AN EDUCATOR'S GUIDE TO CYBER BULLYING

MEDIA LITERACY COUNCIL

15

58

1K Disliked

Why do you even come to school when nobody wants to see you?

120

1K Not interested

9

120 Unfollowed

120 Angry

125K

FOREWORD

Lock Wai Han
Chairman
Media Literacy Council
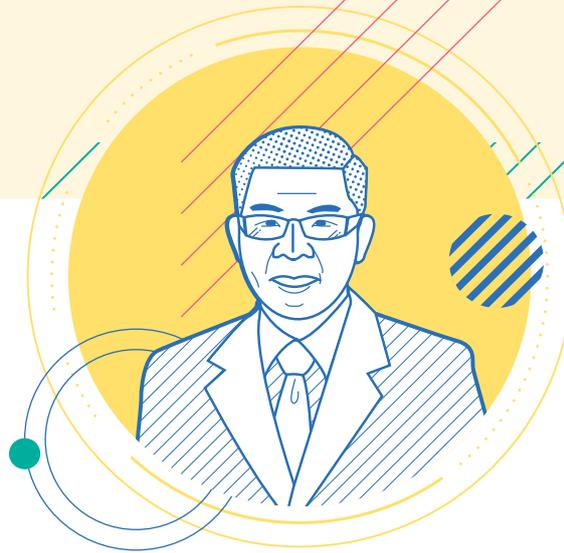
Every student you teach is a digital native. Their lives have been integrated with technology, in the form of smartphones, social media, YouTube videos, and the Internet. Yet, being a digital native does not automatically accord a student the skills they need to navigate online spaces safely and responsibly.

With social networking platforms taking up an increasingly significant part in the formation of friendships and relationships, do your students understand the difference between online and offline connections? Do your students understand the threat that follows the possibility of anonymity online? Do they relate the rules of engagement that guide their offline behaviours and lives to the way they conduct themselves online? Given all these potential pitfalls, what role do educators play in guiding students to think more critically about the information they post online and the messages they send?

The Media Literacy Council (MLC) strongly believes that teachers are an integral part of raising generations of young people to understand how to be safe, smart, and kind online. As a key component of the school landscape in which students spend half of their days, teachers are well-placed to tackle one of the major challenges of the online world: cyber-bullying. Cyber-bullying affects growing numbers of young people every year and, given our digitalisation, at younger and younger ages.

To this end, An Educator's Guide to Cyber-bullying provides educators with supplementary materials that explain the problem of cyber-bullying, and detailed, engaging lesson plans for the classroom. The Guide provides different activities for different grades of students, from lower primary to pre-university, to better meet and tackle the various types of concerns and challenges they face as closely as possible. We hope that you find this Guide useful when tackling the issue of cyber-bullying and raising compassionate and considerate classes of students.

CONTENTS

WHAT IS
CYBER-BULLYING
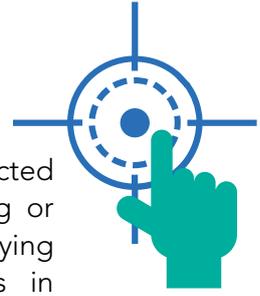
You might not think cyber-bullying has affected your students, particularly if they are young or don't have their own phone. But cyber-bullying affects school-going children of all ages in many different ways. Have you encountered the following examples in your classroom?


Lisa, *an obese Sec 4 student, was changing in class after PE. Danielle secretly took a photo of her. Within minutes, the photo had reached every class in their school.*

Wei Jie *overheard his classmates talking about how much fun they had at the zoo together. He realised that they had created a class WhatsApp chat without him to plan their class outings.*

Iman *was at home after fracturing her leg at volleyball. Her teammates said they would stop by to visit her before they went for a movie. She got a message from her friend saying, "sorry girl change of plans no movie so no visit". She was upset but understood and quickly responded, "no worries!!" An hour later, she saw that same friend's Instagram story video of the whole team at the movie after all.*

Cyber-bullying is any behaviour over digital devices by a person or group that intentionally hurts someone else emotionally or physically. It can occur through texts or, increasingly, through social media platforms or gaming chat rooms. The cyber-bully may be someone that the victim knows or a stranger online. The cyber-bully may also be anonymous.

The cyber-bully may also ask another person or a group to carry out the cyber-bullying instead of doing it themselves. The cyber-bully may be motivated by prejudice, such as real or perceived differences amongst students.

Cyber-bullying can take many forms, including:

Harassment

Repeatedly sending offensive and insulting messages, both in private or public.

Denigration

Spreading vicious rumours or gossip to damage a person's reputation or relationships.

Trolling

Posting inflammatory or off-topic messages to provoke emotional responses.

Impersonation

Pretending to be someone – by either accessing their private accounts or creating fake profiles – to make the person look bad, get them in trouble, or damage their reputation or relationships.

Outing

Sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or photos online, or tricking them to reveal embarrassing information or photos, which are then shared with others.

Exclusion

Intentionally excluding someone from online groups of friend circles.

Cyber-bullying is a **serious, growing problem in Singapore.**

A 2018 survey by Mediacorp programme Talking Point found that one out of four primary and secondary school students had been bullied online. Worryingly, the majority of these students did not inform their parents.

WHERE DOES
CYBER-BULLYING OCCUR

Cyber-bullying occurs over digital devices and online platforms. As a teacher, you might already be familiar with several, such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube, and may even use WhatsApp with your class to organise outings or hold group discussions. However, young people's choice of social media platforms is quick to change due to the evolving nature of social media, making it difficult to track what is most popular with students at any given time. Nonetheless, it is useful to familiarise yourself with several current, popular social media sites.

Instagram

Age limit 13

Photo-sharing app that lets people send direct messages, and upload short videos or photos that can be seen for 24 hours. Instagram can be particularly harmful for a child's mental state because of the body image expectations that come from photoshopped images by influencers. Cyber-bullying often occurs through negative comments or trolling on posts.

Snapchat

Age limit 13

Messaging app which lets pictures and videos be seen for a short time before being 'deleted' (they are actually very easy to save and the company has control over all content as well). Snapchat also has 'Stories', which show content for 24 hours, 'Discover', for brands to show their ads and advertise products, and 'Snap Map', to share locations with friends. Kids can also maintain 'Snapstreaks' with their friends by sending at least one photo to each other every day. It can be difficult to track cyber-bullying, since the images and messages 'disappear' so quickly, and users are notified if someone takes a screenshot of what they sent. The breaking of 'Snapstreaks' have also been used as a way to exclude someone.

