTube)

## **B – Identifying the tell-tale signs of bullying: ‘How will I know?’**

Parents can find themselves worried about the aggression, bullying and violence in schools they read about in the newspaper, see on television, or hear about in their local communities, worrying about whether their child will have been victimized – no matter how positive or open their relationship with their son or daughter might be. So they adopt what the authors refer to as a ‘detective’ role. So, ‘How will I know?’ – becomes a highly relevant question for parents.

In this part of the module, we seek to provide parents with input on how they can identify:

- a. Their child being cyberbullied
- b. Their child targeting or victimizing others
- c. Their child acting as a bystander to cyberbullying

### **Identifying the effects of victimization**

Although research demonstrates that victims of cyberbullying are more likely to report having been bullied to their parents than they are to their teachers, it also shows that most bullied children are unlikely to report having been bullied at all <sup>(1,2)</sup>. The longitudinal Growing up in Ireland (GUI) study, for example, recently found that 40% of 9 year old children been victimized in the past year, yet only 24% of parents were aware of it <sup>(3)</sup>. So it is true to say that much violent behavior would seem to thrive under conditions of secrecy (be this school bullying, domestic violence or organized crime). Parents are, by and large, aware of this ‘code of silence’; and many parents consequently suspect or worry about their child or teenager having been victimized long before they are ever told (if indeed that ever happens).

### **Possible signs of a child being cyberbullied**

As cyberbullying and direct bullying affect victims in very similar ways, the same measures can be applied for recognizing the problem at an early stage. Taking action early allows tensions to be dissipated before the situation escalates and prevent additional bullying attacks. The following section provides a few reference points for detecting cyberbullying. It should be noted that a child can be both cyber-bullied and bully others as is the case with traditional bullying. These children are referred to as bully-victims and they share many of the characteristics of both ‘victims’ and ‘bullies’.

- **Disinterest in or loss of friendships**

Former best friends – particularly among girls – become the victims/perpetrators of bullying attacks as they know many of each other's intimate secrets and can use them against each other. The child may withdraw from social interaction with peers.

- **More frequent health problems**

These include symptoms such as headaches, stomachaches, frequent absenteeism, sleep problems or depression.

- **Behavioral changes**

Alarm signals can include a loss of confidence, moodiness, out of character aggressive behavior or turning to more taciturn nature, or to a retreat into another world, e.g. online games or imaginary worlds. The young person may look distressed or anxious, and have problems sleeping yet refuses to say what is wrong.

- **Changes related to school**

A lack of interest or reluctance to go to school. Possible drop in academic performance.

- **Negative and emotional expressions after use of social media**

The child appears angry or upset after being online or after viewing a text message.

Activity 3.1 - 'Consider you have a feeling that your child may be cyberbullied' allows you to contemplate on how to talk with your children about cyberbullying.



### **Activity 3.1 - 'Consider you have a feeling that your child may be cyberbullied'**

Each parent to think for themselves for two minutes on each of the following questions:

'Consider feeling that your child may be cyber bullied'

1. How can you start a conversation about this with your child?
2. What can you do if your child refuses to talk to you about this?

After 2 X 2 minutes, the parents are asked to form small groups of 3 – 5 parents.

Allow the parents in the small groups to share and discuss their thoughts on question 1 and 2.

You may conclude the activity by asking if somebody would like to share something they discussed with the rest of the audience.

### **Additional Activity:**

Activity 3.2 - 'Understanding the signs and symptoms of being victimized' is based on the premise that much aggressor-victim behavior, perhaps most especially bullying and cyberbullying behavior, is shrouded in secrecy. If parents do, as suggested above, find themselves in a position of having to 'play detective', this activity is an attempt to help them.

In Resource 3.2 - 'Signs and symptoms of victimization' you can familiarize yourself with the signs and symptoms of victimization, for cyberbullying.

### Resource 3.2 - 'Signs and symptoms of victimization'

Following the research findings recorded in the text immediately above this activity (i.e., that young people are more likely to report having been victimized to their parents than to their teachers) it is crucial that parents are aware of the signs and symptoms of victimisation. It is equally important for parents to be aware of signs that relate to both traditional bullying and to cyberbullying as most often children who are cyber-bullied are also traditional victims. In our Irish study, for example, 71% of cyber-victims were found to also be bullied in traditional ways <sup>(4)</sup>.

For these reasons it is to be recommended that parents become familiar with the signs and symptoms of both cyber- and traditional bullying. In *Dealing with Bullying in Schools*, <sup>(8)</sup> the authors presented parents with a list of 'signs and symptoms' of being victimized, which is reproduced in condensed form below. This list can either be printed out on cards or worksheets, or else be projected overhead for the benefit of all the participants:

- 'The young person looks distressed or anxious, and yet refuses to say what is wrong';
- 'Unexplained cuts and bruises';
- 'Reluctance to go to school';
- 'Changes in mood and behavior';
- 'Lower confidence and self-esteem';
- 'Complaints of headaches and stomach aches'; and,
- 'Problems sleeping'.

A further sign is that:

- the child / teenager is likely to have very few friends and appears to be socially isolated from peers.

As O'Moore and Minton noted, "this is not a fail-proof checklist" <sup>(4)</sup>; however, it does present a reliable enough starting off point for this activity.

While the tell-tale signs of cyberbullying tend to be indistinguishable from the effects of traditional bullying there are some that are specific to cyberbullying. For example, the emotional symptoms that characterize traditional bullying may be especially evidenced when the child is online or comes off line or when they are viewing a text message. Also a significant proportion of cyber-victims remove themselves from the online venue in which the cyberbullying occurred, with as many as one in five feeling forced to stay off-line completely for a period of time <sup>(6)</sup>. Some researchers <sup>(7)</sup> make

reference to the following warning signs of cyberbullying:

- Child appears upset after being online;
- Child appears upset after viewing a text message;
- Child withdraws from social interaction with peers; and,
- Possible drop in academic performance.

This list can, as with the earlier list for traditional bullying, either be printed out on cards or worksheets, or else be projected on overhead for the benefit of all the participants and a comparison made of the two sets of symptoms.

## **Possible signs of a child cyberbullying others or being a bystander**

Identifying that a child is bullying others or being a bystander may actually be harder for parents to detect than a child being victimized. Some symptoms may have similarities to when a child is victimized.

### **Possible signs of a child cyberbullying others:**

- **Difficulties maintaining friendships**

The child may be involved in break ups and ganging up on others, displaying either a nonchalant, disrespectful, or defiant manner. He or she may have a small group of friends of which he or she is the dominant member.

