

Exploring online experiences

Life online for women and girls

 15 minutes  Whole class

Activity focus: victim blaming

Activity description:

On three pieces of paper, write 'Helpful', 'Victim Blaming' and 'Unsure'. Stick these pieces of paper on opposite sides of the room.

Read out the scenario below and explain you are going to read out some possible responses to this situation. Learners will need to decide whether the response is helpful or victim blaming, or whether they are unsure.

After the response is read out, the young people should go to the piece of paper in the room they agree with the most. Alternatively, learners can write their answer on a whiteboard and lift it up. Ask a few people to explain their reasoning.

Activity resources:

Using Appendix A, read the scenario to learners and the responses.

Educator Guidance:

Explain that some of these responses are examples of 'victim blaming'. This is where you are suggesting the victim is at fault for what has happened to them. Victim blaming is not a helpful response to a situation as it is likely to make somebody feel worse and may be a barrier to them seeking support.

Erin posted a photo of herself on holiday on her public Instagram. Without her knowledge, it was screenshotted and posted onto a TikTok where men were ranking her body and giving her marks out of ten.

<p>Why did you post a picture like that anyway?</p>	<p>What did you expect to happen?</p>	<p>I'm sorry that happened to you</p>
<p>Do you need help reporting this?</p>	<p>Your profile is public, so you've got to expect things like this to happen</p>	<p>Do you want to talk about it?</p>
<p>You should've thought about what you were wearing before you posted it</p>	<p>It's not okay for them to use your picture like that</p>	<p>Next time just don't post that kind of picture</p>

 20-30 minutes  Whole class

Activity focus: upstanders vs bystanders

Activity description:

To introduce the activity, ask young people the following questions:

1. What is the difference between an 'upstander' and a 'bystander'?
2. Why can being an upstander be difficult sometimes?
3. Why is it important to be an upstander?

Organise the different examples of behaviour below into upstander or bystander. What does being an upstander look like?

Activity resources:

Using Appendix B, learners will organise the different examples into upstander and bystander.

Educator guidance:

An upstander is someone who takes action against bullying and harassment, whereas a bystander just observes when unkind behaviour happens.

Explain that you do not have to be confrontational to be an upstander; you could support the victim, report the content or speak with a trusted adult.

In order to combat sexist content and misogyny online, it is important to take action rather than ignore it.

Calmly challenging problematic content and language

Ignoring the content - you don't want to get involved

Speaking privately to someone you know about why what they've said or posted is not okay

Offering support to victims

Talking to a trusted adult

Closing an app when you see a sexist post

Reporting sexist and misogynistic content online

Helping a friend tell someone about what they've experienced online

 20 minutes  Whole class

Activity focus: barriers to reporting and responding

Activity description:

In this activity, you will be discussing the reasons why somebody may be hesitant to report or respond to misogyny online.

Using the Diamond 9 method, learners will decide to what extent each of these factors might prevent someone from reporting sexism and misogyny online, from the most impactful barrier to the least impactful barrier.

It is likely that you will get some different answers, so give learners the opportunity to discuss and explain their reasoning for where they have placed a card.

Activity resources:

Using Appendix C, learners sort the barriers to reporting and responding into most impactful to least impactful.

Educator guidance:

Explain that there may be a number of reasons why someone doesn't feel like they can report misogyny online.

Remind learners that reporting is anonymous, and the person who has posted or shared content will not know who has reported it.

Discuss the trusted adults who young people can speak to, such as parents and carers, teachers, youth workers and helplines such as Childline.