Tumblr

Age limit 13

Microblogging site where users can make public blogs, follow others' blogs, and access content through common hashtags. Tumblr generally does not restrict content and encourages collaborative blogging. Tumblr has recently come under fire for not deleting blogs with explicit photos of young people being shared without their permission. It can also be easy to create a 'hate blog' about a specific person, where people come together to write mean things or share offensive images about someone.

Musical.ly

Age limit 13

Video app that lets users create 15-second to 1 minute videos, at different speeds, and choose sound tracks to follow it. Musical.ly can be used to make fun of or mock victims, by imitating them and sharing it amongst their friends. There have also been reports of online predators using the app to find and communicate with victims.

YouTube

Age limit 13

Video-sharing website that lets users upload, view, rate, share, and comment on videos, and subscribe to other users. YouTube has restricted content that is only for 18+ year old users. YouTube can be the site of cyber-bullying as it allows people to freely comment on others' videos, and share videos of someone without their consent.

Understanding the nature of these social media platforms, their functions, and the ways students interact with each other while using them can reveal useful information about the ways students might be bullied or bully others online. For example, exclusion online might be the mass de-following of someone on Instagram, and humiliation might involve creating a fake Tumblr profile with embarrassing edited images. Knowing the lingo, such as Snapstreaks or Vines, is also helpful in translating what occurred to a student and why it may have upset them.
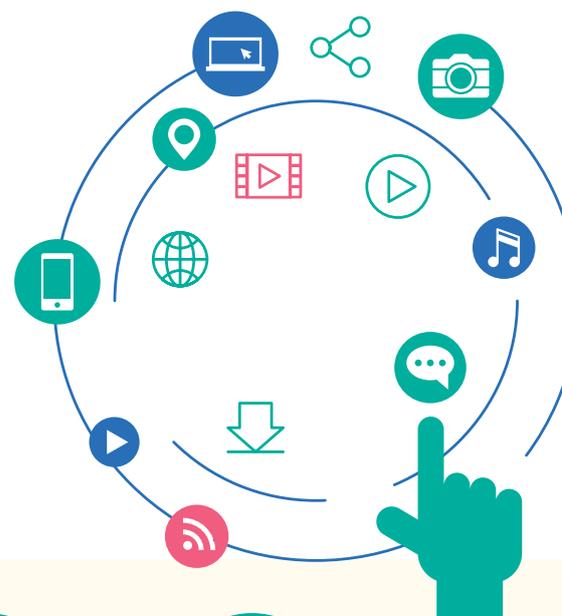
Ask.FM

Age limit 13

Social networking site where users can register to create a profile and send anonymous questions to others. It is possible to change privacy settings to not allow anonymous questions. Like other anonymous sites, there have been many incidences of hate speech and harassment reported.

Sarahah

Age limit 17

Social networking site where people can create profiles and send messages to each other anonymously. It has been deleted from Apple's App Store and Google Play after complaints of cyber-bullying, worsened by the anonymity afforded by the site, but it can still be used and found online.

Vine

Age limit 13

App on which users could upload 6-second looping video clips. It was shut down by Twitter, but the videos are archived and can still be watched. The term Vine is also commonly still used to describe short videos, now shared on Instagram or YouTube instead. Vines can be made to mock people, such as by comparing them to an infamous celebrity or mimicking them in a mean way.

Tellonym

Age limit 13

Social networking site where people can create profiles and anonymously send 'Tells' to others and answer questions on their profile. Given the anonymous nature of the site, harassing and cruel comments have been common. A group of cyber-bullies may also send or answer many Tells about someone without directly involving them (e.g., a group of students asking each other if they would date the victim and answering crudely or cruelly).

Bigo Live

Age limit 16

Live-streaming and chatting app with a currency called 'diamonds' ($1 gets 42 diamonds) which can be used to buy items to 'gift' streamers. These items are converted into 'beans' which streamers can cash out for real money (280 beans for $1). Due to the transactional nature of the app, many online predators find victims on the site, and many young people are enticed to sharing videos of themselves that can later be used to blackmail them.

THE IMPACT OF
CYBER-BULLYING

It is well recorded that bullying causes long-term psychological harm to victims *(Hinduja & Patchin, 2008).*

Children feel lonely, angry, embarrassed, and confused when bullying occurs, which can lead to depression, anxiety, school avoidance, and even suicide. Cyber-bullying is no different.

It is possible that the harm caused by cyber-bullying may be greater than the harm caused by traditional bullying due to the nature of the online world. Cyber-bullying has a wider audience since it can be sent to anyone, at any time, and at any place, meaning that both the potential viewers and participants in the cyber-bullying increase. Cyber-bullying material is often impossible to retrieve or take back. Cyber-bullies can be anonymous and involve other people including the target's friends, such that the target has no idea who can be trusted. The cloak of anonymity online can also cause children to behave in more vicious or cruel ways than they otherwise would. Children may feel that there is no escape since their phones and tablets follow them from their schools to their homes, making the victimisation 24/7.