- **Hiding media use from parents**

The child may seem to hide their use of computers or mobile phones. He /she may also may react with anger and/or stress when a parent enters the room or he /she may close or hide web pages when a parent enters room or walks past the computer. Unlikely to answer if a parent asks him or her what he/she is doing online.

- **Negative expressions while engaging with or after use of social media**

The child may display disrespect, hostility or hilarity when online either alone or with a group of friends or after being online. May be quick to slag, tease or use 'put downs' when referring to peers.

- **Approach from others**

The parents maybe approached from a third party, expressing evidence or suspicions that their child or teen is involved in victimizing others.

### **Possible signs of your child being a passive bystander**

Most children are aware that bullying takes place although it would appear that children are less aware of cyberbullying than that they are of the more traditional forms of bullying<sup>10</sup>.

The majority of children who are not bullied or bullying others tends to either assist or reinforce the bully in their actions or they take a passive observer stance. Few children come to the victim's defense when they are witness to incidents of bullying or cyberbullying<sup>10</sup>.

A child who is a passive observer or bystander tends either to hold the attitude that it is ok to cyber-bully and that there are no ill effects. Others however are afraid to intervene or do not know how best to intervene. Either way children need guidance as to how best they can intervene to have the bullying stopped.

Activity 3.3 - 'Your child is involved in spreading severe rumors on the Internet' aims to generate some reflection upon what to do if you realize that your child has been involved in cyberbullying.

### **Activity 3.3 - 'Your child is involved in spreading severe rumors on the Internet'**

Each parent to think for themselves for two minutes on each of the following questions:

1. "The father of a teenage girl in your child's class calls you and tells that your child is involved in spreading severe rumors about her on the Internet. He asks for a personal meeting with you to discuss it."What do you think could be your own immediate reaction?
2. What would you do?

## C – Intervention

In this chapter, we seek to provide parents with advice related to what they can do if their child is subjected to bullying or is bullying others or is both bullied, or bullying others or is as is most often the case a passive observer of cyberbullying.

### **Helping young people who have been victimized: ‘What should I do?’**

To find out that one’s son or daughter has been victimized is a time when emotions run very high.. There can be great upset and sadness, as one empathizes with the injury, suffering or humiliation that one’s child or teenager has had to endure. There can be guilt, as one blames oneself for not having realized that something was wrong, or of not having done something sooner. There can be one’s own residual pain, in the case that such a revelation re-opens one’s own psychological wounds of having been victimized in perhaps a similar way. There is often anger at the perpetrators of the violence, or those in authority whom one believes should have acted to prevent or stop it. In short, a complex array of emotions – none of which are pleasant – is typically involved upon a parent hearing such news.

After this immediate emotional response, there is, on the part of a caring parent, an overwhelming urge to *do* something –one’s deep love for one’s child or teenager triggers compulsion to protect and nurture (and maybe even in a more negative way seek revenge).

### **What can parents do if their child is affected?**

Here is a list of measures parents may consider:

#### **Possible short term / immediate actions:**

- **Listen closely to your child**

When explaining why children do not report cyber victimization to their parents, parents need to listen closely when their children speak about online experiences, and also need to become acquainted with the methods of cyber communication that children engage in. Following a disclosure of victimization a parent's first response should be something like "Thank you for telling me that. You did the right thing by letting me know<sup>(7)</sup>."

- **Remain calm in case of incidents**

Parents should remain calm when a child is telling them about an incident in which they were abused online. A calm, controlled response can help to keep lines of communication open with one's child. Kowalski and colleagues also feel that parents and children should agree on the circumstances under which children will report to parents about negative content or contact experienced online<sup>(7)</sup>.

- **Block the “cyber-bully”**

Most responsible providers of social networks and other Internet services allow you to block or report anyone who is behaving badly. Responsible websites and mobile phone operators provide their users to report offensive material. It is important that one takes the time to become familiar with these features. The final escape is to change your child or teen’s contact information, such as the instant messenger (IM) or mobile phone number, in order to avoid unwanted contact.

- **Do not reply**

Do not react to offensive or unpleasant messages, even if you find this difficult. Provoking a reaction is exactly what the cyber-bully wants. It gives him/her satisfaction. If the messages do not stop, open a new e-mail account.

- **Secure evidence**

Learn how to log or make copies of unpleasant messages, images or online conversations. These will help you to show other people what has happened and can help in investigating your tormentor. Make sure records are kept of dates and times when the abusive messages are sent.


### **What parents can do on a deeper level in order to support the child and stop the bullying:**

- **Finding out what’s wrong**

Try to get an overview of the situation: What has happened? Who are involved? What is the role of your child in this? Going through log, mailbox, incoming text messages or print-screens from the web are ways to find evidence.

If a parent would like to check weblogs or content on mobile phone, the ideal situation would be that parents get permission from their child to do this. Explain to your child why you would





like to check it, and ask the child's feelings about it. Remember that to many teenagers, the mobile phone can be considered as equal personal as a diary.

- **Stress the fact that the aggressor has the problem, not the victim**

If you feel confident that your child is a victim of bullying and not a part of a conflict between equals, impress upon your child that the bully has the problem, in so much that they are unable or unwilling to behave in a respectful and dignified manner.

- **Create an atmosphere of safety**

Let your child know that you are there for them should they ever feel that they are not able to stop the cyberbullying on their own. A problem shared is a problem halved. However let them know that you will act in a sensitive manner and in their best interest.

- **Do not add fuel to the fire**

Let your child know that that one shouldn't fight back physically or verbally. It is better not to reply at all and if upset and worried to tell someone they trust.

- **Building self-esteem at home**

Improve the resistance to negative effects of bullying by providing a positive self-esteem. Building self-esteem can best be achieved by giving your child every opportunity to play to his or her strengths. Frequently praise, reward and recognize the efforts that they make. It is the positive parental voice that will become internalized and that will help to build your child's self-esteem. Seek their opinions and give them plenty of responsibility. This gives them a sense of belonging, and most importantly confidence in their own resourcefulness.

- **Report the problem**

You can contact the school, youth organization or the police etc. if this is considered relevant due to what has seemingly taken place. Become informed of the legislation in your country as it pertains to cyberbullying

In Resource 3.3 - 'Relevant links and contact information' you'll find links to help lines or similar organizations that may be relevant to contact.

