



SEX AND VIOLENCE IN DIGITAL MEDIA

Prevention, Help & Counselling

With Exercises for School and Youth Work



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Preface

Dealing with sexuality and the internet is a challenge

From an early age, children are confronted with sexualised images in public, for example in advertising, music videos or television shows. Even though the sexuality of young people has not changed much in recent years (the average age of first intercourse, the importance of partner fidelity etc.), the internet has certainly changed the outside frame of reference. Digital media enable a quick and easy access to various information and themes. This implies a dilemma: on the one hand, young people find here additional possibilities to find answers – often anonymously – to questions of their interest. On the other hand, easy access to pornographic material makes it difficult to recognise trustworthy information and even to realise one's own needs and wishes. This phenomenon is tightly linked with “sexual violence” and new forms of harassment that arise in conjunction with the increasing use of digital media by youths.

Therefore, time and again, experts call for sex-education in schools that also addresses internet-mediated sexuality – internet pornography, posting provocative images of oneself online or phenomena such as “sexting” and “grooming”. In such a way, schools can make an important contribution to keeping our children and teenagers safer.

Sexual violence in school inevitably impacts the school climate, just as violence in general does. Teachers need to be especially vigilant in order to recognise problems early on. This handbook shall assist in this endeavour. It also addresses some concepts and topics that don't necessarily lead to sexual violence, but may be new to adult caregivers of children: “sexting” and “posing”.

Violence is a complex phenomenon

In order to prevent or reduce violence, the phenomenon has to be comprehended in all its facets and needs to be addressed in several areas at once. School is one of those areas. The perception and assessment of violence is always subjective and depending on the social environment. Thus, the exact same act can be perceived as violent by one group or person, but not by another. Depending on the context, violence is defined and interpreted on an individual basis.

Sexual violence is *one* type of violence among many. In the context of school, sexual violence is usually coupled with other types of violence. Therefore, this handbook addresses all forms of internet-mediated violence and understands violence as a multi-faceted phenomenon.

Through programmes to prevent violence, schools contribute significantly to raising pupils' awareness. With good prevention work, schools can protect and empower victims, promote empathy and show perpetrators that violence leads to repercussions. Direct influence on the propensity towards violence amongst children and youth, however, is limited because the conditions that lead to violence can be found in the areas of personality, family, leisure time, school and society.

Even though this handbook mainly speaks of school, with a few adaptations it can be applied in youth work just as well.

About the Project Ch@dvice:

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the *Daphne III* Programme of the European Commission in the framework of the project Ch@dvice. Beside the creation of this handbook, one of the goals of this project has been development of a high-quality counselling service in Belgium in the form of a one-to-one internet chat (www.maintenantjenparle.be and www.nupraatikerover.be). It shall give children and young people an uncomplicated avenue to ask questions or get help from competent persons in case of sexual abuse. In Austria, this task is performed by “147 Rat auf Draht” (www.rataufdraht.at), amongst others, which offers online counselling in addition to a telephone hotline.

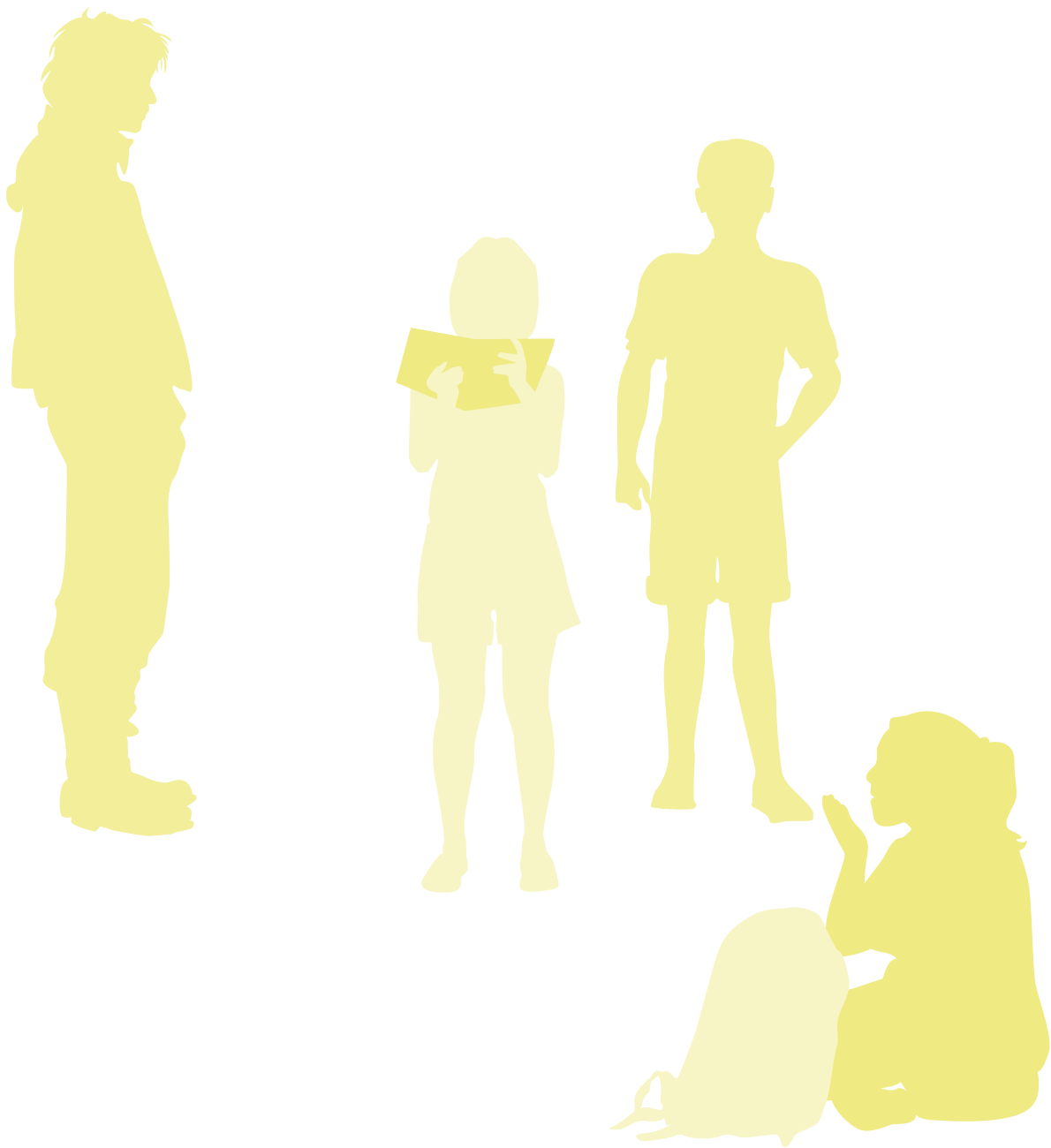
The best practice from the Belgian counselling service is meant to be introduced to other online helplines throughout Europe. This handbook is meant to complement these approaches with prevention. Teachers, educators and other people who deal with young people shall be introduced to the topic of “Sex and Violence in Digital Media” and be in a position to take appropriate preventive measures in school or youth work.

This handbook¹ focuses on **violence – especially sexual violence – in connection with digital media**. On the one hand, this refers to violence perpetrated by and among young people themselves, but it also includes, for instance, adults who initiate contact on the internet for the purpose of sexually abusing a minor (cyber-grooming). Sexual abuse within families is not explicitly addressed in this manual and will only be mentioned in passing.

Many of the topics discussed here (cyber-grooming, sexting, etc.) have not yet been researched enough to adequately explain all phenomena and correlations. Therefore, readers may not find every single topic covered in this handbook. Current information can be obtained from your national Safer Internet Centre and their associated helplines (see page 40–41). In Austria it is www.saferinternet.at, in Belgium www.childfocus.be. The list of other centres can be found under: www.saferinternet.eu.

The **exercises** presented in this manual have been successfully field-tested in Austria. They were developed in collaboration with experienced educators, a psychologist and a psychotherapist. Support your pupils in using digital media safely and responsibly by including these topics in your work. The more children and young people know about potential risks, and the more openly they communicate with adults, the safer they will be. Support your pupils in such a way that they know to resist in an emergency and to ask for and accept help. Consider: The internet is not just a place where children and young people come into contact with violence and perpetrators; it is also a place where they can find and utilize help.

¹ A lot of content for this handbook has been obtained from the teaching materials of the initiative Saferinternet.at: “Handy in der Schule”, “Gewalt und Medien”, “Safer Internet in der Volksschule”, and “Cyber-bullying”. See: www.saferinternet.at/broschuerenservice.