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120

👤 *120 Unfollowed*
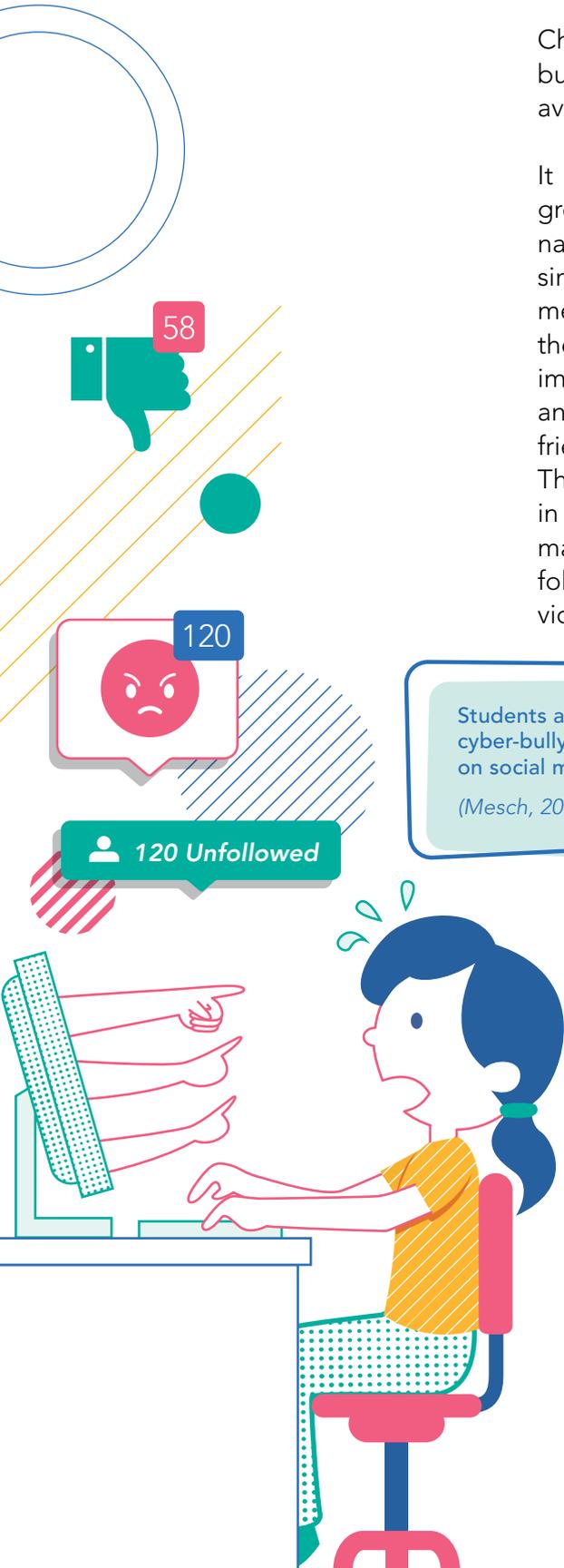
Students are more likely to experience cyber-bullying the longer they spend on social media platforms.

(Mesch, 2009)

Girls are more likely to face cyber-bullying than boys for the same amount of time spent online.

(Walrave & Heirman, 2010)

Despite the fact that the bullying takes place virtually, students who face cyber-bullying are more likely to feel that school is not a safe place and skip school.

(Holt, Chee, Ng & Bossler, 2013)

Students who are cyber-bullied are more likely to self-harm.

(Singapore Children's Society & Institute of Mental Health, 2014)

Students facing cyber-bullying are more likely to suffer academically.

(Kowalski and Limber, 2013)

THE SIGNS OF
CYBER-BULLYING

If you are concerned that a student may be a target of cyber-bullying, pay close attention to them both in and outside of class, such as during recess. It is easier to spot these signs and help the affected student if you have a good relationship based on mutual trust and respect. Thus, be empathetic and non-judgemental when discussing cyber-bullying. This also makes it more likely that a student approaches you when they or someone they know is cyber-bullied.

Emotional signs

Sudden withdrawal
This is easy to spot with out-going students who suddenly become quiet and avoid interacting with their classmates and friends.

Bursts of anger
If a student lashes out in unexpected situations or when they would not normally, it might be indicative of a build-up of stress due to cyber-bullying.

Restlessness
A student may be particularly anxious and cautious after being cyber-bullied.

Upset during or after using digital device
If your student appears to be emotionally distraught during or after using their device, someone may be victimising them online.

Social signs

Difficulty eating or sleeping
Keep an eye out for students who appear more tired than they usual, such as if they suddenly fall asleep in class. If you are concerned about a particular student, check if they appear to be losing or gaining weight rapidly.

Avoidance of friends and classmates
Victims of cyber-bullying may stop hanging out with their usual group of friends and classmates, who may be perpetrators of bullying.

Exclusion by friends and classmates
Note if your class appears to exclude someone, such as ignoring them during group discussions or annoyed to play with them during team games at PE.

Self-harm
Signs of self-harm include your student taking extra effort to hide parts of their body, particularly their arms, or their friends being more concerned about their safety. This requires immediate intervention, such as contacting the school counsellor and parents.

Academic signs

Decreasing interest and involvement in school
A student may begin submitting homework half-complete, be consistently late in submitting work, or stop speaking up during class discussions.

Grades fall
Even if a student is generally lacklustre about school, a drop in their grades may be an indicator that they are struggling with cyber-bullying.

Skips class
A student may skip class to avoid their classmates or having to interact with their peers. This may also be the victim's way of 'acting out' to release their frustrations.

Skips school
If a student appears to be avoiding school, it is best to contact their parent to better understand the situation and the reasons behind their behaviour.

Helping Your Students
Lower Primary

If your students are between 7 and 9 years old, it can be difficult to know where to begin explaining the problem of cyber-bullying, much less teaching them how to change this behaviour. Most of your students likely do not have their own digital devices or, given the age restrictions of social media platforms, access to social media at this point. However, kids have innovative ways of getting online, such as by using their parents' or the family's digital devices, and many secretly make social media accounts. Parents are more likely to allow digital use if platforms such as WhatsApp are used for schoolwork. As a teacher, it is important to bear in mind that your lower primary students are technically not allowed to use platforms such as WhatsApp, and to think twice about using it with your class.

OBJECTIVES

Introduce the issue of cyber-bullying, its impact, and how to respond to it.

Teach students how to behave when they go online, not find out what exactly they are doing online or whether they are breaking rules with their device use.

DISCUSS

Question for the class

Who in this class goes online?
How much time do you spend online?

Will get mixed responses.

What are some of the good things about going online?

Examples of responses:
1. *Finding out cool facts*
2. *Talking to your friends more*
3. *Playing games*
4. *Having fun*

What are some of the ways someone might get hurt by going online?

Examples of responses:
1. *Someone hurts their friend*
2. *They make jokes that they think are funny, but it's actually hurting someone*

EXPLAIN

Cyber-bullying is using digital devices, like our phones or computers, to deliberately upset someone. This can include:

Sending someone mean messages

Spreading rumours about someone that make them look bad

Sharing secrets about someone that they didn't want anyone else to know

Excluding someone by not letting them join any of your online groups

TEACH

If you see or experience cyber-bullying:

IGNORE
the cyber-bully
▼
You can block or unfollow the bully by changing your privacy settings.

TAKE
screenshots
▼
If someone is being mean, take screenshots of what they are messaging or posting so that you can use this as proof later on.

REPORT
the cyber-bully
▼
Use the community reporting tools so that the social media site knows someone is hurting you on their sites.

TELL
your parent (or me)
▼
Cyber-bullying is not okay, so it is important to tell an adult and get help.

ACTIVITY

Do you know the saying, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me"?

Will get mixed responses.

What do you think this saying means?

Examples of responses:
1. *Finding out cool facts*
2. *Talking to your friends more*
3. *Playing games*
4. *Having fun*

Do you think this is true?