Resource 3.4 - 'How do I contact service providers?' offers information on how to contact various service providers to report cyberbullying.

#### **Additional resource:**

Activity 3.4 - 'Considering what parents can do if their children/teenagers report having been victimized' aims at encouraging participants to think through the advice that is generally given to parents who find themselves in the distressing situation of their children/teenagers reporting having been cyber-bullied.

#### **Resource 3.3 - 'Relevant links and contact information'**

To get help turn to:

- your friends, because that will make you feel better and you are not alone
- an adult that you trust, who can help you to report the case to the right authority
- an anti-bullying group (e.g. The Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre, Trinity College Dublin - <http://www.abc.tcd.ie>)
- Childline: <http://www.childline.ie>, or call 1800 66 66 66
- the provider of the service via which you are being bullied (Internet, mobile phone)
- your school: a trusted teacher can support you and confront the person bullying you
- the police, if the cyberbullying is serious and there is a potential criminal case, e.g. a threat of murder.

### **Resource 3.4: How do I contact service providers?**

#### **Social networks**

Many operators of social networks now offer ways to report cases of cyberbullying. They have reporting functions which are easy to find and use.

When operators receive reports of cyberbullying, they first check them and can then delete content, which is illegal or breaches the code of behavior in another way. They can also delete the profiles of members who do not comply with the rules.

You can find further information by contacting your social network provider, e.g., [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com/help/?page=260315770650470&ref=hcnv) - consult facebook Help Centre -

<http://www.facebook.com/help/?page=260315770650470&ref=hcnv>

#### **Video sharing websites**

There are also ways to have videos removed from video sharing websites. For this, it is necessary for the video to feature illegal content – e.g. child pornography, depictions of violence or hate videos – or contravene other regulations. These include videos used without the permission of persons featured in them or films featuring people talking about you in a discriminatory manner. Most video sharing websites offer a "Report" button. After clicking on this, you can state your reason for reporting the video. For example, if you have been filmed without your permission, you can state that this video breaches your personal rights. The operator is then obliged to remove the video from its portal. Well-known video sharing websites include, e.g. YouTube. Posting private, intimate recordings of an ex-partner on a pornography website without the permission of the person shown is also covered by this area. These are often thought of as "acts of revenge" after a painful break-up.

You can find further information about safety on Youtube at:

[http://support.google.com/youtube/bin/request.py?contact\\_type=abuse&hl=en-US](http://support.google.com/youtube/bin/request.py?contact_type=abuse&hl=en-US)

#### **Instant Messenger**

All reputable instant messenger services now offer a standard option, which allows you to "ignore" a person so that you receive no more messages from him /her.

You can find further information for blocking and reporting a contact on Skype via:

<https://support.skype.com/en/faq/FA10488/how-do-i-block-or-report-a-contact>

### **Chat rooms/Forums/Blogs**

Normally chat room operators have clear and easy-to-find reporting functions, which allow you to write to them directly. They can then delete users who do not comply with the chat room regulations. Some chat rooms are moderated so that moderators can first issue a warning. Forums normally have moderators as well. If they see that a user is posting inappropriate messages or comments, they are able to delete these comments and block the author immediately. If you find that nobody responds to your complaints in a chat room or forum, it is probably better to avoid this website in future.

### **Mobile phone operators**

Data protection laws prevent operators of mobile phone networks from releasing their customers' mobile phone numbers even if a number is being used to harass another customer. However, you can see some numbers (if they are not hidden) on your mobile phone display. If you repeatedly receive unwanted text messages or are being harassed by repeated calls, you should ask your mobile phone provider for a new number.

You can find further information by contacting your mobile phone service provider, e.g., Vodafone, o2, etc.

### **Email**

If you receive unwanted, insulting or even threatening e-mails, you should initially treat the e-mail address of the sender as a spam address. You can place any e-mail address on your spam list. Unwanted messages are then sent straight to the waste paper basket.

You can find further information by contacting your email service provider, e.g., [www.gmail.com](http://www.gmail.com), [www.hotmail.com](http://www.hotmail.com)

**If you receive serious threats, you should always contact the police immediately.**

## Helping young people who have been involved in bullying others: 'How will I cope?'

We have seen previously that finding out one's son or daughter has been victimized is invariably an emotionally charged experience. It is sometimes assumed that a parent of a child who is involved in victimizing others is emotionally unaffected by hearing the news that his or her child is so involved. That is to say, that such a parent, by the very fact that he or she has produced a child who has been involved in victimizing others, must be negligent, and therefore doesn't care, or will invariably lie, about his or her child's involvement. Quite simply, this is not the case. Parents may be far less likely to seek help from practitioners about their *victimizing* offspring as opposed to their *victimized* offspring; those who fall into the former category have taught us that it is no less upsetting for a caring parent to have an aggressor for a child than a victim of violent behavior.

So in this case, a parent might feel anger towards his or her child / teenager, or towards the child's/teenager's friends, or friends' parents (if the parent has formed the opinion, as is often the case, that their child / teenager has been somehow led astray by others). The parent might feel disappointment, or shame, at the child / teenager, or his or her own failure to instill his or her (say) democratic and peaceful values in his or her child. Or, if one feels (as many parents do) that one's child/teenager has been unjustly accused, one may feel a need to fight his or her child's corner. In short, there can be an array of complex and negative emotions to cope with.

One could also answer for oneself a very simple question:

*'Have you always acted in ways in which your parents would wish you to do so?'*

Possible reactions for a parent who experience their child is cyberbullying others:

- *Guilt: "What have I done wrong as a parent?"*
- *Anger: "Child, you should know better!"*
- *Neglect: "This cannot be true; my child would never do such!"*
- *Shame: "I am ashamed of my child's action, and ashamed of myself."*

## Functions of cyberbullying for the perpetrator

In order to understand why children and teens bully others online, it is worth taking a look at what the perpetrator appears to gain from the bullying:

- **Relief:** Bullying serves as a valve for pent-up aggression.
- **Recognition:** Bullying is used to acquire a particular reputation or status, e.g. to be particularly "cool".
- **Reinforce a feeling of community:** Bullying is usually perpetrated by a group, i.e. creating the feeling that "united we are strong".
- **Demonstration of power and control:** Bullying is used as a display of strength to make it clear "who is the boss".
- **Fear:** Fear of failure or fears of becoming a victim of bullying oneself are often contributing factors. "Hangers on", in particular, do not want to put their membership of the group at risk.