1. Media Violence and Internet-Mediated Sexual Assault

Not only has digital media long since become a natural part of everyday life, but the internet, mobile phones, etc., have also caused dramatic shifts in our media usage behaviour. Content is no longer just passively consumed, as when watching TV or listening to the radio, for example. It is (also) actively produced. Therefore, web 2.0 applications such as social networks or blogs are also called the “participatory web”.

The term “media violence”, as used in this handbook, therefore refers to both the passive consumption of media violence (for example, watching a video that contains violence) as well as to the active infliction of violence by using media (for example, publishing a compromising photo). In both cases, the sexual nature of the violence is just *one* characteristic among several.

Without a doubt, one consequence of the widespread use of digital media is the easier access that children and adolescents have to violent content. “Real” and “media” violence are increasingly intertwined. Bullying, for example, is often done both “offline” and “online”.

Given the diverse nature of internet-mediated violence, a classification based on usage types makes sense. Passive and active use, however, are not always easy to separate since they often go hand in hand in the everyday life of children and young people. Pornography, for instance, is consumed passively on the one hand, but on the other hand young people also actively create such material and use it for violence (for example, for extortion). Separating active and passive media use is therefore not always accurate. However, the categories are still useful because they are so easily comprehensible. Also, this distinction makes it clear that children and young people are not only affected as consumers of violence, but rather that in many cases they are heavily involved themselves.

1.1 Passive Media Violence: Consumption and Viewing

Children start consuming media violence at an early age – for example, in cartoons where characters are run over and steamrolled, only to get up again and walk away, and a few years later in life, children may be exposed to crime series or horror films. In fact, one could argue that consuming media violence in childhood and adolescence is nothing new. What has changed with the prevalence of digital media, however, is the constant availability of such violent media content. On television, the broadcast times comply with the legal protections for children and young people. Thus, adult cartoons such as “South Park” are often shown after midnight. On the internet, however, these items are available at any time and, with mobile phones, at any place as well.

In order to recognise media violence and to take measures against it, it is important to become acquainted with the different types of media violence that children and young people encounter.

“Funny” Violence:

“Funny” violence mainly encompasses animated series for “older” audiences, such as “South Park”, and also videos such as “Jackass”, in which the actors are not actually harmed in real life. Even some “funny” games on the internet fall into this category. “Funny” violence is very well-known and popular among young people. It is consumed through all types of media – both on TV and the internet – and the best “tidbits” are then further distributed through social networks such as *Facebook*.

Whether something is perceived as funny depends on both the individual level of development and on the social and moral beliefs that children and young people have learned from their family and school environment. In that sense, how violence and sexualised images are dealt with at school matters.

The age at which children learn to distinguish between fantasy and reality depends on the genre. Thus, 6 to 9 year old children are already able to make this distinction when it comes to cartoons, but this may still be difficult with other shows, such as action series.

Real and Extremely Brutal Violence:

This encompasses videos with extremely brutal content that are classified as “real”. For instance, they may show executions, war scenes, mutilations, rapes, torture and murder (“snuff videos”²). Special emphasis is placed on the graphic depiction of violence.

Such images and videos are distributed on so-called “tasteless” sites. These websites show uncensored violence, which may stick in young peoples’ memory for a long time. The “knowledge” that this was real violence can cause especially severe discomfort. These films are sometimes downloaded from the internet and then shown to others on a mobile phone. Thus, young people are often caught completely off-guard by what they see – along the lines of “Look what I found!”

Simulated (Play-Acted) Violence:

This term refers mainly to stunts, wrestling or even mock fights. Such scenes are well known and popular among young people, and are also re-enacted again and again. The boundary between consuming media violence and producing one’s own forms of violent media content is blurred here.

Another problem is the type of male role model that is presented here, which is especially critical in those social environments where other male role models for young people are lacking.

Violent Music Videos and Lyrics:

Music videos that contain violence are commonly mentioned by young people when asked about violence in media. Music is far more than entertainment. It often expresses the affinity to a particular youth culture and life style and often explicitly addresses the problems and everyday life of young people.

Usually, brute force is not shown so much as “implied”. The exception to this rule is rap music, in which the lyrics often quite explicitly convey violent and pornographic content. In this way, violence is not only transported via pictures, but through lyrics as well.

The violence that is conveyed can be met with either rejection or approval by young people, depending on their gender, social class, age and the ability for reflection.

² Snuff videos, from snuff (out) = wipe out, destroy, kill. Snuff videos show murders in an extremely brutal fashion and, as opposed to other extremely brutal films, they claim that the persons shown were subjected to this violence specifically for the purposes of making the video.

Case Study: Gender Differences in the Perception of Eminem

The way in which US-American rapper Eminem insults his mother in his songs is perceived very differently by boys and girls. Girls clearly reject the practice, but boys see themselves in Eminem's position. In that way, Eminem becomes a possible character in which boys can identify with, aiding and shaping them as they search for their own identity.

Horror and Violence in Movies:

Horror movies hold a certain amount of fascination for young people. Some reasons include a desire to experience fear and shock (akin to the "thrill" of a roller coaster ride), a desire to test one's own limits and to do something on a dare, and seeking the "thrill" of identifying with the victims. Various types of horror films are easily accessible on the internet, even for young people, and by downloading them to mobile phones they often become part of everyday life. First and foremost, young people talk of "slasher"³ and "splatter"⁴ films.

Pornography:

Pornography and access to pornography is becoming increasingly common-place for adolescents. From an early age, children are confronted with sexually suggestive postures in advertisements and music. It should be assumed that boys have actively searched for and viewed at least one porno film by age 12. Pornographic images (often showing bestiality) are also used to perpetrate violence against younger children. Pornography must be considered a form of violence whenever children are unable to deal with its content (passive media violence), or, in the worst case, if they are themselves victimized and images of them are published (child pornography).

Case Study: Inappropriate Content

Paul comes from a good home and enjoys open communication with his parents. He attends an after-school programme at his elementary school (3rd grade). There, the children are allowed to use computers and the internet, which they are happy to do often. At those times, they are supervised by a teacher. As a practical joke, one day, the older pupils show the younger ones online videos that show pornographic depictions of humans with animals. The second and third graders are deeply disturbed and fall silent. The teacher did not notice the incident. After a few days, Paul is ready to talk to his parents. The other children don't dare to do that. Paul's parents are horrified and turn to the school. The incident, however, is not investigated any further. Paul's parents are at a loss, and the children are left to deal with their traumatic experience by themselves.

³ "Slasher" films are a sub-genre of horror films in which people are dismembered and dissected.

⁴ "Splatter" films are also a sub-genre of horror films with a lot of blood (e. g. hurting people with sharp objects).

1.2 Active Media Violence: Production and Execution

Harassment on the Internet:

Young people sometimes feel harassed on the internet: Through unwelcome advertisements or spam and through lewd or suggestive messages and postings (for example, on social network sites). This type of sexual harassment is on the rise, since it is so easy to carry out, and it is primarily directed at girls. What may have been little “love notes” when adult caretakers were young has taken the form of messages on social network sites today. The senders hope to become acquainted with other persons, often hoping for a sexual relationship or contact in the future.

Cyber-bullying:

Cyber-bullying (also called cyber-stalking or cyber-mobbing) refers to deliberately insulting, threatening, embarrassing, or harassing people on the internet or via mobile phones – usually over a longer period of time. On the internet, mainly photo or video platforms (for example, *Flickr* or *YouTube*) as well as social networks (for example, *Facebook*) are utilized for these attacks. Cyber-bullying in social networks is especially hurtful because the users are in constant contact with all of their friends and acquaintances and rumours or insults, once published, spread very fast. Instant messengers (chat programmes such as *MSN* or *ICQ*) are also used for cyber-bullying, as are mobile phones. In the case of the latter, it is mainly the photo and video functions that are utilized for mobbing attacks. Usually, the victims are adolescents (although in rare cases they can also be adults). The perpetrators are also known as “cyber-bullies”.

Especially when it comes to cyber-bullying among children and adolescents, the victim and the perpetrator usually know each other in “real life” as well. The victims almost always have a strong suspicion about who may be behind the attacks. Cyber-bullying usually originates with persons in the victim’s immediate surroundings – the school, the neighbourhood, the village or the ethnic community. Cases involving complete strangers are very rare.

Case Study: The Shower Photo

The mother of Fara, a 13 year old Muslim girl, contacted the helpline. She was totally in panic. Her daughter had just told her that after gym class, another girl from her class had made a video of her with her mobile phone while she was taking the shower. Then, she had sent this video to some people from the school. The next day, everybody had seen the video. Fara still feels really ashamed, she doesn’t want to go to school, and she just wants to stay home.