Examples of responses:
1. *Someone hurts their friend*
2. *They make jokes that they think are funny, but it's actually hurting someone*

Explain the saying, and tell your students that words also have power. It can be hard to ignore someone who is saying mean things about you, as it can be very hurtful.

RECAP

Question for the class

What is cyber-bullying?

Examples of responses:
1. *When someone is mean to someone else online*
2. *When people exclude someone from playing games with them online*

What should you do if you see someone being cyber-bullied?

Examples of responses:
1. *Support them so they have a friend*
2. *Tell the cyber-bully to stop*
3. *Tell an adult about what is happening*

Helping Your Students
Upper Primary

At the ages of 10 to 12, some students are likely getting their own digital devices. For example, a recent online poll done by the Media Literacy Council found that 35% of the respondents thought that a child should have their first mobile phone at this age. These students likely also have access to at least one social media platform, such as WhatsApp or YouTube. As this is the start of their journey in exploring the online space and creating an online reputation, it is important that they know how to behave while online.

OBJECTIVES

- Introduce the issue of cyber-bullying, its impact, and how to respond to it.

- Introduce the concept of being an upstander and its importance.

- Teach students to be upstanders together when faced with cyber-bullying by showing them the importance of courage as a virtue.

DISCUSS

Question for the class

What are some of your favourite things to do online?

Examples of responses:
1. *Talking to my friends*
2. *Playing games*

Have you ever seen anyone being mean to someone online? If you would like to share, please change their names so that you don't reveal anyone's real identity.

Will get mixed responses.

EXPLAIN

Cyber-bullying is using digital devices, like your phone, tablet, or computer, to deliberately hurt or embarrass someone. This can include:
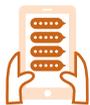
Sending someone insulting messages repeatedly

Spreading rumours or gossip about someone that makes them look bad

Pretending to be someone online to make them look bad or get them in trouble

Sharing embarrassing information or secrets about someone online

Excluding someone from online groups

DISCUSS

Question for the class

How is cyber-bullying different from normal bullying?	*Bullying:* 1. *It usually stops when the student goes home.* 2. *It is usually obvious who the bully is.* 3. *It causes harm physically and emotionally.* *Cyber-bullying:* 1. *It can happen any time and wherever you are.* 2. *It can be hard to know who the cyber-bully is, as they can be anonymous online.* 3. *It can be quite public. Lots of people can see what is happening to you online.*
How might someone be affected by cyber-bullying?	*Examples of responses:* 1. *They might feel hurt or sad.* 2. *They might be embarrassed that other people know something about them that they were hiding.* 3. *They might be angry that their friend betrayed them.* 4. *They might feel lonely, because everyone is making fun of them.*

TEACH

If you or your friend experiences cyber-bullying:

DON'T BLAME
the victim

▼

They did not ask to be cyber-bullied and it is not their fault.

FIND
a friend

▼

Being cyber-bullied can be very upsetting, so make sure the victim is supported by caring friends and family.

IGNORE
the cyber-bully

▼

Most cyber-bullies just want attention so do not respond to them.

TAKE
screenshots

▼

Take screenshots of the bully's messages and posts to use as proof of the bullying.

REPORT
the cyber-bully

▼

Use the community reporting tools so that the social media site knows someone is cyber-bullying.

TELL
an adult

▼

Tell a trusted adult, like a parent or teacher, about what is happening. Cyber-bullying is not okay, so it is important to get help.

Helping Your Students
Upper Primary

DISCUSS

Question for the class

What is a bystander?	*Someone who sees cyber-bullying happen, but does not step in to help. Some might even join in the cyber-bullying and spread it.*
If a bystander stands by and watches cyber-bullying happen without helping, what do you think an "upstander" is?	*An upstander is someone who:* 1. *Empathises with the victim of the cyber-bullying, letting them know that they have support and a listening ear* 2. *Does not go along with cyber-bullying because of peer pressure* 3. *Stands up for the victim in their own ways* 4. *Encourages the victim to tell an adult about what is happening*
What makes it easier to be an upstander?	*It is easier to stand up for a victim of cyber-bullying when many other people do it as well. It is important for everyone to be an upstander, as this will stop cyber-bullies once and for all.*
Why might someone find it hard to be an upstander?	1. *The cyber-bully is scary.* 2. *They are friends with the cyber-bully, and they do not want to hurt their friendship.* 3. *They don't like the victim of the cyber-bullying, so they don't want to stand up for them*

ACTIVITY

Present this scenario to your students:

Class 5C from Stepford Primary School has a WhatsApp group. One day, Xavier shares an embarrassing photo of Zi Yang when he was sleeping before class. People start posting in the chat calling him "gross", "ugly", and saying "eww".

If you were a student in that group, what would you do?	*Will get mixed responses.*
If you wanted to be an upstander in this situation, what could you do?	*Examples of responses:* 1. *Do not join in the cyber-bullying.* 2. *Send Xavier a private message to take down the photo.* 3. *Tell the class that they are not being nice, and Zi Yang did not want this photo shared.* 4. *Tell the class teacher about what happened so that they can talk to the class.* 5. *Message Zi Yang to tell him that you are there to listen and support him.* 6. *Encourage Zi Yang to tell the teacher or a parent.*

At the end of the activity, explain to your students the importance of being an upstander instead of a bystander in that situation. Tell them that when people intervene when cyber-bullying happens, the bully is a lot more likely to stop.

ACTIVITY

Ask your students to stand in a line. Tell them that you will read out a few statements, and that they should move one step forward if they think it may be cyber-bullying, two steps forward if they think it is definitely cyber-bullying, and to stay where they are if they do not think it is cyber-bullying. After each statement, ask one or two students to explain why they did or did not take steps.

Statement	Assessment
Mary messages her classmate Nina, "Why is it taking you so long to finish your work? What's wrong with you?"	*This is cyber-bullying as Mary is criticising Nina harshly.*
Nina messages Jing Xuan, "Did you finish the math homework?"	*This is not cyber-bullying as Nina is only talking about school work.*
Jing Xuan messages Rani, "I don't want you to come for my birthday party."	*This is cyber-bullying as Jing Xuan is excluding Rani from a social function.*
Rani messages her brother Raul, "you looked so ugly in that photo why did you even put it up lol jk"	*This could be cyber-bullying if Raul did not think his sister was being funny.*
Raul messages Chin, "You're such a freak."	*This could be cyber-bullying if Raul meant freak as an insult instead of praise, which it can be in some groups.*
Chin messages her best friend Mary, "I can't believe you said that to John, you stupid, ah?" Followed by 5 laughing-crying emojis.	*This is most likely not cyber-bullying as Chin and Mary are close friends, and she is jokingly making fun of her.*

At the end of the activity, your students may be standing at different points, with some further ahead than others. Ask them to reflect on what this could mean, namely that different people have different ideas of what constitutes as cyber-bullying. Remind them to take this into consideration when they are saying things online.