## Reasons and triggers for cyberbullying

The reasons and triggers for cyberbullying are many and varied. Such attacks usually have roots going back a long way (e.g. exposure to aggressive behavior in the home and a lack of parental discipline) and are an expression of a failure to communicate adequately and a lack of empathy.

- **Bullying is seen as normal**  
It is not uncommon for bullying to be part of daily interaction in a group. It is tolerated and has no consequences. If onlookers look away and fail to help victims of bullying to defend themselves, the harassment can continue for years.
- **Boredom**  
Cyberbullying can be the product of boredom, e.g. by posting a negative comment about a fellow pupil in an online community. This can result in a dispute that spirals out of control.
- **Intercultural conflicts**  
Intercultural conflicts between young people of different nationalities are also a frequent factor in cyberbullying.



- **Conflicts in the classroom community**

Existing tensions within a class increasingly shift to the environment of the internet and mobile phone. The "class swot" may (also) be teased in social networks or pupils harassed at home by unwanted text messages from classmates.

- **Friendships change**

Friendships break up and feelings of hatred and a desire for revenge spring up between former best friends.

- **Unwanted publication of personal information**

Personal details or intimate photos/videos not intended for the public are passed on – sometimes even with no malicious intent. Children and young people are often not aware how hurtful this kind of humiliation can be.

## **How parents may proceed if their child is involved in victimizing others**

Helping parents to cope with children and teenagers who cyberbully would not be dissimilar to advising parents in relation to traditional bullying of others. From specialist sources dealing with both traditional and cyberbullying <sup>(6,7,8)</sup> the following strategies are recommended:

- Create an accurate awareness of 'what cyberbullying is;
- Find out what is causing the cyberbullying behaviour;
- Discuss the rules for responsible Internet and Computer use; (i.e. social contract);
- Monitor and supervise internet use appropriately;
- Teach skills of empathy at home;
- Build self-esteem at home;
- Facilitate energetic children's 'catharsis' (i.e., 'letting off steam in a positive way').

Activity 3.5 - Discussion: 'What do you do if...?' aims to generate some reflection on some common problems related to cyberbullying.

In resource 3.5 - 'Social contract' you'll find a suggestion for a social contract, which can be used by a group of parents, an individual parent and /or parent and child at the home. The purpose of the contract is to explore the boundaries of safe, respectful, and ethical Internet use.

Resource 3.6 outlines the pros and cons of monitoring children's Internet use at home.

***Additional activity:***

Activity 3.6 - 'Considering what parents can do if their children/teenagers have been involved in cyberbullying others' offers participants a thinking-through of advice that may be given to parents of those young people who do engage in violent behavior.

**Activity 3.5 – Discussion: 'What do you do if...?'**

Ask the participants to form small groups of 3 – 5 people. Allow the small groups to discuss each of the four following points 3 – 4 minutes:

- **Statement:** Parents have responsibility for what's written on their children's web pages and profiles. What do you think?
- **Problem:** Your child has sent a threat from his / her mobile to another person in his/her class. What do you do?
- **Problem:** Your child has received a message on his mobile/email/profile that ridicules/offends a friend. You also realize your own child has forwarded this e-mail to several others. What do you do?
- **Problem:** Your child has published quite private photos of three other teenagers taken at a party he/she attended to some days ago. What do you do?

### Resource 3.5 - 'Social contract'

#### Purpose

This social contract is designed for a group of participants, an individual parent and /or parent and child at the home. The purpose of the contract is to explore the boundaries of safe, respectful, and ethical internet use.

#### Procedure

Create three to five rules that you feel would be useful in developing an online social contract. Use the following words: respect, honesty, privacy, kindness:

Rule 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Rule 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Rule 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Rule 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Rule 5: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Resource 3.6: The pros and cons of monitoring Internet use**

Although parents often leave the computer in a communal area of the house, many young people can now access the Internet on their phones, and therefore they need to take responsibility for their own behavior.


Extreme monitoring can constitute a severe breach of privacy for the young person. However, it is reasonable that if a child is creating content (e.g., Facebook profile) which can be viewed by the public, then a parent should also be allowed to view this every now and again. It creates more trust if this is discussed ahead of time with the child, and if it is emphasized that the parent will not read their child's every communication. In the case where cyberbullying has already occurred, then this monitoring may need to be more frequent.

Many parents invest in filtering technology to protect and limit their children's online activities. Other resources can monitor every keystroke to record the child's activities. However, this also can be interpreted as mistrust towards the child. Therefore, Kowalski and colleagues<sup>(7)</sup> emphasize the importance of education, guidance and communication as a priority.

### **Helping young people who have been witnessing cyberbullying: 'How should I act?'**

Although witnesses of cyberbullying may take on a type of bystander role, the characteristics of the various types of 'cyber bystander' requires further investigation, as discussed in Module 2: "Introduction to Cyberbullying". Research conducted in Canada has indicated that witnesses of cyberbullying often react in diverse ways, with some bystanders joining in, some cheering on the cyberbully, others watching but not participating, some leaving the online environment, some objecting to others but not to the cyberbully, others objecting directly to the cyberbully, some trying to help or befriend the victim and others reporting to someone who might help. This is certainly indicative of the capacity of the bystander to help the target of cyberbullying, or to do nothing, or to increase their suffering.

For a parent, it may be very difficult to get a proper and true understanding of what role a child who has been a witness to cyberbullying taking place really played.



Some suggested questions a parent can ask its child both to find out what but also to intervene could be:

- How will you describe what happened?
- Who would you say were involved as perpetrator(s)?
- What did you think of the event that took place?
- How do you think the victim could feel about the event that took place?
- What did you do?
- What does it mean to be a bystander?
- What responsibility does a bystander have?
- Is there anything you suggest could have been done differently by the child who witnessed the bullying?
- Is there anything the parent and their witnessing children feel needs to be sorted out, said or done to either the victim or the perpetrator?

Even for bystanders, most of the advice to cope with children and teenagers who *cyberbully* could be relevant for coping with bystanders; if the parent find evidence that the child has joined in, or been cheering on the cyberbully:

- Create an accurate awareness of 'what cyberbullying is;
- Find out what is causing the cyberbullying behaviour;
- Discuss the rules for responsible Internet and Computer use; (i.e. social contract);
- Monitor and supervise internet use appropriately;
- Teach skills of empathy at home;
- Build self-esteem at home;

## D - What can parents do to prevent cyberbullying?

Parents can play a vital role in preventing their child from taking part in bullying others via Internet and mobile phones. Here are some focus areas parents can work on in order to reduce the risk of the ill effects of being victimized; or being involved in victimizing others:

Resource 3.7 -outlines students' views on how adult could prevent cyberbullying.