It’s also really hard for the family. The mother explains that, as a Muslim, it’s even more a shame to have a naked video of someone. The mother asks us what she can do.

We explained her that there are different steps: first, and because her daughter knows who the author is, she can go to meet the director of the school. The director can also take some decision in the school and talk to the parents of the girl who had made the video. Also, if they want to, they can go to police.

What distinguishes mobbing from cyber-bullying?

Mobbing itself is not a new phenomenon. The use of internet and mobile phones to harass others, however, has the following implications:

Cyber-bullying can be done around the clock.

Due to the permanent availability of internet and mobile phones, it is very hard for young people to escape from cyber-bullying attacks. Unlike traditional forms of bullying, cyber-bullying doesn't end with the last lesson or at the end of work. Given the pervasiveness of digital media, mobbing does not even stop in one's own four walls. Social networks, instant messengers, mobile phones, etc., have become commonplace and essential for the communication of young people today.

Cyber-bullying reaches a wide audience.

Social networks, e-mail and mobile phones allow for the rapid dissemination of content to a wider public. With one click, an embarrassing photo, for example, can be sent to a large number of recipients. And once such a photo is published on the internet, it is more or less impossible to remove it. The internet has a long memory: Even if content is deleted from one website, at that point it may already have been copied or forwarded numerous times as well as stored in internet archives.

Cyber-bullies are (seemingly) anonymous.

Often the perpetrators believe that on the internet, they can remain anonymous, by hiding behind a fictitious identity, for example. On one hand, this reduces inhibitions in the perpetrator: Cyber-bullies don't have to deal with their victim's reactions face to face and therefore are unaware of the impact their hurtful words or pictures can have. On the other hand, this anonymity can cause additional fear and insecurity for the victims. Something internet users often forget, however, is that every action on the web leaves a trail, and with the help of IP-addresses, the exact computer that was used can be clearly identified (even if in reality, this is only feasible in exceptional cases, such as with a subpoena).

There is no clear demarcation of roles.

Often, in cyber-bullying, the roles of "perpetrator" and "victim" are not easily distinguishable. Attacks may be replicated in counter attacks and thus leave the former perpetrator as a victim. Victims become perpetrators because they are intimately familiar with the behaviours and strategies that prove effective. Characteristics that often hold true for the victims and perpetrators of traditional mobbing prove to be less accurate when it comes to cyber-bullying. For example, even well integrated and popular pupils can become victims of cyber-bullying.

Sexual violence as one form of violence.

Lovesickness and the termination of relationships often lead to cyber-bullying combined with sexual violence. For example, it is common for boys to blackmail girls into taking nude pictures of themselves. Suggestive text messages or private messages in social networks are also used in this way. Boys may also fall prey to this type of violence, especially homosexual boys or boys whose sexual orientation is unclear are victims more frequently.

Case Study: Jealousy

Christina has been harassed by a girl she knows for a few months. This girl is currently dating Christina's ex-boyfriend which makes Christina believe she's being harassed because of jealousy. This girl posts denigrating messages about Christina on *Facebook*. She calls Christina fat and ugly, makes fun of her tattoo, etc. This has had a huge impact on Christina: She isn't the happy, cheerful girl that she used to be, she's become very closed, she doesn't trust anyone anymore, and she suffers a lot because of this. All of this is making Christina lose her self-confidence.

Even though Christina talks with friends about it and tries to ignore the denigrating messages, the situation doesn't stop and, what's worse, she doesn't know what to do to make it stop.

Case Study: Breaking Up

A girl (15 years old) broke up with her boyfriend via *Facebook*. He doesn't want to accept this, however. They were together for more than a year. The boy is harassing the girl, continually sending her text messages and messages via *Facebook*. The girl feels persecuted. She thinks about meeting with the boy to make it clear to him that it is really over.

Happy Slapping:

Disputes and scuffles between adolescents, during or after school hours, are a well-known phenomenon. Recently, however, these incidents have been filmed and the videos distributed rapidly over the internet or mobile phones. Thus, the acts don't stay within the close social circle of the young people. (Negative) reactions to "happy slapping" videos range from rather distanced disapproval to great concern, depending on the similarities to one's own life experience (school, way home, bus stop, etc.), one's individual ability to empathize and the extent of the violence depicted. Because these videos are passed on to others, with "happy slapping", the boundaries between consumption and perpetration of media violence are often blurred. Forwarding such videos already surpasses mere passive consumption!

Sexting:

"Sexting" – a combination of "sex" and "texting" (English for sending SMS messages) – describes a trend: More and more adolescents take erotic pictures of themselves or others and send them via mobile phone to their friends and acquaintances. Often, these pictures end up on the internet, for example in social networks or photo communities, and are then further distributed to a large audience.

In many cases, these intimate images are at first "only" exchanged among couples or best friends, possibly as a kind of proof of love or friendship, or as a form of flirting. When these relationships or friendships end, however, some of those pictures end up on various mobile phones or on the internet in revenge, or are used for extortion. The use of nude pictures to blackmail others after a relationship has ended is especially on the rise.

Case Study: Sexting

For some time, Lisa (15 years old) has been in a loose relationship with Daniel via *Facebook*. One Sunday afternoon, they are both bored and they exchange erotic pictures through the social networking site. Well, actually it was Lisa who took the photos and sent them – Daniel held back quite a bit. A few days later, Lisa hears that Daniel has distributed the pictures to all of his acquaintances. Lisa hasn't seen them yet, but everyone else has. Now, Lisa is mortally embarrassed.

Once pictures have been distributed, there is virtually no way to stop their dissemination. Even with pictures that have only been shared with “friends” online, there is no way to guarantee that they won't end up in the wrong hands. Therefore, once distributed, pictures can surface even years later and damage future careers and private relationships. Furthermore, distributing and publishing erotic images of minors is illegal (child pornography) and may lead to legal repercussions, even if they were only sent to one's partner within the framework of an intimate relationship. In some countries, this has even led to convictions for young people. From a legal standpoint, it is especially problematic if such self-made “pornographic” images are used in the context of cyber-bullying or extortion, or as “material” for consumers of child pornography.

In Fall of 2011, European teenagers who are active in the youth-panels of Safer Internet Centres and therefore especially mindful and educated when it comes to navigating internet risks, were asked about sexting⁵: As reasons for sexting, the European teenagers mentioned “being noticed by others/attracting other people's attention”, “stupidity”, “feeling sexy” and “getting compliments”. Asked what feelings it triggers in them, they mentioned amazement and curiosity on the one hand, but also embarrassment and fear. The biggest fear was that their parents would see the pictures. Girls' reactions were more centred on shame and fear, while boys felt more curious and had rather positive feelings. Regarding the dangers of sexting, these already sensitized young people thought of drawing “dangerous people's” attention and of conflict with parents. The danger of sexual harassment was mentioned as well.



⁵ Barbara Buchegger (2011): Sexting: Nude Pictures and Internet. Results of Pan European Insafe Youth Panel Survey Sept/Oct 2011. Online: http://www.saferinternet.at/fileadmin/files/Online_Communities_Studie/Sexting_survey_nov11.pptx.pdf (23.02.2012).

Case Study: Sexting with coercion

On *Facebook*, 12-year old Julia became acquainted with a presumably 16-year old girl. The two girls became friends and Julia got talked into sending nude pictures of herself to the 16-year old. The 16-year old sent pictures back as well. In this way, they exchanged 20 pictures. Then, the messages stopped. Suddenly, the 16-year old opened a fake profile for Julia on a social networking site. She blackmailed Julia that she would publish her pictures there unless Julia kept sending more and would masturbate together with a friend in front of the camera on Skype.

After “147 Rat auf Draht” was called, the fake profile could be deleted very fast. No further measures were taken because Julia didn’t get in touch anymore after the incident.

Sexual Harassment and Coercion on the Internet⁶:

Sexual harassment on the internet takes many different forms, ranging from public postings in a social networking site to publishing slanderous statements behind the back of the person concerned. Postings may include unwelcome sexual content, or depictions of the person in a negative sexual context (“faggot”, “whore” etc.). Often, sexual harassment takes the form of unwelcome sexual approaches (in public or in a private message/e-mail), often coupled with sexually denigrating behaviour (for example, dirty jokes, lewd remarks, comments such as “typical female!”, mailing pornographic materials, etc.). Public inquiries into sexual attributes or the other person’s sex life are also part of this pattern. These behaviours often constitute a form of cyber-bullying (see page 11).