RECAP

Question for the class

What should you do if you see someone being cyber-bullied?

Examples of responses:
1. *Be an upstander*
2. *Support them so they know they have a friend*
3. *Tell the cyber-bully to stop*
4. *Tell an adult about what is happening*

How can you be an upstander?

Examples of responses:
1. *Do not join in the cyber-bullying*
2. *Talk to the cyber-bully and tell them to stop*
3. *Encourage the victim to tell an adult*

58

120 Angry

Helping Your Students
Lower Secondary

Beginning in secondary school, students often get their first smartphone and are allowed to use social media platforms too. It is important that your students learn not just how to behave online, but also that their comments and posts – both positive and negative – will stay online.

OBJECTIVES

Explain the types of cyber-bullying and how to respond to them.

Introduce the concept of digital footprints and the impact it can have on someone's lives.

Show students the importance of leaving positive digital footprints that do not negatively affect them later in life.

DISCUSS

Question for the class

What are some of your favourite things to do online?

Examples of responses:
1. Talking to my friends
2. Playing games

Have you ever seen anyone being mean to someone online? If you would like to share, please change the names so that you don't reveal their real identity.

Will get mixed responses.

EXPLAIN

Cyber-bullying is using digital devices, like your phone, tablet, or computer, to deliberately hurt or embarrass someone. This includes harassment, denigration, impersonation, outing, and exclusion.

Question for the class

Split your class into five groups and give each group the name of one type of cyber-bullying. Ask them to come up with explanations of what each type means.

1. Harassment. Repeatedly sending offensive and insulting messages.
2. Denigration. Spreading vicious rumours or gossip to damage a person's reputation or relationships.
3. Trolling. Posting inflammatory or off-topic messages to provoke emotional responses.
4. Impersonation. Pretending to be someone – by either accessing their private accounts or creating fake profiles – to make the person look bad, get them in trouble, or damage their reputation or relationships.
5. Outing. Sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or photos online, or tricking them to reveal embarrassing information or photos, which are then shared with others.
6. Exclusion. Intentionally excluding someone from online groups of friend circles.

120

How might cyber-bullying affect someone?	*Examples of responses:*

Examples of responses:
1. *They might feel hurt or sad.*
2. *They might be embarrassed that other people know something about them that they were hiding.*
3. *They might be angry that their friend betrayed them.*
4. *They might feel lonely, because everyone is making fun of them.*

TEACH

If you or someone you know experiences cyber-bullying, here are some tips:

DON'T BLAME
the victim
▼
They did not ask to be cyber-bullied and it is not their fault.

BLOCK
the cyber-bully
▼
Change your privacy settings to block or unfollow the cyber-bully on all social media platforms.

REPORT
the cyber-bully
▼
Use the community reporting tools so that the social media site knows someone is cyber-bullying.

DO NOT
retaliate
▼
Most cyber-bullies just want attention so do not respond to them.

TAKE
screenshots
▼
Take screenshots of the cyber-bully's messages and posts to use as proof.

TALK
to an adult
▼
Tell a trusted adult, like a parent or teacher, about what is happening. Cyber-bullying is not okay, so it is important to get help.
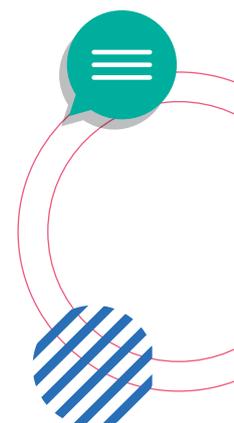
Question for the class

We talked about the effects of cyber-bullying on the victim. Do you think there are any effects on the perpetrator?

Examples of responses:
1. *They might regret it later.*
2. *Everyone will always think of them as someone who was mean, so they will not be trusted.*

What happens to mean comments once they are posted? Do they disappear?

Examples of responses:
1. *They can be deleted by the person who made them or by the site if you report it.*
2. *They can be saved or screenshotted so that they will always be online.*

Helping Your Students
Lower Secondary

Question for the class

What are digital footprints?	*Digital footprints are everything a person does in the digital world.*

What are examples of digital footprints?

Examples of responses:
1. *Search history*
2. *Text messages, including deleted ones*
3. *Photos and videos, including deleted ones*
4. *Tagged photos, even those you never wanted online*
5. *Likes/loves on sites like Instagram and YouTube*
6. *Browser history, even when you use 'Incognito' mode*
7. *Locations, as tagged on photos on social media*

Why do your digital footprints matter?

Examples of responses:
1. *It can be difficult to take back things you put online*
2. *People make up their minds about someone based off what they post online*
3. *People can look you up online and learn about you*

ACTIVITY

1 Watch the video "YOU LOOK DISGUSTING" by My Pale Skin on YouTube. The video shows the comments that a woman received on photos she had posted online.

What do you think was the point of the video?

Will get mixed responses.

Imagine you had posted a mean comment on this video. Who do you think could see this comment? What are the repercussions of people seeing your comment?

Examples of responses:
1. *My parents might see it and punish me.*
2. *My friends might see it and think that I was mean, and not want to hang out with me after that.*
3. *My teacher might see it and punish me for my behaviour.*
4. *In the future, if I want to go to a different school or university, they might see this and not accept me.*

Explain to your students how unthinking hurtful comments can have implications on many different parts of their life.

ACTIVITY

2 Watch the video "Amazing mind reader reveals his gift" by Duval Guillaume on YouTube. The video shows a man who claims to read the minds of random people on the street, revealing many details about their lives. He then reveals that he found the information online. The video is actually a commercial, but the point is made.

What do you think was the point of the video?	*Will get mixed responses.*
Have any of you ever Googled yourself?	*Will get mixed responses.*

Ask the students to Google themselves, by searching their full name. Then, ask them to add key identifiers like 'Singapore' or the name of their school. Then, ask them to use a site like Pipl to search themselves. Without asking them to reveal anything about themselves, ask them if there was anything they found that was unexpected or that they would not want online.