### **Resource 3.7 - Students' views on how adults could prevent cyberbullying**

Students in focus groups held by the authors were given the opportunity to express how they felt adults could prevent cyberbullying. Some of their suggestions are as follows:

- Set age-appropriate guidelines;
- Educate on appropriate strategies to cope with conflict;
- Monitor your child's Internet activity;
- Supervise without snooping (i.e., do not invade your child's privacy);
- Look out for any indications that something might be wrong;
- Do not blame or punish the victim;
- Educate yourself.

### **Build a home where the family talks together**

Children are most likely to talk to their parents if they worry about something they experience online or by mobile phones. By creating a culture at home where parent and child get used to talk to each other about personal matters, parents increase the chance that the child will bring up issues at an early stage. Fears of punishment or restrictions are common barriers for children to talk to parents about concerns. Listen carefully and react consciously if your child brings up matters to you as a parent.

Resource 3.8 - outlines the negative effects restrictions can have on children.



### **Resource 3.8: Taking away electronic privileges can be perceived as further punishment**

Taking away electronic privileges from a child who has been cyberbullied is in fact punishing them further. Kowalski and colleagues compare this with the situation where a child reports an incident of sexual abuse and a parent reacts with a question like "Why didn't you tell them to stop?" This unintentionally lays blame with the victim and can cause further victimization. Furthermore, a response such as this is likely to discourage a child from confiding in their parents, should another incident of cyberbullying occur.

## **Talk to your child about safe and conscious use of digital media**

Parents can take part in creating an awareness of choices in terms of online activities, language, how to handle photos, rumors etc. Feel free to use the enclosed resources "Suggested Topics to discuss with your child" as a guide. By using these, the parent and child will cover many of the most important basic safety and everyday risks.

Improving the general awareness of online usage and social behavior online may reduce the risk of the child victimizing others. It can also increase the chance of the child intervening rather than being a bystander in cases where the child is a witness to others victimizing somebody online or through the mobile phone.

Resource 3.9 - 'Well connected, good connections' offers suggested topics to discuss for parents with children in the age group 10 – 15 years related to safe and conscious use of mobile phones and internet.

### **Resource 3.9: Well connected, good connections**

In the following you can find quick questions without easy answers to discuss with children in the age group 10 – 15 years.

#### **Password:**

How can you make passwords that are difficult for others to guess?

Is it okay to share passwords with others?

#### **Webpages and net communities:**

What information about yourself is okay to share on the World Wide Web?

What should you think of and who do you have to ask before you publish information or pictures of others?

#### **Chatting:**

What guidelines will you follow to make chatting as safe and enjoyable as possible?

#### **Online friends:**

What would you do if someone you meet online asks to meet you in real life?

Is it okay to go alone if you're meeting a net friend?

What would you consider before adding a person to friend lists on social media like MSN and Facebook?

#### **Downloading:**

What should you think through before downloading free files and content you find online?

What do you think about downloading copyrighted material such as movies and music?

#### **On/off:**

How much time is okay to use on net surfing?

What time of day is it okay to be online?

#### **Online contents:**

What kind of web pages do you like?

Are there any sort of web pages you don't think it's okay to visit?

**Negative online experiences:**

What do you do if you experience something you feel is uncomfortable online?

**Mobile phone:**

What should you think about before taking pictures of others with your mobile camera?

What rules apply for mobile use at school?

What will you do if you have negative experiences via your mobile?

What should you consider before downloading ringtones, pictures or making use of other services? Are there any services you don't wish to make use of?

Who is it okay to provide your phone number to?

When should the mobile phone be switched on/off?

What should you think about before taking pictures of others with your mobile camera?

**Social behavior on social media:**

Where would you draw the line between teasing and bullying?

Is teasing okay? What is bullying?

What do you think about spreading rumors about others?

Is it okay to log on to others' web pages or chat programs?

What should you consider and whom must you ask permission from before sharing information or pictures of others online?

What do you do if someone you know is being treated badly online or on mobiles?

Why can it be difficult to tell someone else if you're being bullied?

**Cyberbullying:**

- What is cyberbullying?
- What could be reasons that somebody would bully others on social media?
- What do you do if somebody bullies you through internet or mobile phone?
- What does it mean to be a bystander?
- What do you do if somebody you know is being cyber bullied?

- What do you do if somebody bullies you?
- What do you do if you have done something towards others via Internet or mobile phone that you regret?

**What does regional legislation say about common challenges like:**

- Spreading rumors?
- Harassments?
- Publishing pictures without permission?
- Threats?
- Identity theft?

## **Prepare your child for possible challenges**

By discussing different issues of cyberbullying with your child, your child may be better equipped to face possible challenges related to cyberbullying. This may also increase the level of resilience, which is a vital skill to prevent the child from being hurt by other's harmful action. Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, threats, or even significant sources of stress — such as cyberbullying. It means “bouncing back” from difficult experiences.

It is likely that a child may be a witness to cyberbullying taking place on social media. Due to this, we also suggest that parents discuss the issue in order to address it.

Example on relevant questions:

- What is cyberbullying?
- What could be reasons that somebody would bully others on social media?
- What do you do if somebody bullies you through internet or mobile phone?
- What does it mean to be a bystander?
- What do you do if somebody you know is being cyber bullied?
- What do you do if somebody bullies you?

- What do you do if you have done something towards others via Internet or mobile phone that you regret?

## **Talk to your child about how legislation sets guidelines for behavior on social media**

Knowledge of social limits given by the law may prevent the child from bending rules and harassing others. Example on relevant questions:

What does regional legislation say about common challenges like:

- Spreading rumors?
- Harassments?
- Publishing pictures without permission?
- Threats?
- Identity theft?

In resource 3.10 – ‘Relevant legislation’ you’ll find an overview of what the law says about common challenges connected to cyberbullying.

### **Resource 3.10: Relevant legislation**

**The following legislation does not directly relate to cyberbullying but can be relevant following specific instances of cyberbullying:**

#### ***a) Criminal Damage Act, 1991:***

Section 5(1) deals with the unauthorized accessing of data:

A person who without lawful excuse operates a computer

(a) within the State with intent to access any data kept either within or outside the State, or

(b) outside the State with intent to access any data kept within the State,

shall, whether or not he accesses any data, be guilty of an offence. On summary conviction,

that person can be imprisoned, fined or both

***b) Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act, 1997:***

Section 10(1) says that:

Any person who, without lawful authority or reasonable excuse, by any means including by use of the telephone, harasses another by persistently following, watching, pestering, besetting or communicating with him or her, shall be guilty of an offence.

