**Group Chat**

**Session Plan**

**Learning Intentions:**

To explore the impact of making hurtful/ nasty comments about someone online.

To consider the role of bystanders and ways in which bystanders can intervene.

**Key Learning Outcomes:**

**HWB 3-16a / HWB 4-16a**

I am learning to assess and manage risk, to protect myself and others, and to reduce the potential for harm when possible.

**HWB 4-05a**

As I develop and value relationships, I care and show respect for myself and others**.**

**Children’s Rights:**

**Article 19** states that you have the right to be protected from beinghurt or mistreated, in body or mind.

Article 29 states that children have the right to an education which encourages them to respect other people’s rights and values.

**GIRFEC Wellbeing Indicators:**

Safe, Healthy, Respected, Responsible.

**Preparation:**

* Prepare 5 min icebreaker activity (for example, see session plan below)
* PowerPoint slides or handout sheet of scenario / train of thought / options
* Slides or flipchart with Agree Disagree Unsure statements (see session plan below)
* Agree and Disagree signs (download available).
* A link to the ‘Group Chat’ animation. (download available) \*\*Optional\*\* <https://youtu.be/BE8H9uLiK7Y> (Please note- the animations are not the same images as on the Slides. They may or may not be suitable for your learners. Educators should watch to decide)

**Resources:**

* Flipchart
* Marker Pens
* Your Group Agreement (pin/tack this up in the room)

**All Activities are given an estimated Time Allocation. This will vary depending on ability of each class and pupil.**

**Introduction**

Inform the class that **this session will look the issue of types of abuse that can take place online and how it affects people.**

Refer to group agreement and ask if pupils would like to add / change anything.

Share the learning intentions and children’s rights for this session (above).

**Time allocation: 5 minutes**

Supporting Notes:

**Icebreaker Activity**

Hand out a sheet of A4 to each participant. Ask them to draw a picture which shows their favourite activity (running, reading, spending time with friends etc.)

Once complete, ask them to swap their sheet with someone near them. Each person should then crush the sheet of paper into a small ball and return it to the participant who drew the picture.

Challenge the group to open up their picture and to flatten it without tearing the paper.

**Ask the group the following:**

* How easy was it to crush the paper?
* How did you feel when you had seen your picture being crushed?

*Some responses might be: Annoyed, angry, not bothered, frustrated.*

* Did anyone manage to completely flatten their piece of paper?  
  No, it is not possible without leaving marks.

Share with the group that today’s session focuses on name calling and that calling someone names can leave a lasting effect on them.

**Time allocation: 10 minutes**

Supporting Notes:

**Scenario**

Remind the class that for this session they will be bystanders to an incident involving a friend, classmate or someone they know. (N,B, You may need to recap on what a Bystander is).

Show slide/ flipchart or share copy of scenario and ask for a volunteer to read the scenario (If, after asking twice, no one volunteers then read it yourself).

**You are part of a group chat with people from school. Someone in the group starts to make fun of your friend. Their comments are really nasty. Your friend doesn’t reply although you can see that they have read the comments.**

After reading the scenario, you can also show the group the ‘Group Chat’ animation. \*\*This is optional\* <https://youtu.be/BE8H9uLiK7Y> (Please note- the animations are not the same images as on the Slides. They may or may not be suitable for your learners. Educators should watch to decide)

(For learners with Additional Support Needs, the Scenario can be acted out using teachers or pupils or puppets. The class can video or photograph the Scenario.)

Then ask the group:

1. **Put your hand up if you feel there is something wrong with what is happening.**

If most of the group raise their hand, before they are lowered ask them to look around the room and see how their friends/classmates have responded. If most don’t put their hand up at this point – return to this question after the discussion part of the session.

**2. When we think or feel something might be wrong, we call these Red Flags.**

**What are the red flags in this situation?**

Ask pupils to discuss this for 30 seconds with the person beside them, then ask class to call them out – note the red flags down on flipchart/whiteboard as they are called out.

**Time allocation: 5 minutes**

Supporting Notes:

**Train of Thought**

Ask the group: **As a bystander in this situation what questions might you have? What might you be thinking?**

This can be briefly discussed in pairs or groups and then shared.

Ask for a volunteer to read the following train of thought (if after asking twice no one volunteers then read it yourself).

**Why are they doing this? … I feel bad about what is happening … Why is nobody challenging it? We’re all meant to be friends ... And why didn’t my friend respond? … Is it my place to get involved? … If I say something will I be next? … But I feel really uncomfortable when I see someone treated like this … Is this any of my business? …**

***What should I do?***

Ask the group:

1. **What are the words/phrases that stand out in this train of thought?**
2. **What reasons might someone give for not getting involved in this situation?**

Suggestions may include: fear, think it’s nothing to do with me, it’s only fun, don’t want people to laugh at me etc.

**Time allocation: 5 minutes**

Supporting Notes:

**ADU/Discussion**

**AGREE/DISAGREE/UNSURE**

Place your agree and disagree signs at opposite sides of the room.

Tell the group you are going to show them a statement (on ppt./flipchart) and they should decide whether they agree or disagree with the statement, then move to the relevant side of the room. If they are unsure, they can stand in the middle.

Statement **–Insulting a person online isn’t as bad as doing it to their face**

Give a short amount of time for group to make their choice then ask 2-3 people in each group: **Why did you agree/disagree/Why are you unsure?**

Ask the group: **Why might a person choose to be abusive to a person online?**

Ask: **Do you think it is easier for people to join in when abuse take place on line?**

Ask: **How might a person feel who is treated like this?** Write down responses to this on a flipchart.