What are the potential consequences of having this information about you online?

Examples of responses:
1. *Everyone will know this about me before even meeting me.*
2. *Someone might judge or make fun of me for something from really long ago.*

At the end of the activity, explain to your students that if people chose to dig a little deeper, they might also be able find other information such as their location or habits. Remind them that their digital footprint will only grow over time.

As a precaution, Google yourself before allowing your students to take part in this exercise. They might find it funny to search their teacher as well.

RECAP

Question for the class

What are digital footprints?

Examples of responses:
1. *Search history*
2. *Deleted photos and messages*

How could someone's digital footprints impact their life?

Examples of responses:
1. *People judge one another before meeting*
2. *Employers or schools turning you down based on a bad Tweet or photo*
3. *Being remembered by an old incident*

Helping Your Students
Upper Secondary

By this point of their academic career, students are often juggling multiple social media platforms, use their phones to carry out a range of tasks, and begin to think about how their online lives connect to their offline lives in different yet systematic ways.

OBJECTIVES

✓ Explain the types of cyber-bullying and how to respond to them.

✓ Introduce the concept of integrity and the importance of being honest online.

DISCUSS

Question for the class

Have you ever seen anyone being mean to someone online? If you would like to share, please change the names so that you don't reveal their real identity.

Will get mixed responses.

Why do you think people are mean online?

Examples of responses:
1. *They feel bad in real life, so they cyber-bully as an outlet.*
2. *They are mean people.*
3. *They get bored and have nothing better to do.*

EXPLAIN

Cyber-bullying is using digital devices, like your phone, tablet, or computer, to deliberately hurt or embarrass someone. This includes harassment, denigration, impersonation, outing, and exclusion.

Question for the class

Split your class into five groups and give each group the name of one type of cyber-bullying. Ask them to come up with an explanation and examples of each type, then present one to the class.

Will get mixed responses.

How might cyber-bullying affect someone?

Examples of responses:
1. *They feel hurt or sad.*
2. *They get embarrassed that other people know something about them that they were hiding.*
3. *They might get suicidal or hurt themselves.*

Do you think people are more likely to cyber-bully than bully? Why?

Examples of responses.
1. *Yes, because when you are online, you can be anonymous or pretend to be someone else.*
2. *No, because good people are good online and offline.*

TEACH

If you or someone you know experience cyber-bullying, here are some tips:

DON'T BLAME
the victim
▼

They did not ask to be cyber-bullied and it is not their fault.

BLOCK
the cyber-bully
▼

Change your privacy settings to block or unfollow the cyber-bully on all social media platforms.

REPORT
the cyber-bully
▼

Use the community reporting tools so that the social media site knows someone is cyber-bullying.

DO NOT
retaliate
▼

Most cyber-bullies just want attention so do not respond to them.

TAKE
screenshots
▼

Take screenshots of the bully's messages and posts to use as proof of the bullying.

TALK
to an adult
▼

Tell a trusted adult, like a parent or teacher, about what is happening. Cyber-bullying is not okay, so it is important to get help.

58

1K Disliked
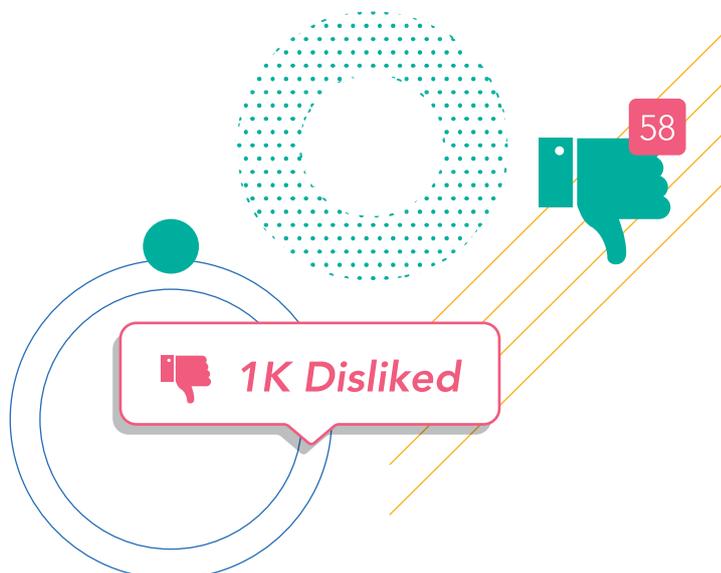
Helping Your Students
Upper Secondary

Question for the class

We talked about the effects of cyber-bullying on the victim. Do you think there are any effects on the perpetrator?

Examples of responses:
1. *They might regret it later.*
2. *Everyone will always think of them as someone who was mean, so they will not be trusted.*

Do you think people who cyber-bully also bully in the real world?

Will get mixed responses.

Why might someone act differently online than they do in real life? Tell your students that you mean any behaviour, not just cyber-bullying.

Examples of responses:
1. *They do not like who they are in real life, possibly because of the circumstances they are in.*
2. *They feel liberated online because they can 'be anyone'.*
3. *They enjoy being anonymous, because it makes them think they can get away with more.*

What are the consequences of pretending to be someone else online?

Examples of responses:
1. *You might feel better as you are more 'you' online.*
2. *You feel stressed by constantly having to pretend.*
3. *Your friends find out and stop trusting you.*

ACTIVITY

1. Ask your students to write down any site, platform, or app where they interact with other people. These might include YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, Reddit, Minecraft, Ask.fm, and more. Then, ask them to write down 3 things that are considered positive in these spaces (the type of behaviour that gets you more likes, friends, or followers), and 3 things that are considered negative (behaviour that gets you unfriended, fewer followers or likes). These things are considered the site's values.

Ask your students to consider what these positive or negative values mean. What is their impact? Do the positive values make it more or less likely that someone will cyber-bully? Is there a different between these values and what they should do in situations? Do the positive values promote shallowness or self-centredness? Do the negative values stigmatise kindness and support? Ask them to share some examples.

120

125K

58
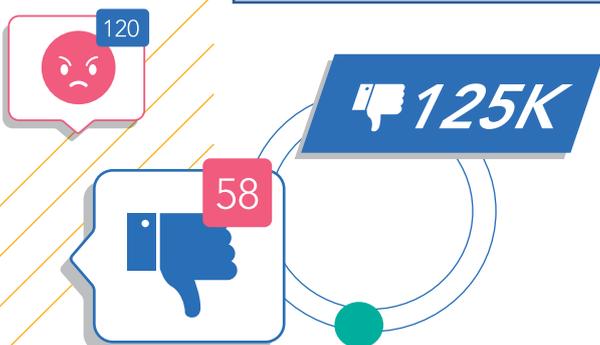
ACTIVITY

2 Ask the class to form a circle. Select two students to be the 'psychiatrists' and tell them that their classmates will be pretending to be each other. They must figure out who is who. Ask the psychiatrists to leave the class.

