U4: CREENDER - The big debate

Educational Toolkit

OVERVIEW

Areas covered:

Understanding	Preventing	Responding

Areas of SEL:

Self-awareness	Self-management	Social awareness	Relationship skills	Responsible decision-making

Audience:

11-13	14-18

Timing: **60 minutes**

Learning outcomes:

Learners will be able to:
- **Consider the motives behind different online behaviours.**
- **Evaluate the issues and risks around the right to online expression and privacy.**

Key vocabulary:**victim-blaming, rights, privacy, freedom, expression, trolling, harassment, protection, expectations, responsibility.**

Resources: **Google Slides**

Key questions:
- Is everyone treated the same online? Why/why not?
- Does everyone have the right to…
  - ...privacy?
  - ...freedom of expression?
  - ...protection from harm?
- Does someone put themselves at greater risk if they share/post their photos publicly online?
  - Why/why not?
  - If so, what risks might they face?
- Should someone expect to get a negative reaction about their photos from others online?
  - Is this fair?
  - Is it ever deserved?
  - What about public figures (celebrities, politicians, influencers, etc.)?
- Are there sufficient laws to tackle cyberbullying?
- Does the internet industry do enough to protect their users from cyberbullying?

- What can someone do to protect themselves from cyberbullying, harassment or hate online?
  - o Behaviour strategies
  - o Technical strategies
  - o Strategies to seek help/support

ACTIVITY PLAN:

Starter activity (10 minutes)

Introducing the statement

Explain to learners that this session will take the form of a debate around the concepts of freedom of expression (free speech) and privacy in relation to cyberbullying, and whether treating someone negatively based on what they share online is ever justified.

Introduce the debate statement to learners:

"If you don't want people to leave nasty comments on your photos, then you shouldn't post your photos online...
Agree or disagree?"

Give learners several minutes to briefly discuss the statement and share some initial thoughts.

Activity (40 minutes)

Holding the debate

Explain to learners that they will split into two teams - 'Agree' and 'Disagree'.
You can form the teams through random selection, or nominate two team captains to take turns in selecting members for their side.

Each team has 10 minutes to prepare the argument (and any supporting evidence) for either 'Agree' or 'Disagree'.
They must also select between **1-3 team members** to speak on the group's behalf in the debate.

Learners may wish to conduct some research for statistics, quotes or other information to strengthen their argument.

As a start, learners may wish to use the Better Internet for Kids portal to show statistics on the concerns raised to national online safety helplines. You may also wish to show learners any cyberbullying statistics that you are aware of in your country.

If required, the following themes can be shared with the groups to help direct their thinking:

Agree	Disagree
• Should negative comments be expected online? • Is this just freedom of expression? • Is this behaviour ever justified? • Does it come down to personal choice? • Does privacy exist online? • Are expectations the same for all groups of people e.g. young people, adults, men/women, figures in the public eye? • How could someone protect against this treatment?	• Is this behaviour ever justified? • What are the risks of sharing images online? • Who is responsible for this behaviour? • Should there be stronger laws? • Should social media companies do more? • Is privacy and safety more important than the right to express yourself freely? • How could someone protect against this treatment?

Once learners are prepared, carry out the debate. Depending on the available time, you may wish to limit the time per student to present their argument. You may also wish to allow the opposing side to respond after each speaker.

Hopefully, the debate will highlight some key points:
- There are always risks around sharing images online.
- Public communication and private communication online carry different risks.
- It is never okay to blame the target of cyberbullying for the behaviour directed towards them.
- Privacy is a personal choice but the expectation should always be that anyone can choose to express themselves and have a voice online.
- Cyberbullying behaviour may or may not break the law.
- Celebrities and others in the public eye sometimes receive more negative attention than other users, but being famous doesn't mean you should accept a greater level of harassment or hate.
- The internet industry (social media) has an important role to play in protecting its users.
- Users can take some responsibility to protect themselves and others from online harassment, but that doesn't excuse the responsibility of the person who is bullying or harassing them.

Plenary (10 minutes)

Hold a vote on whether learners agree or disagree with the debate statement. Encourage them to vote honestly; even though they represented one side, if they felt they were convinced by the opposite side then they should vote accordingly.

Ask learners to consider the final point about taking personal responsibility to protect themselves and others.

On a large sheet of paper, ask each team to record as many strategies as they can think of for an online user to protect themselves or others from online bullying, harassment or hate.

They should consider the following categories:
- **Behavioural strategies** (choices that a user makes with regards to what they create/post/share online)
- **Technical strategies** (online/digital tools that can aid users e.g. privacy settings)
- **Strategies to seek help/support** (e.g. reporting tools, helplines, etc.)

Ask learners to share their ideas.