Sexual coercion goes one step further and always includes making contact with another person with the goal of performing sexual activities. This includes persuading someone to talk about sex online, or to undress in front of a webcam in order to take a picture. If this is being done by an adult who approaches children online, it is called “cyber-grooming”.

Case Study: Chat Messages

13-year-old Marie wants to chat with her friend on *Facebook*. However, she constantly receives chat messages from a man. Even if she clicks them away, he always returns. At first, he was friendly, but then he got more and more insistent. He offered her pocket money. Marie suspects that it might have something to do with sex.

⁶ Ethel Quale, Lars Lööf, Kadri Soo, Mare Ainsaar (2011): Methodological Issues. In: Mare Ainsaar, Lars Lööf: Online behavior related to child sexual abuse. Literature Report. Robert project. 2011, p. 11. Online: <http://www.childcentre.info/robert/> (23.02.2012).

Seduce and Bait – “Online Luring”:

Children and adolescents can – with or without their knowledge – themselves be used as bait for sexual assaults by adults. This may happen in connection with prostitution, for example, or with sexual abuse (“Extra pocket money” as a nickname in a social forum). Such baiting often uses promises of gifts, concert tickets, trips, electronics (mobile phones, gaming device) or money.

Grooming:

The risk of being faced with sexual advances is one of the dark sides of using social networks. Girls especially report this. Negative experiences may include unwelcome “come-ons” by peers, requests by strangers to share intimate information or photos, and – in extreme cases – so-called “grooming”.

Grooming refers to (usually male) adults who deliberately work on gaining the trust of children and adolescents – with the explicit goal of sexual harassment and/or abuse. Over a long period of time, the perpetrators patiently try to obtain the trust of their intended victim, and finally arrange for a meeting in real life. To that end, some adults initially pretend to be peers. More and more, however, men don’t bother with this detour and don’t hide their age; instead, they try to ingratiate themselves with the girls (and sometimes boys) with compliments and the like. If the girls become apprehensive at a later date and try to break off the contact, the perpetrators try to intimidate them by using threats, for example, in order to make sure they don’t tell anyone what happened, or they extort them using photos and postings they already received (“you wanted it too, you went along”).

In the first phase, perpetrators often want to receive nude pictures of their victims. They often do this by referring to the children’s and teenagers’ profile pictures and calling them “cute” or “sweet”. Subsequently, they want to receive more photos, and they also actively send pictures and erotic comments themselves. Often, they further post these pictures in dedicated child porn forums as well.⁷ It is believed that online-groomers differ from offline perpetrators in that they are younger and better educated. Compared to the population as a whole, both groups have a higher degree of sexual deviation and a lower ability to present themselves well⁸. Online-groomers show a slightly higher level of empathy towards their victims than offline perpetrators.

⁷ Ethel Quale (2011): Behavioural patterns of becoming an offender of sexual abuse and offending behavior. In: Mare Ainsaar, Lars Lööf: Online behavior related to child sexual abuse. Literature Report. Robert project. 2011, p. 50.
Online: <http://www.childcentre.info/robert/> (23.02.2012).

⁸ Ibid. p. 57.

Case Study: Grooming**Chat**

Stéphanie is 14 year old girl. She loves chatting and she met a young guy (who claims to be 20 years old) on an online forum. Because he appeared to be very nice, Stephanie gave him her *MSN* address so that they could chat in private. Little by little they began to know each other better. One day he told her that she was the most beautiful girl in the world and that he was in love with her. After this, he asked Stéphanie to send him pictures of herself, first with clothes, but afterwards he began to ask for pictures of Stephanie naked. Stephanie was so in love with him that she took her clothes off in front of the webcam. After a while they had an argument/fight and the young man threatened Stephanie with spreading the pictures (online). Stephanie decides to talk with her mother about the situation. The mother is worried because she does not know if the pictures are actually being spread online or not.

Webcam

"... and so I accepted the guy in messenger, since, you know, I wanted to have some fun and I was bored, too. And then he said I should turn on the webcam, and I did. And then he started to wank off. It was really gross. I turned off the webcam right away and I blocked him in messenger, but he also knows my real name from *Facebook*. Now I'm really scared."
Girl, 14 years

Social Network

In a social network in which everyone is online with a nickname, younger girls are hit upon very quickly and pestered with messages. Messages that comment on the appealing looks of the girls and intend to gain their trust are especially well suited to bring those girls into a grooming situation. Below are messages to a 13-year old girl who never did anything actively in the network.

Messages to "sexysarah13" on a social networking site (within 5 days):

TheSeeker39: "Hi, you look so cute, unfortunately I don't see enough for sexy. May I see more from you"

sam19: "Hey how are you? Wanna do cybersex?"

draken09: "Hi! Tell me are you really only 13y. young? Love draken"

bmwfreaky: "Hi how are you? wicked photo. :-)"

noname2009: "Hello. may I have pw? You are pretty :-) pretty please wanna see how hot you are"

atom69: "hy wanna earn 1000 euro?"

1.3 Who is in Danger? Victims of Sexual Harassment and Grooming on the Internet

Studies⁹ have shown that the following factors may be relevant when children and adolescents become victims of sexual abuse in connection with the internet. However, that doesn't mean by implication that all children and adolescents who share these risk factors will become victims.

Individual Factors:

Demographic Factors

- Gender: Girls are more likely to be targeted for grooming and sexual harassment.
- Age: Teenagers are more likely to become victims than younger children.
- Education: Girls with less education are more likely to be victims.
- Sexual orientation: Adolescents who appear homosexual or whose sexual orientation is unclear are more likely to become victims.

Behaviour on the Internet

- Frequent internet use: Young people with a high level of online activity, especially chatting and online messaging, are more likely to be victims.
- Risky online behaviour:
 - Children and young people who have contact to strangers on the internet, for example in a social network or chat room
 - Liberal handling of personal data, such as giving out phone numbers, pictures, name, address
 - Flirting, sexting, and exchange of intimate details on the internet (which young people find easier than face to face communication) in order to satisfy their sexual curiosity
- Drug use: Girls are more likely to become a victim if they consume high amounts of alcohol and/or drugs. No connection for boys has been shown.

Experience with Difficult Emotional Situations

- Abuse: Girls who experienced sexual harassment and sexual violence in their life offline are especially likely to become victims online as well. Having experienced abuse can also cause teenagers to not be able to react adequately if harassment does occur. This psychological stress considerably increases the risk of becoming become a victim again because no appropriate defence mechanisms could be acquired.
- Depressed mood and thoughts: Young people who are depressed are more likely to become victims. However, it is possible that the depression is a consequence of the abuse. If a young person reacts to sexual harassment with depression, this in turn will make it more likely that they will be victimized again in a similar incident.



⁹ Kadri Soo, Zinaida Bodanoskaya: Risk factors becoming a victim of Internet related sexual abuse. In: Mare Ainsaar, Lars Lööf: Online behavior related to child sexual abuse. Literature Report. Robert project. 2011, p 46 <http://www.childcentre.info/robert/> (09.03.2012)

Societal factors

- Family structure: Children living in single-parent homes or patchwork families are more likely to become victims.
- Homeless teenagers and runaways are more at risk.
- Socio-economic status of the household:
 - Children and adolescents from higher-income families are more likely to become victims of unwelcome sexual contacts. This is probably due to the fact that these children are more likely to have their own computer with internet access at their disposal.
 - Children whose parents are less educated are more likely to become victims.
- Quality of parent-child relationships: Children who have a bad relationship with their parents are more likely to become victims. Where mutual trust is high, and children are able to turn to their parents even in problematic situations, the risk is lowered.
- Parental supervision: The more insight parents have into their children's lives and/or the more parental supervision is maintained, the less likely it is that their children will become victims.

Differences between Girls and Boys¹⁰

Studies show clear differences between girls and boys and their respective experiences with sexual harassment and abuse on the internet. Boys are more open to risky behaviour, such as taking part in cyber-sex, practicing sexting, consuming pornography or participating in sexually oriented chat rooms. Girls' behaviour is less risky; they are more aware of the risks. Still, they are more likely to be victims of sexual harassment and abuse on the internet. Girls also experience sexual harassment as unpleasant, disturbing or frightening.