Explain to the class that they must decide on a pattern, like 'the person sitting on their right'. When the psychiatrist returns and asks questions to different classmates, they must answer for the person that the pattern dictates. For example, if the psychiatrist asked, "How many siblings do you have?" the student would have to answer based on the information they know about their classmate to their right. If they do not know the answer, everyone must yell 'Psychiatrist' and switch places. The game ends when the psychiatrists figure out the pattern that their classmates are using.

At the end of the activity, ask the students if it was easy pretending to be their classmate even for a few questions. Did they know if their classmate had siblings? Their favourite colour or subject? Did they know if their classmate had been happy or sad yesterday? Explain to them that it is never easy to be another person, even for a while, and this type of 'faking it' can be very stressful in the longer term.

RECAP

Question for the class

How can someone show integrity online?

Examples of responses:
1. *By being true to themselves*
2. *By trying to do the right thing*

Why is it important to be true to one's character online?

Examples of responses:
1. *It is hurtful to oneself and others.*
2. *It can be stressful to continue pretending.*

120 Unfollowed
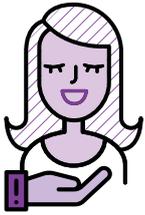
Helping Your Students
Pre-University

Students in pre-university education, such as junior colleges, polytechnics, ITEs or Arts institutions, are nearly legally adults. Many use digital devices in every aspect of their lives – to socialise, study, and relax – and many of their relationships are, in some part, grounded in online modes of communication.

Although students of this age are likely aware and have been involved in cyber-bullying, they might need guidance to understand the types of cyber-bullying that may occur and how to cope with the extremes.

OBJECTIVES

✓ Introduce the issues of cyber-bullying and online harassment.

✓ Explain to students that cyber-bullying is not a 'child's problem' by showing them the serious consequences of cyber-bullying amongst young adults.

DISCUSS

Question for the class

Have you ever seen anyone acting in a way online that was very different from the way they are in real life? Please change their names when you share so that you don't reveal their real identity.

Will get mixed responses.

Have you ever seen anyone act in a way that you thought was mean online? Please change their names when you share so that you don't reveal their real identity.

Will get mixed responses.

EXPLAIN

Cyber-bullying is using digital devices, like your phone, tablet, or computer, to deliberately hurt or embarrass someone. This includes harassment, denigration, impersonation, outing, and exclusion.

Further explain to them that online harassment is online behaviour that goes out of the way to cause trouble for a person by threatening or humiliating them, and can have serious social, psychological, or even physical consequences for the victim.

Question for the class

Split your class into five groups. Ask them to come up with an explanation and examples of each type, then present one to the class.

Examples of responses:
1. *Harassment: people sending many crude messages to someone through Tellonym or Sarahah anonymously*
2. *Denigration: when people spread rumours that a girl is promiscuous to make her look bad*
3. *Impersonation: creating a fake profile of someone to make rude comments to their friends and family*
4. *Outing: revealing a secret in a class-wide WhatsApp group*
5. *Exclusion: purposefully making sure that one person is not followed on any social media sites by the entire class*

Question for the class

What are the
similarities and
differences between
cyber-bullying and
online harassment?

Online harassment:
1. *Tends to be more severe, such as sharing intimate or sexual messages without someone's consent to shame them or encouraging a vulnerable person to self-harm or commit suicide.*
2. *Tends to involve more repeated threats over time.*

Both:
1. *Can take place over a long period of time.*
2. *Can have serious repercussions for the victim.*

What are the effects
of cyber-bullying/
online harassment?

1. *They might feel hurt or sad.*
2. *They might be embarrassed that other people know something about them that they were hiding.*
3. *They might be angry that their friend betrayed them.*
4. *They might feel lonely, because everyone is making fun of them.*

😠 *120 Angry*

TEACH

If you or someone you know experiences cyber-bullying, here are some tips:

DON'T BLAME
the victim
▼

They did not ask to be cyber-bullied and it is not their fault.

DO NOT
retaliate
▼

Most cyber-bullies just want attention so do not respond to them.

BLOCK
the cyber-bully
▼

Change your privacy settings to block or unfollow the cyber-bully on all social media platforms.

TAKE
screenshots
▼

Take screenshots of the bully's messages and posts to use as proof of the bullying.

REPORT
the cyber-bully
▼

Use the community reporting tools so that the social media site knows someone is cyber-bullying.

TALK
to an adult
▼

Tell a trusted adult, like a parent or teacher, about what is happening. Cyber-bullying is not okay, so it is important to get help.

GO TO
the authorities
▼

If someone has acted in a way that made you feel like your safety, or the safety of someone you know, is compromised, inform the police.
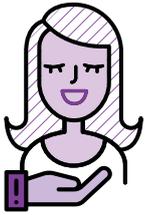
Helping Your Students
Pre-University

ACTIVITY

Watch the video "My Story: Struggling, bullying, suicide, self-harm" by TheSomebodytoknow on YouTube. The video shows a 15-year-old girl from Canada, Amanda Todd, using a series of flashcards to tell of her experiences being bullied. It also includes a photo of someone's arm after self-harming. Please do let your class know beforehand that the video involves blood, and the topics of self-harm and suicide, so that they can excuse themselves or turn away if necessary.

Begin a class discussion with the following questions. Since the topic is sensitive, skip questions if students seem too upset. If any student begins laughing or attacking Amanda for her 'weakness', be sure to point out that this is unacceptable behaviour, just like the behaviour that caused the death of her and many other young people.

1. Amanda Todd committed suicide about a month after releasing the video. How does it make you feel hearing this story of what someone even younger than you experienced?

2. What do you think the people who tormented her feel now, watching this?

3. Why do you think people comment things like 'you should drink more next time' on the video?

4. If you had been friends with Amanda, what would you have done or said?

5. What does it mean to stand up for someone being harassed?

RECAP

Question for the class

How does online harassment affect people?

Examples of responses:
1. *It causes anxiety and depression*
2. *It makes them distracted, so they do poorer at school*
3. *It makes them feel lonely*

How can you stand up against cyber-bullying?