<p>Worried about backlash</p>	<p>Not thinking anything will change</p>	<p>Fear of upsetting others</p>
<p>Not realising the content is wrong</p>	<p>Worried about not being believed</p>	<p>Embarrassment</p>
<p>Being unsure of how to make a report</p>	<p>Not wanting to make the situation worse</p>	<p>Worried it may lead to harmful content appearing on your feed</p>

 20 minutes  Whole class

Activity focus: sexist and misogynistic content

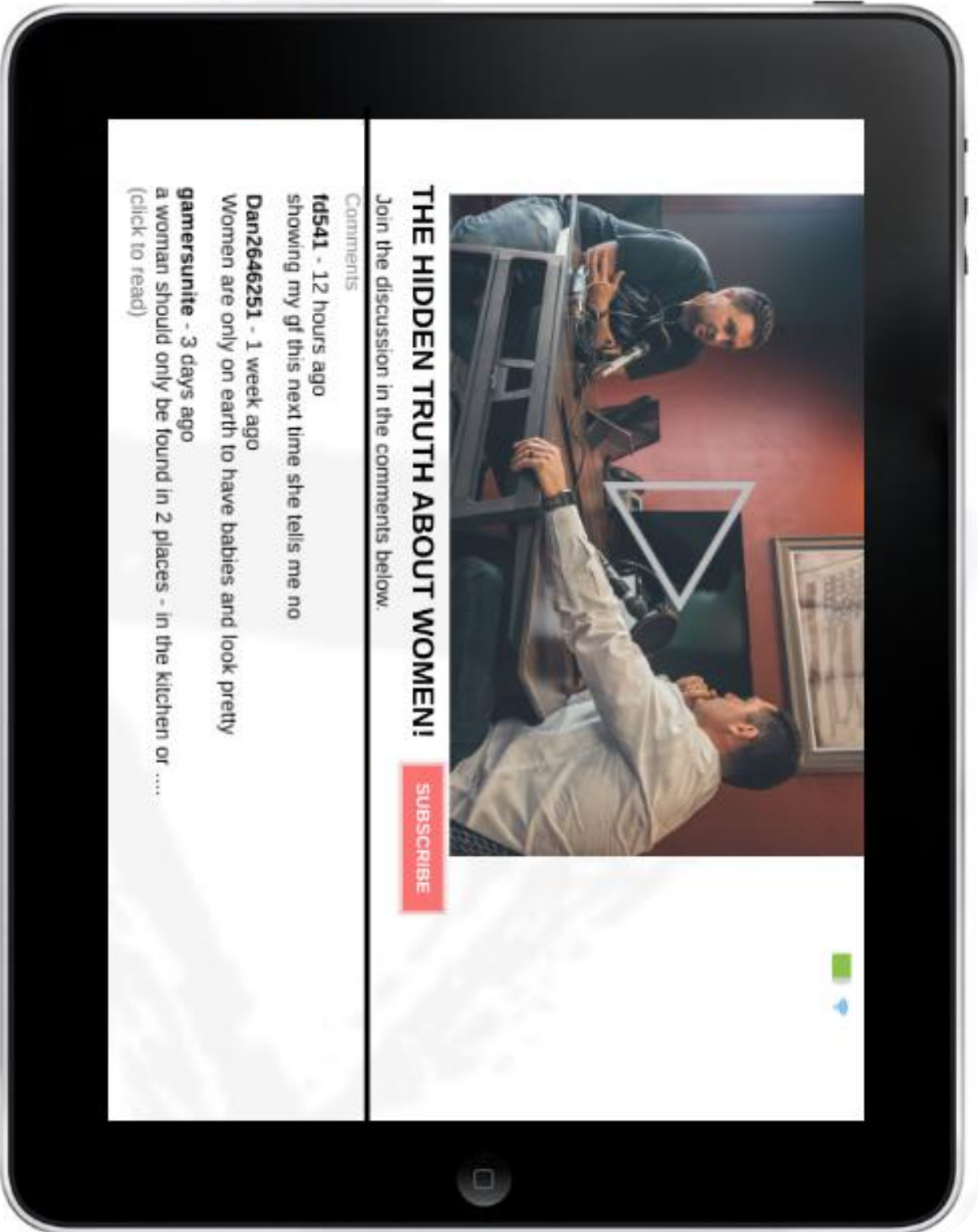
Activity description:

Using Appendix D, young people will point out any examples of sexist and misogynistic perspectives and harassment.