Section 10(2) says that a person harasses another when:

(a) he or she, by his or her acts intentionally or recklessly, seriously interferes with the other's peace and privacy or causes alarm, distress or harm to the other, and

(b) his or her acts are such that a reasonable person would realize that the acts would seriously interfere with the other's peace and privacy or cause alarm, distress or harm to the other.

As well as imprisonment, a fine or both, whether on summary conviction or conviction on indictment, a court may also, or as an alternative, order under section 10(3):

that the person shall not, for such period as the court may, specify, communicate by any means with the other person or that the person shall not approach within such distance as the court shall specify of the place of residence or employment of the other person.

***c) Post Office Amendment Act, 1951:***

Section 13 (1) of this Act, has been amended a number of times, including by the Communications Regulation (Amendment) Act 2007, Part 2. It now says that: Any person who

(a) sends by telephone any message that is grossly offensive, or is indecent, obscene or menacing

or

(b) for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience, or needless anxiety to another person



(i) sends by telephone any message that the sender knows to be false, or

(ii) persistently makes telephone calls to another person without reasonable cause,

commits an offence.

On summary conviction or conviction on indictment, that person can be imprisoned, fined or both.

## Develop a sound self-confidence

Children and young people who learn to act confidently and feel empowered have a better understanding of how to help themselves in difficult situations. They take attacks less personally and are generally able to have a more relaxed approach to these kinds of attacks from bullies.

- Acknowledge the child: *"I see you. You belong. You have lots of abilities. I love you."*
- Focus on the child's positive sides and abilities: *"You are really good at... I like the way you..."*

Activity 3.7 - 'Encouraging strengths' aims to reflect upon how to empower children.

### Activity 3.7 - 'Encouraging strengths'

Allow the parents to reflect for themselves on three questions:

1. What do you see as gifts/abilities/strengths in your child?
2. How can you as a parent encourage and enable your child to develop his or her abilities?
3. How can you as a parent express to your child that you love him/her?

## Increase the child's empathy

Empathy is a process where a person senses how others feel about their situation and is able to then respond to the situation in a caring way. In many cases due to behavior on social media, children are not aware that their actions may harm others. It therefore makes sense to raise awareness in this area.

Resource 3.11 'For the birds' aims to create awareness that children can take part in bullying without being consciously aware of it.

### Resource 3.11: For the birds

Produced by: Pixar Animation Studio



Made available at: YouTube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=omk6TAxJYOg&feature=related>

#### After watching:

The short film "For the Birds" may be transferable to cyberbullying and bystanding activities: A child can take part in bullying without being consciously aware of it by posting comments, clicking "Like this", passing photos or rumors on to others etc.

#### Reflect about the following questions:

Who are bullies in this video clip; The two birds in the middle or all the little birds?

Do you think the birds that do not take part in the physical picking see themselves as bullies or not?

## Learning to value others

Learning to value others means being able to separate the relationship from the rational. This involves learning to draw a distinction between liking a person and seeing the facts of the situation more objectively.

Example on relevant questions to discuss with your child:

- *What does it mean to pay respect to others?*
- *What is the difference between “respect” and “like” another person?*

## Give positive feedback:

By giving the child feedback with a positive flavor, parents may correct their behavior without discouraging their child.

Well-intended words are often understood in ways they were never meant: "I like the fact that you don't gossip," is, for example, meant as a positive statement but is formulated as a negative (you don't...). It would be better to say "I like the fact that you can keep secrets".

Honor what you think is good rather than a unilateral focus on behavior you will correct.

## Additional resource:

Activity 3.8 - ‘Understanding parents’ concerns and perspectives around cyberbullying’ aims at generating an understanding, amongst the group participants, of what parents’ concerns are around cyberbullying.

Activity 3.9 - ‘Time for reflection’ aims at introducing parents to the various different discussion type questions that relate to cyberbullying.

## Activities

This section includes all additional activities resources not included in the 'Summary of current knowledge and thinking' section above.

### Overview:

Activity 3.2 - 'Understanding the signs and symptoms of being victimized' is based on the premise that much aggressor-victim behavior, perhaps most especially bullying and cyberbullying behavior, is shrouded in secrecy. If parents do, as suggested above, find themselves in a position of having to 'play detective', this activity is an attempt to help them.

Activity 3.4 - 'Considering what parents can do if their children/teenagers report having been victimized' aims at encouraging participants to think through the advice that is generally given to parents who find themselves in the distressing situation of their children/teenagers reporting having been cyber-bullied.

Activity 3.6 - 'Considering what parents can do if their children/teenagers have been involved in cyberbullying others' offers participants a thinking-through of advice that may be given to parents of those young people who do engage in violent behavior.

Activity 3.8 - 'Understanding parents' concerns and perspectives around cyberbullying' aims at generating an understanding, amongst the group participants, of what parents' concerns are around cyberbullying.

Activity 3.9 - 'Time for reflection' aims at introducing parents to the various different discussion type questions that relate to cyberbullying.

### **Activity 3.3 - 'Understanding the signs and symptoms of being victimized'**

#### **Purpose**

This activity is designed for a group of approximately twenty to twenty-five participants. The activity is based on the premise that much aggressor-victim behavior, perhaps most especially bullying and cyberbullying behavior, is shrouded in secrecy. If parents do, as suggested above, find themselves in a position of having to 'play detective', this activity is an attempt to help them.

#### **Procedure**

- The facilitator presents the two lists provided in Resource 3.2 - 'Signs and symptoms of victimization' to the entire group of participants, illustrating each point with examples (according to his or her experience), or elucidating responses from the group to illustrate each point (if this latter tactic is taken, more time should be allotted to this activity).
- The whole group can then be split into sub-groups of between four and six members, for the purposes of discussion and consequent generation of ideas and examples (ten minutes should be allowed for this part of the activity).
- After re-forming the group, each point is discussed in turn. Discussion points can be along the lines of:
  - Why would this 'sign or symptom' be likely to manifest? How does it make sense in terms of the child's/teenager's experience of having been victimized?
  - Precisely how is this particular 'sign or symptom' likely to manifest itself in the home? Who is most likely to notice it?
  - What should one do if one notices such a 'sign or symptom'? In one's capacity as an educator, what should one advise a parent to do who reported noticing this?
  - How one could 'rank' these 'signs and symptoms', what criteria would you apply?