Examples of responses:
1. *Do not join in the cyber-bullying*
2. *Talk to the cyber-bully and tell them to stop*
3. *Encourage the victim to tell an adult*

WHERE TO GO
FOR HELP

If your student appears to need more help than the school can provide, there are several organisations that they can turn to for help:

Coalition Against Bullying for Children and Youth (CABCY)
– For advice on cyber-bullying

6223 3122
ask@cabcy.org.sg

TOUCH Cyber Wellness
– For help on a range of cyber wellness issues

1800 377 2252
cyberwellness@touch.org.sg

Fei Yue Community Services
– For practical and emotional guidance for youth

6422 1599
project180@fycs.org

Help123
– Hotline for youth cyber wellness issues

1800 6123 123
hello@help123.sg

Tinkle Friend
– Hotline for primary-school aged children

1800 2744 788

Samaritans of Singapore
– For emotional support for suicide-related issues

1800 221 4444
pat@sos.org.sg
www.sos.org.sg

Community Justice Centre
– For practical and emotional support, and in-person legal advice

6557 4100
help@cjc.org.sg
www.cjc.org.sg

The Legal Aid Bureau (LAB)
– For legal services for Singaporeans and PRs

1800 225 5529
www.mlaw.gov.sg/content/lab

AWARE (Association of Women for Action and Research)
– For counselling and legal advice for women

1800 777 5555
helpline@aware.org.sg
www.haware.org.sg

SACC (Sexual Assault Crisis Centre)
– For counselling, legal advice for sexual harassment and assault, and assistance in courts and police cases

6779 0282
sacc@aware.org.sg
www.sacc.aware.org.sg

MEDIA
LITERACY
COUNCIL
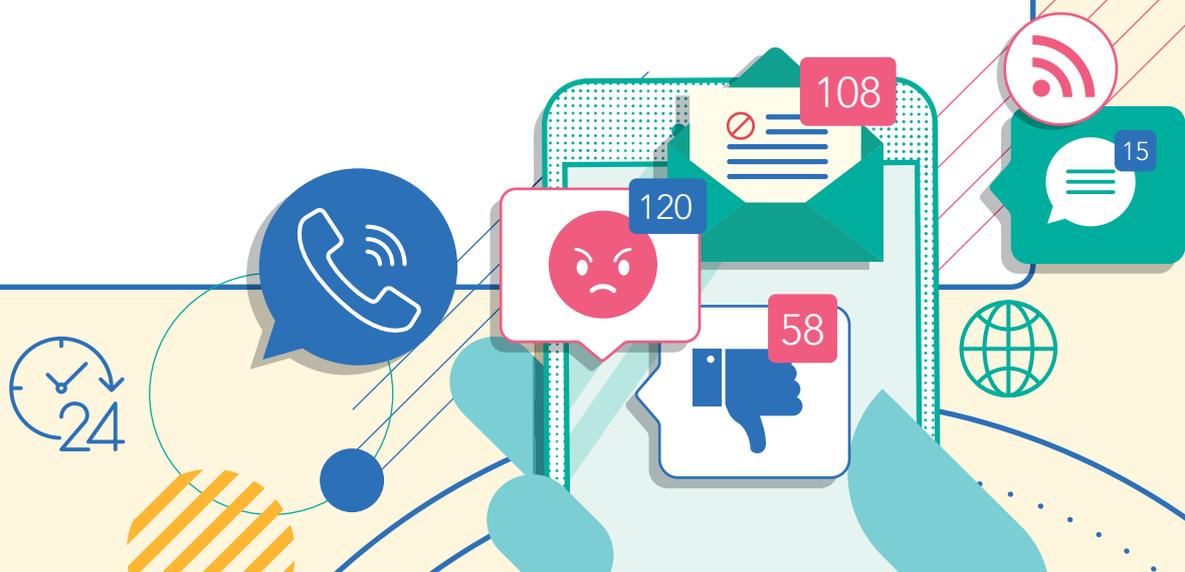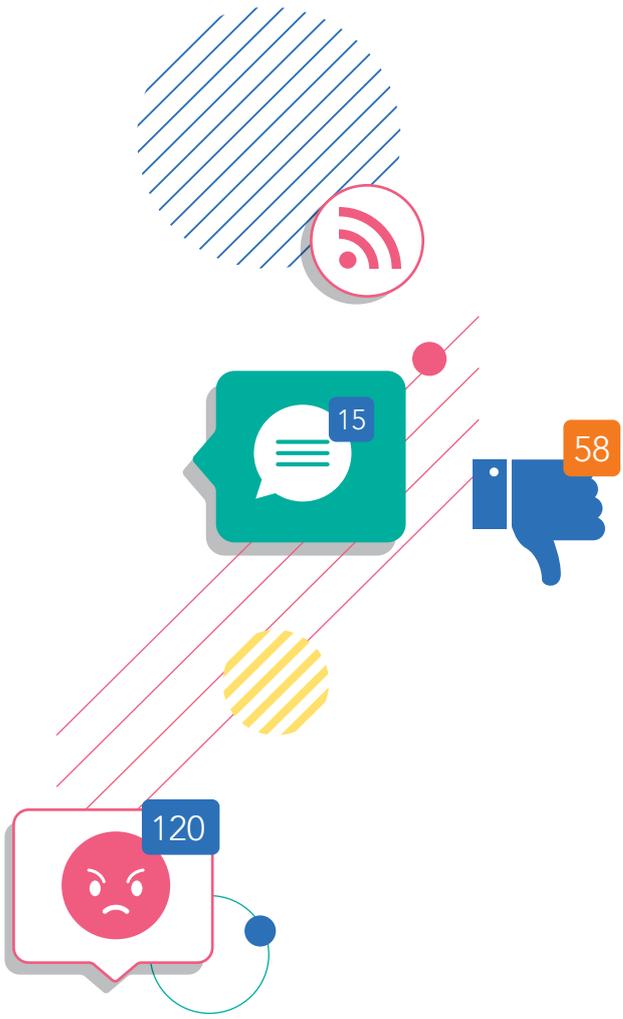
The Media Literacy Council works in partnership with industry, community and government to champion and develop public education and awareness programmes relating to media literacy and cyber wellness. In an increasingly interactive and participatory media landscape, the Media Literacy Council seeks to cultivate and encourage the public to become discerning media consumers with the ability to evaluate media content effectively, and use, create and share content safely and responsibly. It also advises the government on how to respond to emerging issues relating to internet and media content.