Examples of Sexual Offline Violence¹¹

- Rape (vaginal, oral and anal)
- Forced masturbation
- Penetration of a child's anus or vagina with fingers or objects
- Manipulation of a child's genitals
- Sexual activity in which a child is forced to touch the genitals of an adult
- An adult masturbating in the presence of a child
- Forced joint consumption of pornographic movies, or forcing a child to watch someone having sex
- Child Pornography
- Putting children on display
- Undressing a child against their wishes
- Female circumcision
- Forced marriage
- Sexually suggestive comments and behaviour

¹⁰ Kadri Soo: Specific behavioural patterns and risks for special groups of becoming a victim? Experiences of Internet related sexual abuse and its risks among boys and girls. In: Mare Ainsaar, Lars Lööf: Online behavior related to child sexual abuse. Literature Report. Robert project. 2011, p. 64 <http://www.childcentre.info/robert/> (09.03.2012)

¹¹ Eva Borissova, Radoslava Raykova, Marieta Radulova, Tsveta Brestnichka, Georgi Apostolov, Natalia Kirilova, Svetoslava Stoyanova, Kamen Petrov: Virt@al and Re@l Violence. A Manual for Prevention. Association Roditelli, Sofia 2009, ISBN 978-954-92296-1-5, p. 66 and Joelle Huser, Romana Leuzinger: Grenzen. Prävention sexueller Gewalt. Kohl Verlag 2011. p. 7

Examples of Sexual Online Violence¹²

- Invitation to become sexually intimate with the other person
- Luring someone into prostitution
- Cyber-sex against someone's will
- Spreading intimate photos (those showing the victim, but also photos showing the perpetrator that are sent to the victim)
- Spreading child pornographic images
- Spreading intimate pictures without the knowledge or consent of the victim

1.4 Empowering Children and Young People Online

Even though many children fall into the various risk groups associated with sexual abuse online and may, for various reasons, be more likely to become victims, there are nevertheless many ways to strengthen children and young people against these risks.

- **Education and awareness:** When children have heard numerous times that they may encounter persons on the internet who have bad intentions, they will be quicker to notice if something is off.
- **Saying “no” and scaring someone off:** Potential perpetrators faced with initial resistance usually leave to look for “easier prey”. This must be practiced in order to work in real life.
- **Following one's instincts.** Generally speaking, children and young people have good instincts about what feels good to them and what doesn't. However, if this ability is confused and disturbed, they will be faster to lose it. For example: Is that “horrible kiss” at family visits with the great aunt really a necessity? Here, too, the instincts say no ...
- **Strengthening family ties and social cohesion:** Children who have a safe haven at home are less likely to put their trust in potential perpetrators on the internet. If that isn't possible at home, other adult confidants can offer crucial support.
- **Bolstering children's self-confidence.** In order to figure out what one likes and feels comfortable with, it is necessary to possess a fair amount of self-confidence.
- **Knowledge about where to find help.** Once a child or adolescent actually finds her- or himself in an unpleasant situation, it is necessary to get help fast. If children already know where to go, they can draw on those resources much faster.

¹² Eva Borissova, Radoslava Raykova, Marieta Radulova, Tsveta Brestnichka, Georgi Apostolov, Natalia Kirilova, Svetoslava Stoyanova, Kamen Petrov: *Virtu@l and Re@l Violence. A Manual for Prevention*. Association Roditelji, Sofia 2009, ISBN 978-954-92296-1-5, p. 66 and Joelle Huser, Romana Leuzinger: *Grenzen. Prävention sexueller Gewalt*. Kohl Verlag 2011, p. 7

How Can I Scare Off Potential Perpetrators on the Internet?

Scaring someone off is easier said than done. Depending on the situation in which the child/young person finds him or herself, a different strategy might make sense. Below are a few useful options.

- **Verbally scaring someone off** with statements such as
 - “Leave me alone!”
 - “I don’t want that!”
 - “What you are doing is illegal. I will report you to the police!”
 - “I will tell others about you so that you won’t approach any other children.”
 - “I saved everything you did. I have evidence!”
 - “This is your fault. What you did to me is not okay.”
- **Block and report:** Cyber-groomers should be reported to the social networking site directly in order to get help. As a first step, the person should be blocked and all “friends” should be warned. Cyber-groomers don’t like publicity; they want to get close to their victims in secret and confidential situations.
- **Secure evidence.** If legal action is taken against the groomer, evidence is needed. It is crucial to secure all evidence. Even if one would rather “not have anything to do with it anymore”, screenshots should be taken and text messages saved.
- **Starting a new account.** If one’s fear is very large and one feels that, in the past, one wasn’t careful enough with personal data, it can be helpful to delete the old account on the social networking site. In one’s new profile, a young person can add only those friends he or she actually wants to have and make sure to be more mindful of all the settings.
- If the fear is too big, it is important to **contact adult persons of trust or a counselling service** and to consider, together with the experts, what the next step could be. The “right reaction” may look very different depending on the individual case in questions.



2. The Role of School – Prevention and Help

2.1 Why Should Schools Address Media Violence?

In connection with school, it is important to identify which things have an impact on the classroom and which things are “only” relevant for pupils’ personal development. Obviously, both topics are important and will sometimes become part of the curriculum. The form in which that is done, however, might be different.

There are many reasons to study media violence in school:

- Media violence (for example, cyber-bullying, insults, etc.) does not only affect the pupils and children involved. It also has a big impact on the climate in class, and therefore on learning. Prevention ensures that teaching will be unimpeded, and defining clear consequences makes it possible to intervene quickly and efficiently if problems should arise.
- Teachers revisit this topic repeatedly in order to better connect their lessons with pupils’ everyday lives – especially because they know that pupils are particularly susceptible in this. The topic of media violence is easily integrated into many subjects: In German or English lessons, for example, pop songs can be analysed; in psychology classes, the thrill of fear or shock can be addressed; history lessons can take on the new symbolisms or “advertising methods” that right-wing groups use. In the course of sex education, pornography and the credibility of pornographic images can be discussed.
- Children and young people need adults that are media competent – parents, teachers and caretakers who are interested in their world and are able to give them guidance. Even though they may be more technologically adept than adults, that doesn’t mean that they can educate themselves when it comes to media.
- From time to time, even teachers become victims of media violence. A firm stand on the part of the school and addressing the topic ahead of time clearly show preventive effects.

Sexual Violence

If sexual violence is occurring among students, as described above, it should be addressed, especially in cases of cyber-bullying and if a number of pupils are involved.

If it is individual pupils that are affected, and if the sexual harassment they experience is done by stranger, it makes more sense to discuss this topic in the framework of personal development and self-confidence and to work together with the pupils on possible ways to handle such critical situations.

In the course of sex education, it further makes sense to address pornography, pornographic images and their truthfulness. This can help to give pupils more self-confidence when it comes to their own sexual activities. Pornography shows what people want to see: Stereotypes, dreams, fantasy. But in no way does pornography depict reality. It also does not help one learn about “customary” or “common” sexual behaviours. What shown are activities that excite and stimulate and are absurd, exceedingly rare and usually completely exaggerated. This is just as true for the role that violence plays in sexual imagery.

Posing

Being able to represent yourself is an important function the internet has for young people. Their online self-expression involves pictures, postings and comments, as well as home-made videos and music. Both popular culture (for example, music videos) and advertising have an influence on young people's autonomous creation of photos and videos.

Photos play an important role when it comes to self-portrayal on the internet – especially in social networks. Sometimes, a “simple” photo isn't enough. To attract attention, the pictures have to be really eye-catching. Sexually suggestive poses (“posing”) or (a lack of) clothing can help with that. Nicknames often include sexual innuendo as well, for example, as many Xs as possible in a name (XXX), or allusions to porn stars.

Children and adolescents are often completely unaware of the possible negative consequences such a self-portrayal can have, especially if they haven't had any bad experiences yet. This is a point where adults can lend support by alerting young people to boundaries that shouldn't be crossed. It is not helpful, however, to condemn every photo or video, since that would only lead to adult comments not being taken seriously anymore. Here, the adolescents' daily life has to be taken into account.

2.2 Prevention of Violence in Schools

Good teaching effectively prevents violence. Teaching and learning is the “main business” of schools. If the school is successful in providing a stimulating and high quality environment to that end, the first violence prevention measures have already been put into place. Important factors include good subject-specific preparation and a didactical design of school lessons, nuanced assistance and support for students, study effort at home, educational style in the classroom, study requirements and stress, the feedback culture, the usefulness of taught material and, for example, teachers' conduct when it comes to motivating and supporting the learning process.

Often, it is exactly the dedicated teachers who demand too much of themselves by aiming for complete prevention of violence as their goal. As a rule, however, this goal cannot be realised. Instead of total prevention, “reducing” violence can be a more realistic goal. Reducing violence means in practice:

- To concentrate on the most common forms of violence;
- To be sensitive towards daily “small” acts of violence;
- To reliably react to them;
- And to introduce violence preventive measures from the start (from the early grades on) in order to prevent escalation.