#### **Debrief**

The participants should be asked to bring their past experience to bear on answering the following question (which can be put to the entire group, and then discussed):

- What did we miss? Are there any other patterns of behavior / discernible effects on the individual that are consistent with being a victim of cyberbullying?

### **Activity 3.4 - 'Considering what parents can do if their children/teenagers report having been victimized'**

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this activity is to encourage participants to think through the advice that is generally given to parents who find themselves in the distressing situation of their children/teenagers reporting having been cyber-bullied.

#### **Resources**

Use a standard A4 answer sheet.

#### **Procedure**

For the same reason as was pointed out previously, namely that there is an overlap of children involved in traditional bullying and cyberbullying, means that parents need to be comfortable with how to deal with both forms of bullying. Indeed what a parent of cyberbullying needs to recognize is that parenting in cyberspace is no different from parenting in the real world. Children need moral and ethical guidance and clear developmentally appropriate boundaries to be responsible and competent cybertizens<sup>(9)</sup>. In *Dealing with Bullying in Schools*,<sup>(8)</sup> the authors suggest 6 things that parents can do if their child or teenager is involved in bullying. They also added that an understanding of such strategies was something that should be included in practical sessions undertaken with parents (p. 96). The six strategies are as follows:

- (A) *'Finding out what's wrong';*
- (B) *'Impressing the fact that the aggressor has the problem, not the victim';*
- (C) *'Impressing the fact that one shouldn't fight back physically';*
- (D) *'Teaching coping skills for verbal harassment at home through role play (the "silent treatment", the "use of humor", and "assertiveness")';*
- (E) *'Building self-esteem at home'; and,*
- (F) *Reporting the problem to the school, police etc if this is considered relevant due to what has seemingly taken place.*



While these strategies may appear to be directed more at conventional bullying than for cyberbullying it is important to note that they can apply to cyberbullying also. For instance, it may seem odd in respect of cyberbullying to include advice about not fighting back physically but it is not unusual for cyber-victims to get sucked into settling their scores by fighting physically, a situation that so often make matters worse especially if it is caught on a cell phone and sent as a video clip. Better advice is to teach victims if face to face with their tormentors to challenge them in an assertive manner. However in addition to the above and specific to cyberbullying would be the following advice:

- (G) Discuss the cyber-rules (e.g., never give out personal information or photographs that you wouldn't mind the world to know about).
  - (H) Monitor and supervise use of internet;
  - (I) Teach coping skills for dealing with cyberbullying (e.g., do not reply or reply calmly, assertively or with humor as one would with face to face bullying, keep the message, block the sender, report the problem);
  - (J) Learn alongside your child about cyber space;
  - (K) Report to the website or mobile phone operator;
- 
- i. The facilitator should introduce these strategies by name to the participants. This can be done by copying the above list onto cards / worksheets, or projecting the list overhead.
  - ii. The group of participants should then split into pairs of 'work partners'.
  - iii. The participants should then think about the following issues in relation to each of the above strategies (again, this list can either be copied onto cards / worksheets, or projected overhead).
    - a) *The skills that parents would need in implementing this (be precise);*
    - b) *Things which parents could find difficult in implementing this;*
    - c) *Objections young people could have if an attempt was made to implement this;*
    - d) *How I would implement this, or advise someone else to do so;*
    - e) *What other considerations could there be in recommending/implementing this*

*strategy?*

*f) How I would implement this, or advise someone else to do so;*

*g) Then, regardless of whether you answered (e) or (f), answer the following: What other considerations could there be in recommending/implementing this strategy?*

- iv. Allow in the region of twenty minutes for this phase of the activity. *Before they write anything*, the participants *must* be made aware that this activity involves the ‘swapping’ of answer sheets with a partner, and the discussion of emerging group themes based on the feedback they have given. Therefore, they should only record what they feel comfortable recording.

The idea is that each participant (a) constructively augments the suggestions made in his or her work partner’s responses to questions and (b) comes up with constructive suggestions for overcoming the potential ‘difficulties’ raised by his or her work partner in responses to the questions . Allow in the region of twenty minutes for this phase of the activity.

- v. The pairs of work partners then engage in a ten-minute dialogue with each other, about the feedback they have given each other and shared.
- vi. The ‘whole group’ (i.e., all the participants together) is re-formed.

### **Debrief**

The facilitator leads a discussion of the activity, posing the following prompts:

- i. *What points of similarity were there between the partners? And, having fed this back to the ‘whole group’, what can be said concerning this about the whole group?*
- ii. *What points of difference were there between the partners? And, having fed this back to the ‘whole group’, what can be said concerning this about the whole group?*

*Speaking only for oneself, what is the most important/useful thing that the participants have learnt through undertaking this activity?*

### **Activity 3.6 - 'Considering what parents can do if their children/teenagers have been involved in cyberbullying others'**

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this activity is to encourage participants to think through the advice that is generally given to parents who find that their child or teenager has been involved in victimizing others.

#### **Resources**

Answer sheet which could be enlarged to A3 format.

#### **Procedure**

Helping parents to cope with children and teenagers who cyberbully would not be dissimilar to advising parents in relation to conventional bullying of others. From specialist sources dealing with both conventional and cyberbullying <sup>(21,22,24)</sup> the following strategies are to be recommended:

- (A) Create an accurate awareness of 'what cyberbullying is;*
- (B) Find out what is causing the cyberbullying behavior;*
- (C) Discuss the rules for responsible Internet and Computer use; (i.e. social contract);*
- (D) Monitor and supervise internet use appropriately;*
- (E) Teach skills of empathy at home;*
- (F) Build self-esteem at home;*
- (G) Facilitate energetic children's 'catharsis' (i.e., 'letting off steam in a positive way').*

(i) The facilitator should introduce these strategies by name to the participants. This can be done by copying the above list onto cards/worksheets, or projecting the list overhead.

(ii) The group of participants should then split into pairs of 'work partners'.

(iii) The participants should then think about the following issues in relation to each of the above strategies (again, this list can either be copied onto cards/worksheets, or projected

overhead).