**DISCUSSION STARTERS:**

Ask the group:

**Why might a person insult/be abusive to another person online?** Explore different reasons given by the group.

It says in the train of thought *“We’re all meant to be friends?”* Ask: **What do friends do for each other?** – Facilitate responses and suggest that friends should both support and even challenge one another if required.

It says in the train of thought *“Why isn’t anyone challenging it?”* Ask: **Why do you think people aren’t saying anything to stop this behaviour.**

**What do you think the impact of this behaviour could have on the person being talked about?** Prompt the group to thinker wider than the impact on their emotional/physical health. Include issues such as not going to school, making it harder to concentrate at school etc.

Refer to scenario, and ask group:

1. **Do we have a responsibility to do something here?**
2. **Who do we have a responsibility to?**

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Refer to scenario, and ask group:

1. **Do we have a responsibility to do something here?**
2. **Who do we have a responsibility to?**

You may need to prompt group:

**Do we have a responsibility to your friends who are being abusive? Why?**

They need to know what he is doing is wrong and they might get into trouble.

**Do we have a responsibility to the person who is being abused? Why?**

It’s important that we find ways to support the friend. They may be feeling really alone as well as being upset. Speaking to them will make it easier for them to deal with this.

**Do we have a responsibility to ourselves?**

We have a responsibility to keep ourselves safe, and to be able to say if we don’t agree with something.

Explain to the group that we are now going to explore some of the things we could do in this situation.

**Time allocation: 20 minutes**

Supporting Notes:

**Options**

If you have time you might ask the group to consider these options in small groups first, before you discuss as a larger group.

When discussing options, consider the following:

**Option 1: Do nothing. It’s none of your business.**

Ask the group:

1. **Is this an option that some might consider using?**

We have already identified some of the reasons people might give for not getting involved.

1. **What might happen if you do nothing?**

Responses may include: it may get worse, my friend will feel upset.

1. **What does doing nothing say to your friend?**

That you don’t think there’s anything wrong with this scenario.

1. **What does doing nothing say to the person who is being abusive?**

That it is okay for them to behave in this way.

**Option 2: Try to change the subject in the group chat.**

Ask the group:

1. **What would be achieved by choosing this option?**

You may distract the group and they will move onto another subject.

1. **What won’t be challenged if you choose this option?**

The original behaviour will not be discussed. It may continue at a later time.

1. **What could you say to change the subject?**

You could ask a question for the group to consider, plan a meeting the next day etc.

**Option 3: Remove yourself from the group and contact your friend to let them know you don’t agree with what was being said.**

Ask the group:

1. **Why might this be a good option?**

It may send out a message to others that you don’t agree. Others might follow.

1. **Would telling your friend this help them to deal with this situation?**

It may help them to see that they still have friends who are there to support them.

1. **What hasn’t been done if you chose this option?**

The behavior has not been challenged. It may continue and be directed at others.

**Option 4: Post on the chat that you think what they’re saying and doing is wrong.**

Ask the group:

1. **What message does this give to the group and the person who is acting this way?**

Your friends will know you do not agree with this behaviour and that you won’t be part of it. Others might do the same.

1. **How might your friend react if you did this?**

Suggestions might include: Your friend might laugh, fall out with you, be angry with you, make you the subject of the insults.

**Option 5: Outwith the group chat, speak to some of your friends who didn’t comment, and ask whether they think what’s happening is fair. Discuss together what you should do.**

Ask the group:

1. **Why might this be a good option?**

Remind the group that as most/all have already agreed that they see something wrong in this situation (when they raised their hands earlier), chances are their friends would do too.

1. **Would knowing that your friends agree this isn’t right make it easier to help here? Why?**

Suggestions might include: safety in numbers, knowing you won’t be isolated from the group for challenging the behaviour etc.

**Option 6: Talk about your concerns with a parent/carer, a teacher/adult you trust or an MVP mentor, and ask their advice on what to do.**

Ask the group:

1. **What might stop people from choosing this option?**

Suggestions might include: don’t want to be a tell-tale / a ‘grass’, don’t want to get my friend into trouble etc.

1. **Is telling an adult or mentor what has happened to stop your friend getting into trouble**

**being a grass or a good friend?**

If it stops him getting into trouble you are being a good friend.

**Option 7: Personal Option**

Ask the group:

**Is there anything else you could do?**

Remember to explore the possible consequences for any additional options.

Thank the group for their answers and ideas.

**Time allocation: 10 minutes**

**Getting Help**

Remind pupils that, as well as speaking to a trusted adult or mentor, they can also ring Childline.

Supporting Notes:

**Conclusion**

Let the group know that as leaders, they have the opportunity to make sure their school and community are respectful and that they can role model respect by not challenging behaviour which can be harmful to others.

Ask the group: **What have you learnt from today’s session?**

You might want to note responses on flipchart.

Reinforce key messages from discussion to include:

* Being abusive to another whether on line or face to face is not right and is hurtful.
* There are many reasons why a person might choose to be abusive. Whatever the reason given, there is never an excuse to do this.
* A person who is being abused can be impacted on in a variety of ways that will be harmful to their mental and physical health.
* There are a number of options we can choose from to challenge behaviour when we don’t agree with it.
* We have a responsibility to help our friends and keep ourselves safe.