Successful violence prevention includes measures that apply at the school, class and individual level (so-called multimodal approaches). In practice it is often dedicated pioneers that take the initiative, using know-how and personal commitment, to introduce violence prevention measures. In the long run, however, it must be the goal to bring the teaching staff and school council on board. Only then will it be possible to implement multimodal programmes.

Empowering Pupils and Personal Development

Strengthening the personality in such a way that one becomes better equipped to handle abusive situations cannot be started early enough. Even in elementary schools, this needs to be a topic.

In order to be able to handle the internet, mobile phones, etc., safely and responsibly, children need special skills. Dangers can never be eliminated completely, neither online nor offline. Therefore, it is even more important that children learn as early as possible how to act independently and competently in risky situations (also called “empowerment”). There are many initiatives that use the “empowerment”-approach, such as the Austria-wide educational programme “EIGEN-STÄNDIG WERDEN” (“becoming independent”, www.eigenstaendig.net) for grades one through four (ages 6 to 10 years).

Below, you will find a **compilation of skills that elementary school children (6 to 10 years old) need in order to be able to safely and responsibly use the internet and mobile phones**. The compilation is based upon years of experience at Saferinternet.at (www.saferinternet.at). It also takes the controversy around education standards and media literacy into account, a frequent debate not just in Austria. General skills are listed together with those pertaining especially to internet use, mobile phones, etc. This is the approach that most closely matches reality since children don’t perceive these areas as separate, and the transitions between them are fluid.

Supporting the development of these abilities is not just the responsibility of schools. Good communication with parents plays an equally important role.

MYSELF

- I am able to recognise what is **good** and **bad for me**, and I know how to act accordingly.
- I am able to **name my feelings**.
- I am **aware of my experiences** and can **talk about them**.
- I recognise when something is **scaring** me; I can talk about it and **get help**.
- I realise when I **need a break** or have to stop with an activity (such as playing games on the computer).
- I am allowed to **say NO** if something doesn’t feel right.
- I know **which information is personal**. I know when, where and to whom I can give personal information, and when, where and to whom I cannot.
- I understand what I can **publish on the internet about myself** and what I cannot.

MYSELF AND OTHERS

- I am able to **talk about my experiences with others**; for example, with my parents, teachers or other adults I trust.
- I know in which cases I need to **ask my parents for permission** when I want to do something on the internet or on my mobile phone.
- If something doesn't feel right or I don't want to do something that my friends do, I can **say NO** and **don't have to participate**.
- I know how **my friends and I deal with each other** on the internet and via mobile phone. I know the **rules** we have with each other.
- I know which **photos** I can **publish on the internet**, and I don't put any embarrassing pictures on the web. I know that I always have to **ask for permission** if I take a picture of someone and want to publish it online.

MYSELF AND THE ONLINE WORLD

- I can **identify risks** that could affect me on the internet and on my mobile phone.
- I can **recognise advertising** on the internet and on my mobile phone when I see it, and I am aware that **advertising can exaggerate** and does not always tell the truth.
- I know how I can help myself to be able to **distinguish between "true" and "false"**.
- I can **recognise sites that are not appropriate for my age**, and I know what to do if I come across one.
- I know that on the internet, some things are **allowed** and some are **forbidden**.
- I know that I can't just **copy and use** everything I found on the internet since there is copyright protection.
- I know that on the internet, I **leave traces**, and others can find out what I did and where.
- I know that I have to choose **passwords** in such a way that others **cannot crack** them. I know that I should **not disclose** my passwords to others.
- I recognise the consequences my **YES** or **NO** can have.

Table: Necessary Competencies and Abilities of Elementary School Kids (6 to 10 years) as a Precondition for Safe Use of Internet and Mobile Phones

2.2.1 Class Activities to Raise Awareness

Numerous exercises can help to bring the complex issue of sex and violence in digital media into the classroom and raise the awareness of students. With the help of the exercises all age groups and topics can be addressed. Chapter 4 (from page 43) of this handbook provides a large number of suggestions.

2.2.2 Rules About Media Use in School

In order to regulate the misuse of mobile phones and cameras in connection with the school, it makes sense to establish classroom norms of agreed upon behaviours, or at least pertinent house rules.

Many schools have already regulated the use of mobile phones and the internet on school grounds. This creates certainty, because it clarifies how teachers should respond and makes it possible to intervene quickly. Furthermore, integrating digital media into the classroom demonstrates a certain interest in and understanding of pupils' daily life.

All those who still have this task ahead of them can already use the process of working on these rules as a way to start integrating the topic "media" – and especially "media violence" – into their lesson plans. When it comes to developing rules for agreed upon behaviour, it is important to involve the pupils as equals. This is a prerequisite for rule acceptance and to ensure that pupils feel responsible for their implementation.

Developing Class/School Rules – Helpful Questions for the Process:

- Mobile phones: Mobile phones may not disrupt lessons. How can this be ensured, and/or when and how may mobile phones be used in class (for example, to write down homework assignments)?
- Photos and movies in school: Before publishing an image, the person depicted must be asked for approval. How can this be done in real life?
- Further dissemination of films and photos etc.: No one may be depicted in an offensive or defamatory manner. Only such content may be spread as is appropriate for the age of the recipient. How can I find out what is appropriate for what age, and what is insulting or denigrating?
- Inappropriate content: At the school, no inappropriate content may be viewed, and the school network may not be used for private purposes. What constitutes inappropriate content or personal use?
- What are appropriate consequences for persons involved in a violent incident (including spectators) who don't do anything against the violence?

In addition to the rules, clear consequences must be agreed upon, as well (for example, a meeting with the parents, a conversation among the pupils, expulsion from school, a talk with the school psychologist, victim-offender mediation, etc.). These rules must come into effect whenever a violent act occurs and need to be implemented consistently. Which consequences the school would like to employ must be decided individually. Taking a firm stand and maintaining that violence will not be accepted is one of the most important aspects of violence prevention.

2.3 An Incident at School – Warning Signs for Teachers

Whenever a pupil suddenly shows signs of social withdrawal, a lack of concentration, a decrease in school performance and other sudden changes, the possibility should always be considered that the teenager may have experienced or witnessed violence to an extent that he or she is unable to compensate for.

When it comes to violent behaviour, teachers' and counsellors' influence is limited. Moreover, successful prevention of violence has to be done on many levels – not just in school. Experience shows, however, that schools stand a good chance of staging a successful intervention. This opportunity should not be missed. The following diagram shows *the cycle of violence as experienced by children and adolescents*¹³. The “happy slapping” example will illustrate at which point in the cycle of violence an intervention is particularly effective.

Cycle of violence

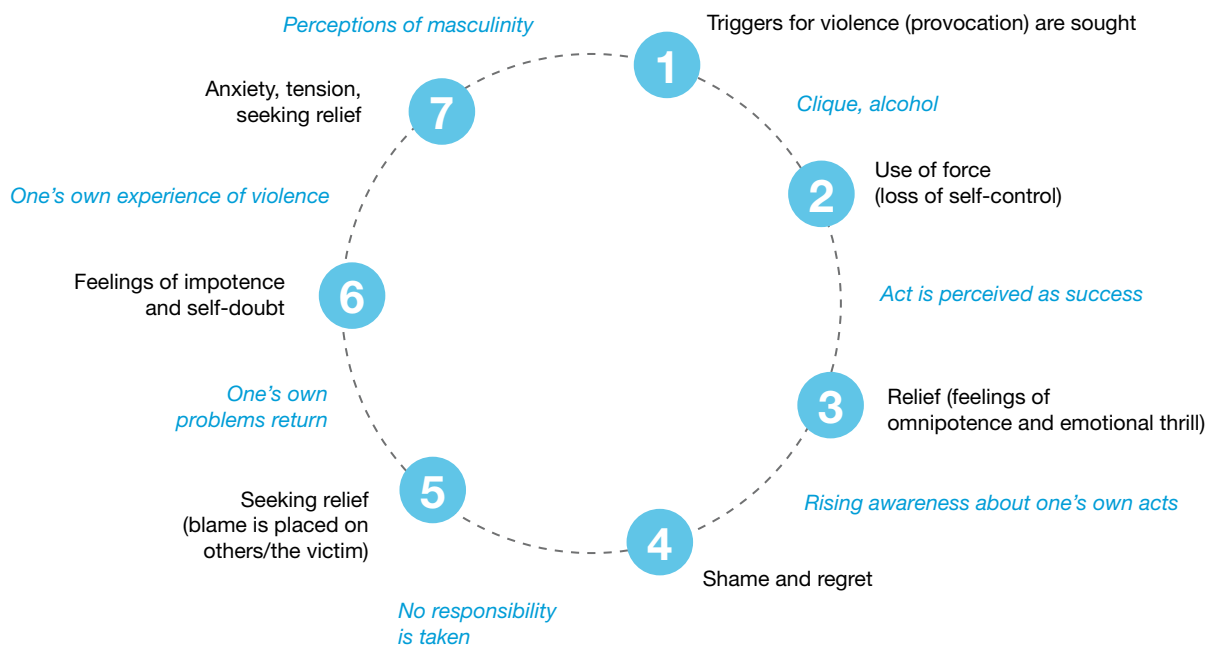


Fig.: Cycle of Violence.