*(a) The skills that parents would need in implementing this (be precise);*

*(b) Things which parents could find difficult in implementing this;*

*(c) Objections young people could have if an attempt was made to implement this;*

*(d) Decision point: Would you feel happy in implementing this, or advising someone else to do so? If 'yes', answer question (v); if 'no', answer question (vi), and return to the pre-chapter reading;*

*(e) How I would implement this, or advise someone else to do so; or,*

*(f) The information/skills I would need before attempting to implement this myself, or advising someone else to do so;*

*(g) Then, regardless of whether you answered (e) or (f), answer the following: What other considerations could there be in recommending/implementing this strategy?*

### **Activity 3.8 - 'Understanding parents' concerns and perspectives around cyberbullying'**

#### **Purpose**

This activity is designed for a group of approximately twenty to twenty-five participants. The purpose of the activity is to generate an understanding, amongst the group participants, of what parents' concerns are around cyberbullying. In the first place, and through the first part of the activity, participants should come to recognise that how parents think about cyberbullying for themselves is not necessarily how the research experts or school policymakers define it. In the second place, participants are put into a position of thinking about cyberbullying from the perspectives of different parenting positions.

#### **Resource**

The facilitator will require only the instructions for this activity, and a board or flipchart and appropriate marker for use in presenting written summaries of the group's responses.

#### **Procedure**

There are two parts to this activity:

**Part One:**

- i. Working alone, at first, each participant is asked to come up with a definition
- ii. The whole group can then be divided up into smaller sub-groups (of four to six members each). The members of the sub-groups compare their definitions, and try to achieve consensus on how they believe that parents of school students would define 'cyberbullying'.
- iii. Each sub-group elects a spokesperson, who feeds the sub-group's findings back to the facilitator, who, using the board / flipchart, summarizes the findings of the whole group.
- iv. The facilitator then relays the definition of those well known in the field of cyberbullying.

For example, some researchers <sup>(3)</sup> define cyberbullying as the: *"... willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computer, cell phones and other electronic devices"*

*or*

Bill Belsey, President of Bullying.org (Canada), defines cyberbullying as follows: *"Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies such as email, cell phone and pager text messages, instant messaging, defamatory personal web sites, and defamatory online personal polling web sites to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm others."*

**Part Two:**

- i. Four potential parenting positions are introduced to the group by the facilitator (these can be elaborated into mock case histories by the facilitator, if this is likely to assist with the participants' understanding):
  - a. *a parent whose child who has been subjected to cyberbullying;*
  - b. *a parent whose child has been indisputably identified as having been involved as having cyber-bullied others at school;*
  - c. *a parent whose child has been accused of having victimized others at school, although*

- the parent is unsure as to the accuracy of his or her child being so identified;*
- d. *a parent whose child is a bystander/witness to a bullying incident;*
- e. *a parent whose child is not involved in problems of cyberbullying at school, although remains concerned about such problems within schools.*
- ii. The whole group (i.e., all the participants together) splits into four sub groups. Each sub-group is allotted one of the four 'parenting positions' outlined above in Point 1.
- iii. Each sub-group has to discuss how their allotted 'parent' might respond to the following prompts:
- *what is the role of external authorities in preventing and countering cyberbullying in schools?*
  - *what is the role of the school management authorities in preventing and countering cyberbullying in schools?*
  - *what is the role of the school's teaching and non-teaching staff in preventing and cyberbullying in schools?*
  - *what is the role of the school's parents in preventing and countering cyberbullying in schools?*
  - *what is the role of the school's students in preventing and countering cyberbullying in schools?*
  - *what should the school do in dealing with perpetrators of cyberbullying in schools?*
  - *what should the school do in dealing with bystanders to/witnesses of cyberbullying in schools?*
  - *what should the school do in dealing with victims of cyberbullying in schools?*
- iv. Each sub-group then elects a spokesperson, who feeds the sub-group's discussion back to the facilitator.
- v. After re-forming the whole group (i.e., all the participants together) from the smaller



sub-groups, the facilitator should aim to summarize the outcomes of the activity (using the board / flipchart) and reflect upon its meaning. The facilitator should seek to address the following:

- *which concerns are constant between different parenting positions?*

### Activity 3.9 - 'Time for reflection'

#### Purpose

The purpose of the activity is to introduce parents to the various different discussion type questions that relate to cyberbullying.

#### Procedure

This activity can be completed by the individual or alternatively can also be tackled within a group setting. The objective of this activity is to stimulate reflective discussion based on the questions below:

- **Problem:** Your child has received a threat on his / her mobile. What do you do?
- **Problem:** You discover that your child is bullying others via their mobile phone and web pages. What do you do?
- **Statement:** Parents have responsibility for what's written on their children's web pages. What do you think?
- **Problem:** Your child has been filmed with a camera on a cell phone in the changing rooms and the film has been published online. What do you do?
- **Problem:** Your child has received a message on his mobile/email/profile that ridicules/offends a friend. What do you do?

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## Further reading and additional material

### Books

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- Byrne, B. (1993). Coping with bullying in schools. Dublin: Columba Press.
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## DVD

- Silent Witnesses (2006). The Anti-Bullying Centre, Trinity College Dublin
- Breaking through the Cloud of Bullying (2009). [www.antibullyingcampaign.ie](http://www.antibullyingcampaign.ie)

## Video films

- Hands on Bullying. (1998). Tony Jewes Productions.
- The Trouble with Tom. (1991). Central Independent Television Productions.

## Useful Websites

- Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre, Trinity College Dublin. <http://www.abc.tcd.ie>
- Anti-Bullying Alliance. <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>
- BBC1 Schools: Bullying. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/bullying>
- Bullying in Schools and What to do About it. <http://www.education.unisa.edu.au/bullying>
- Bullying Online. <http://www.bullying.co.uk>
- Bully Online. <http://www.successunlimited.co.uk>
- Campaign to highlight cyber-bullying(Top ten tips for parents)  
<http://www.carphonewarehouse.ie>
- Childline. <http://www.childline.org.uk>
- Department for Education and Employment. <http://www.parents.dfes.gov.uk>
- Foreldreutvalget for grunnskolen. <http://www.fug.no>
- Internet Safety for Parents. <http://www.internetsafety.ie>
- National Child Protection Helpline. <http://www.nspcc.org.uk>
- Net Safe. The Internet Safety Group. [www.netsafe.org.nz](http://www.netsafe.org.nz)
- Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum. <http://www.niabf.org.uk/cms/>
- Parent Centre, The. <http://www.parentcentre.gov.uk>
- Parentline Plus. <http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk>
- Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service. <http://www.respectme.org.uk/>
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