Activity resources:

While looking at the example, ask the young people the following questions:

1. Look at the example provided. What examples of sexist and misogynistic perspectives and harassment can you identify?
2. Have you seen examples of online content like this before?
3. What impact could this kind of content have on women?
4. What wider societal impacts could this kind of content have?
5. How can you challenge this kind of online content?



Activity focus: sexist and misogynistic content

Educator Guidance:

<p>Look at the example provided. What examples of sexist and misogynistic perspectives and harassment can you identify?</p>	<p>The speakers in the video are both men sharing "the hidden truth about women" – a lack of female voice and potentially sexist views; comments of a sexual nature that are objectifying women.</p>
<p>Have you seen examples of online content like this before?</p>	<p>Advise learners to relay examples that they've seen in a sensitive way as this kind of content can be upsetting. Ask learners not to reference specific people or platforms, and to not promote or raise awareness of these individuals.</p>
<p>What impact could this kind of content have on women?</p>	<p>Feeling isolated, attacked, like they can't express themselves online, triggering, worrying, angry, frustrated, devalued</p>
<p>What wider societal impacts could this kind of content have?</p>	<p>This type of content can directly influence people's perspectives and can stir up more hate and discrimination; it can normalise this kind of behaviour and make people think it's okay to openly say these kinds of things.</p>
<p>How can you challenge this kind of online content?</p>	<p>Reporting, being an upstander, talking to an adult, speaking to the person who posted the content if it's someone you know</p>

 20 minutes  Whole class

Activity focus: slut shaming

Activity description:

A discussion about the term 'slut shaming' and why it is harmful.

Activity resources:

1. What do you think the term 'slut shaming' means?
2. What do you think slut shaming online might look like?
3. What impact could being targeted by slut shaming have?
4. Why do you think girls and women are targeted by slut shaming more?
5. How can we respond to slut shaming online?

Educator Guidance:

Remember this is a sensitive conversation, so make sure young people feel comfortable to share their thoughts.

What do you think the term 'slut shaming' means?	Slut shaming is when someone, usually girls or women, are criticised for being too 'sexual'.
What do you think slut shaming online might look like?	Comments on women's choice of clothes as 'too revealing' or 'too sexual'; comments like "slut", "slag", "whore", etc.; spreading rumours online about someone's sexual activity and criticising them for it; telling a woman that she is at fault for harassment that she has received (e.g. saying "you shouldn't have sent it in the first place" if a woman's nude is sent to more people without her consent – also called victim blaming).

Educator Guidance (continued):

Remember this is a sensitive conversation, so make sure young people feel comfortable to share their thoughts.

<p>What impact could being targeted by slut shaming have?</p>	<p>Can make someone feel like it is their fault if they have been targeted by harassment; can prevent someone getting help; can make someone feel like they can't be their true self; it can make someone feel unable to talk openly about or seek help relating to sex, harassment, etc.</p>
<p>Why do you think girls and women are targeted by slut-shaming more?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Some individuals and online communities believe men to be the superior gender. They promote sexist behaviours like slut shaming and target women with hate. This content and these perspectives can influence the opinions of others, leading to behaviour change and further hate. b) These perspectives are rooted in historic and harmful gender stereotypes, including men being celebrated for having multiple sexual partners (e.g. being called a 'player') whilst women are shamed for the same behaviour or perceived as immoral. c) Men can be targeted and hurt by harmful views of gender stereotypes too, e.g. when a man displays so-called 'feminine' characteristics such as emotion and vulnerability. d) Slut shaming can also impact other groups of people, for example LGBTQ+ people are also often negatively perceived by people as they are sometimes considered to be 'sexually promiscuous'.
<p>How can we respond to slut-shaming online?</p>	<p>It is important to report any content online showing discrimination. If you know the person posting this content, it can also be useful to have a conversation in person and explain the impact this behaviour can have.</p>

 30 minutes  Whole class

Activity focus: sexist bullying

Activity description:

Using the scenarios, discuss any issues and misogyny or sexism present. These examples overlap with bullying, such as excluding people, harassment and sharing photos without consent. You may choose to do this as a class discussion, or have the examples on tables for learners to annotate.