¹³ Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (2010): Entscheidung im Unterricht. Die Schulstunde als Talkshow. Willst du Stress?, p. 12. Online: <http://www.bpb.de/files/LQFIOU.pdf> (23.03.2012)

The Cycle of Violence, Illustrated With the Example of “Happy Slapping”:

Phase 1

Stemming from anger, rage and the feeling of not being able to change his own life (though often, flimsy reasons are given, such as “he looked at me funny”), one adolescent goads others into “fucking someone up” and filming it.

Phase 2

On the way home from school, a teenager is attacked and beaten up while others film the fight with their mobile phones. Perpetrators and spectators run away; the video is “admired” and widely distributed.

Phase 3

At first, positive feelings outweigh negative among the young people. They feel relieved and good (“we fucked him up good!”). Finally, they feel strong and as if they overcame their own powerlessness. Afterwards, however, negative feelings quickly build as well. They get frightened by the vehemence with which they acted as a group against the victim. It is now that they start to realise what they have done.

Phase 4

The adolescent feels remorse and shame and decides not to do this again. If he could, he would like to undo it all. Those feelings, however, are not mentioned in the group or in front of the others.

Phase 5

The responsibility for what has happened is passed on right away. Together, they look for another “culprit”: The victim (“he’s been provoking us forever ... He really had it coming!”).

Phase 6

Their own problems are still there – often, that includes their own experiences of violence. The adolescent does not see a way to change anything. He feels powerless and helpless.

Phase 7

The tension is rising again, anger is building up and the search for relief starts anew.

It is typical for the fifth phase that blame is assigned to the victim: He/she looked at us funny, provoked us, is a weirdo, etc. Herein lays a risk, which is that as an adult, one may be able to understand those arguments, and thus (consciously or unconsciously) end up supporting the perpetrators and legitimizing the violence.

The cycle of violence shows that interventions are especially sensible in the fourth phase. At that point, the perpetrators and offenders are aware of what they have done and show a willingness to change something. Depending on the cause of violence (for instance, one’s own experience with violence in the family, a lack of conflict resolution strategies etc.), individual interventions may help to break the cycle.

One prerequisite to preventing violence, therefore, is to always reflect on one’s own feelings and personal experience with violence.

2.3.1 Dealing with Young Offenders (Violence in School)

As shown in the *cycle of violence* (see page 26), there is a point at which the offenders feel remorse and are uncertain as to whether their actions were okay. In that moment, they are able to view their actions from the perspective of the victim and feel sympathy or even pity. At that point, the perpetrators need to hear the clear message that their behaviour was wrong.

Typical for adult offenders is the fact that their justification mechanism is so strong that it causes them to no longer even perceive the suffering of their victims and therefore believe that for various reasons, they are entitled to inflict violence on others. In juvenile aggressors as well, it was found that they tend to believe that violent acts through media were no big deal, and they also incite others to do the same.

The attitude of teachers towards perpetrators can make a big difference: When young people realise that teachers are prepared to intervene in the case of violent incidents, it decreases the likelihood that they will use force! Similarly, there is less use of force, when young people (potential perpetrators) have the feeling that they are being treated fairly and when they have good rapport with their teachers.

Case Study: Happy Slapping

Three months ago, Peter started his first year of high school. After the first snow has fallen, he is pursued by third year students in the school yard and completely rubbed with snow. A classmate films the process, and they only stop when Peter gets a nosebleed. Peter sees a teacher standing nearby who is supervising the break but he does not seem to notice what is happening. After the incident, Peter doesn't leave the classroom anymore during breaks for a number of days. Then, someone sends him a *YouTube* link onto his mobile phone which shows him as he is rubbed with snow, and gets a nosebleed. He shows the film to his parents, who help him to remove the video from the platform by reporting it to the site operator. They also contact the school, and in a personal appointment, they ask how it is possible that something like this goes unnoticed by the break supervisor. The director tells Peter that he is very sorry, and promises to talk to the teacher who hadn't been paying attention at the time. That teacher turns out to have a suspicion about who may have been the perpetrators, and the director visits that particular class and informs the students that anti-social and violent behaviour towards fellow students is unacceptable and will be punished from now on. The religion teacher in that class discusses with the class how they felt when they were new to the school, and what they would have wished for from their classmates. Peter has once more returned to the playground.

2.3.2 How Can We Help Victims of Violence in the Context of School?

For many victims of violence, the experience isn't something they have forgotten the next day. The more drastic an event, the more people participate in it and the more frequently the incidents happen, the more severe the **emotional distress** that is caused. In this regard, sexual harassment must be considered a form of violence.

The **impact of violence** on the victims may include: Anxiety, loss of interest in formerly favoured activities, social withdrawal, sadness, depressed mood, diminished concentration and learning problems, sleep disorders, low self-esteem, and self-destructive behaviours, all the way up to suicide attempts. In addition, mental stress is often manifested in **physical symptoms** such as headache, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, tremors, fever, weight gain or loss, etc.

Many victims experience **strong feelings of fear, anger, shame and also the desire for revenge**. This may cause teenagers to withdraw from their friends, or to become perpetrators themselves. Therefore, it is all the more important that caregivers clearly define what behaviours are okay and which are not. Particularly distressing is violence whose origin is unknown. In those cases, the mistrust of others and feelings of personal insecurity become even stronger.

Additional problems of the victims

Often, hearing the word "victim", we think of a pitiful person who is in need of help because she is helpless and innocent and has fallen into a bad situation. However, a victim is not usually pitiful, does not always behave correctly themselves and has possibly pursued risky behaviour which may have made the abusive acts possible in the first place (for example, uploaded provocative photos of themselves onto the internet). In such a case, he or she doesn't fit our picture of the "innocent" victim that everyone fully sympathizes with, and it can easily happen that others are quick to pass judgment, such as "it's your own fault", "you made your bed, now lie in it" and similar myths.

Victims often have to contend with the problem that others don't believe them, or at least that is a very big fear, even it may not actually be true. Fear of not being taken seriously can prevent many teenagers from seeking help. Complex interactions on the internet are especially difficult to explain to outsiders, so that feelings of being alone and not understood may be reinforced if the helper has only a little experience with the medium in question.

Once a victim finally finds sources of trust and encouragement in their personal environment, it can happen that others understand that they are feeling bad right now, but if the symptoms continue, they may become more impatient. "Don't be like that!", they say, because the friends think that by now, it should really be back to normal.

What victims need

What victims need, therefore, is to restore their feelings as quickly as possible so they know they are not helpless, but instead able to act an influence their own the situation. Guidelines such as "What can I do?" help with (re)obtaining the ability to act.

Of equal importance is the necessity of involving the victims in all the decisions that concern them. Any action taken needs to be done on the victim's behalf. Nothing should ever be decided without them, something that can happen out of misplaced concern. Even well-intentioned action, if they

haven't been discussed with the victim, can be perceived as abusive in this sensitive stage, which would lead the victim to lose confidence in her helper system.

Dealing with victims

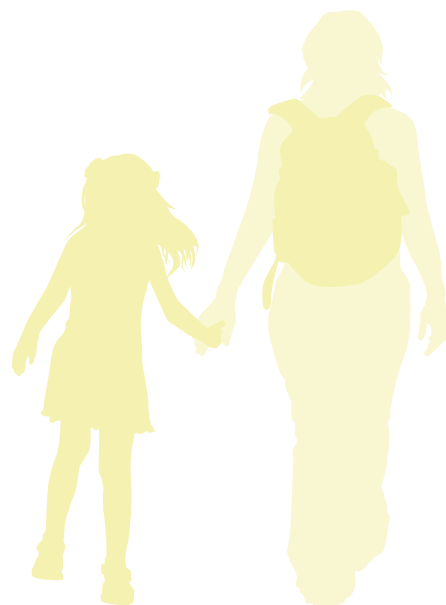
All told, one can say that victims of cyber bullying, grooming or other acts of violence have never done anything to deserve what is happening to them. Maybe they have sometimes behaved awkwardly or risky, but that is something many people do. And not all of those people are victimized.