Activity resources:

Use Appendix E to display various examples of sexist bullying and read the scenarios, then ask learners the questions below.

Scenario 1

On a group chat, a trip is being organised to the local football pitch. Pip wants to join the group and play football.

Scenario 2

Chloe spends the evening at a fast-food restaurant with her friends. That night, a group of boys have taken a picture of her without her knowledge and share it on their group chat.

Scenario 3

Roo enjoys posting selfies on her social media. However, she begins to notice frequent comments on her photos from men. They are sexualising Roo and make her feel uncomfortable.

1. How is this example showing misogyny?
2. What issues are there with this behaviour?
3. How would these situations make women feel?

Lewis
whos coming to football on Saturday??

Milo
I am

Pip
me too

Milo
Lol why are you coming??

Kieran
women cant be footballers

Lewis
Yeah women never make it professionally they're not good enough

Rob
Right boys... thoughts on Chloe??

Mason
lolllll 4/10 at most

Nik
look at her stuffing her face 🤢

Rob
hahahhahaha

Comments

J niiiiice 🔥🔥

K 🍆🍆

E that body tho

H You need a man who... (see more)

Activity focus: sexist bullying

Educator Guidance:

Scenario 1	How is this example showing misogyny?	The boys in this group chat are making sexist assumptions about girls playing football. Pip is being purposefully excluded from an activity, just because she is a girl.
	What issues are there with this behaviour?	This behaviour contributes to spreading sexist and untrue stereotypes about women.
	How would these situations make women feel?	Women may feel that they cannot participate in activities they enjoy due to the judgement and criticism received.
Scenario 2	How is this example showing misogyny?	Chloe is being ranked out of 10 by a number of men, and they are making comments about her appearance.
	What issues are there with this behaviour?	The photo of Chloe was taken and shared without her consent. The comments made are objectifying her.
	How would these situations make women feel?	Embarrassed, insecure, humiliated
Scenario 3	How is this example showing misogyny?	People are sexualising Roo under her pictures, the scenario states that this is happening repeatedly.
	What issues are there with this behaviour?	This behaviour can make women feel very uncomfortable, and is classed as harassment.
	How would these situations make women feel?	This is likely to make Roo feel she cannot post any more photos, although this is something she enjoys. Even if the comments are intended to be complimentary, they can still make people feel uncomfortable.

 30 minutes  Whole class

Activity focus: feminism online

Activity description:

An information poster to celebrate how the internet can support women and raise awareness of feminism.

Activity resources:

1. In what ways does the internet raise awareness of problems women may face in today's society?
2. Can the internet help us learn the history of feminism? Have you used the internet to learn about a female figure in history?
3. How can the internet support women?
4. Has the internet started a movement in support of women?

Educator guidance:

This is an opportunity for young people to celebrate how the internet can support women and raise awareness. Before beginning the activity, ask the questions provided to gain an insight into what they have seen online. Some learners may wish to share some examples.

You can also refer to Appendix F to give young people some ideas from our Youth Advisory Board and Digital Leaders.

Childnet Digital Leaders and Youth Advisory Board shared their experiences and examples of seeing female empowerment online:

Songs about female empowerment being used on social media posts and shared more widely.

Posts encouraging women to go into industries previously dominated by men.

Women feel more inspired by content they see online.

Feminism has become a common topic discussed on social media. It can be beneficial to women across the world.

Using the hashtag for International Women's Day to share inspiring content on social media.

Childnet's mission is to work in partnership with others around the world to help make the internet a great and safe place for children. We work directly with children and young people from the ages of 3 to 18 on a weekly basis, as well as parents, carers, teachers and professionals, finding out about their real experiences online, and the positive things they are doing as well as sharing safety advice.

Explore more resources at childnet.com/resources