Young people are singularly unaware of the dangers they expose themselves to because they are developmentally at a stage where they do not plan as far into the future, have difficulties gauging consequences, and have little experience with stressful situations. In addition, with attacks on the screen, it is common for the person's environment – family and teachers – not to realise what is actually going on.

If a young person hasn't acquired enough confidence in his life to seek help from adults, he or she is left alone to deal with the psychological stress that this form of violence inflicts on her or him. In some cases, victims are blackmailed by saying that if they tell anyone what's going on, the perpetrator will publish a video or photos of them online. For these young people, confiding in someone is an especially big step.

Things to tell victims:

- It is not your fault. The blame lies not with you, but with the perpetrator.
- There is help (teachers, parents, counsellors ...).
- It doesn't always come naturally to get help, but that only shows that seeking out help is a strength!
- You can block unwanted messages, persons, e-mail addresses, etc.
- It may be important to gather evidence, for example, to make copies or screenshots, even if at first that is unpleasant.
- If what happened is a criminal offense, the police can help you.



3. Finding Help and Counsel for Victims

Many young people whose life revolves around family, friends and school are not aware that there are special institutions that become active when there are problems in daily life, for example, and that offer help. In the same vain, the police may be seen not as a potential aide, but rather as a redoubtable institution that controls and punishes. Preventive work includes, therefore, informing young people about the respective organisations that are concerned with their welfare, along the lines of: “If you don’t want to talk to those close to you, talk to those who understand your problem – with professionals”. Depending on the region, those might include special youth counselling centres or psycho-socially, medically or religiously oriented organisations that view themselves as a contact point for young people in need of help.

It is important that those organisations feel responsible not only for ill or deprived young people, but for all young people and their daily needs, as are typical for various developmental stages, and that the help is offered free of charge.

3.1 Online Counselling

Online counselling is counselling that is done over the internet. It is a parallel offer to personal face-to-face (f2f) counselling, the classical type of counselling that requires an appointment and a physical location. Counselling offers possible solutions for a problem.

In many countries, online counselling hasn’t yet been established. Often, this type of counselling falls through due to a lack of media competency amongst counsellors or due to a lack of funding. The pervasiveness of this type of counselling in some countries (mainly the German speaking countries, Scandinavia and the Netherlands), however, shows that it is generally well accepted by young people. Experience shows that even people who are usually not inclined to utilize counselling services find this type of counselling attractive.

3.1.1 What is Online Counselling?

Nowadays, many youth counselling organisations offer online counselling in addition to f2f counselling because online services accommodate many of young people’s needs. Depending on the form of communication, a distinction is made between synchronous telecommunication on the one hand (such as counselling via chat – one-on-one, group chats, or topical chats – as well as counselling via Skype or telephone) and asynchronous telecommunication on the other hand (such as web-based one-on-one counselling, counselling via e-mail or the use of forums). These offers are text-based, meaning that inquiries and problem descriptions, as well as counsellors’ responses, are conducted in writing.

Counselling that was initiated online may lead to f2f counselling later on, but that is not usually the goal of online counselling.

























ICT-Application in Online Help in Social Work													
One way communication 							Online help with interaction 						
Information sites							Postponed interaction 		Direct interaction 		Uncertain interaction 		
													
Uncertain 													
Tips and advice	Tag cloud	FAQ's	Links	Testimonials	News	Reading tips	Forum	E-mail	Chatroom	One-to-one chat	Social network	Serious games	Self test
													

Fig.: BOCKLANDT, P. (2012): Forum and Chat in Child Helplines – Strength and vulnerability. Unpublished training.
Antwerp: Kinder- en Jongerentelefoon. 11 February 2012.

3.1.2 Advantages of Online Counselling

Faceless: Anonymity and Pseudonymity

The big advantage of online counselling options is that they can usually be utilized anonymously or pseudonymously, which fundamentally aids in building the trust that is necessary to address difficult issues.

The anonymity (which can only be assured by services that are free of charge) brings about a situation in which outward appearances are meaningless. It doesn't matter how attractive, well built or expensively dressed one is or isn't, for nobody knows. This fact allows young people to assume other roles and try out new ways of acting, which helps them develop new strengths. If they don't want to ask anyone in their everyday life for advice, they can use a pseudonym and try out online how it feels if done as "Julia95".

Young people also profit from "lurking" (reading other people's posts without writing themselves), where they don't actively participate in forums or chat discussions but can nevertheless receive new information through what they read. Differing counselling policies may or may not support this type of indirect participation. Some counselling webpages purposely put earlier questions and responses online so that young people can find answers to questions they haven't yet asked themselves. In other situations, for example during chats, it can be important to activate the lurkers in order to create a safe atmosphere for those who are discussing their problems.

Anonymity puts the young person seeking advice firmly in control of establishing contact. That, as well as the idea that the counselling session can be discontinued at any time, makes online counselling essentially different from personal face to face counselling. The non-binding nature of the contact makes it easier for young people to bring up topics that cause them fear, shame or guilt, such as sexual abuse. In some cases, someone's presence alone is significant enough to warrant their receiving help. For example, just showing up in a chat room for rape victims¹⁴ is both a statement and a plea in and of itself. In this respect, it is possible to communicate on the web without words.

Young people who have already initiated a process of social withdrawal may be able to establish contact with helpers under the cover of pseudonymity. While there are no guarantees, there is always hope that actions taken in the virtual world will make similar actions in real life more feasible and that experiences gained in online roles will eventually manifest themselves as resources in real life.

Timeless: Independence from Business Hours

Especially with asynchronous media, questions can be asked and sometimes answered at times where no f2f consulting organisation would be open. Except for chat appointments, no special arrangements or advance planning is necessary. Writing e-mails or posting in a forum can be done at a convenient time – when one is alone, in a moment of contemplation or at a time of intense emotion. This helps to accommodate the emotional needs of young people, in particular. Also information on websites of such organisations is obviously available day and night.

Placeless: Overcoming Geographic Distance

Young people often suffer from reduced mobility if they don't have access to public transportation. This leaves them with fewer opportunities to find and visit an appropriate counselling organisation. Online counselling, however, is just "a mouse click away". While online counselling can, of course, also be found abroad, national and regional services should be given preference. The legal situation in other countries can differ greatly (criminal laws, child protection laws, etc.), and it is impossible to ensure an appropriate transfer to other organisations or emergency services etc.

Since, as seen by an outside observer, one is just sitting at the computer as usual, it is not necessary to outwardly declare oneself as a person in need of help.

Peer Support: Opportunities for Contact with Other Affected Youth

On an online counselling platform, contact with other affected people can be established through direct dialogue, but even just reading earlier entries that seem to resemble one's own situation spells an end to the isolation that many victims feel. The realisation that one is not the only person in the world who has this problem can bring deep relief. Moderated communication with other affected young people can lead to new perspectives and open up new courses of action. The support of a virtual community helps with problem solving just as f2f support would.

¹⁴ Formerly: <https://www.wien.gv.at/frauennotrufforum/>

Advantages of Text Based Communication

With asynchronous communication, there is enough time to describe one's situation and formulate questions – this enhances the positive effects of writing, which kick in even before an answer is received (see “Advantages of Asynchronous Services”).

Written records of helpful interventions, be they in form of chats or e-mail dialogues, can be re-read multiple times and therefore constitute a resource for later crises. However, not all chat providers enable users to save the chat protocol.

Young people who have sought advice online have stated that their difficulty speaking about their problem is the reason they chose not to call counselling hotlines. While they had trouble expressing their emotions on the phone, they were nevertheless able to write about them. In other words, text based online counselling may have a lower threshold than anonymous telephone counselling and, through its special features, reaches young people in need who wouldn't otherwise contact a counselling organisation.

3.1.3 Who Counsels Whom?

Depending on the target group or specific problem, different online services exist. A reputable counselling web page will indicate where its competency lies and will state who is running the website and which specific target group it aims to reach. Those are the considerations that will determine the type of online service that is chosen, particularly in regard to the target group. For example, a forum is appropriate for a target group that is sufficiently large, but not for a particular problem that affects only a small number of young people.

When it comes to **qualified counsellors** who offer online counselling as part of their job, such as psychologists or lawyers, services range from individual professionals with their own practice (often, these services are subject to a charge) all the way to counselling services by publicly sponsored organisations or NGO's, who usually offer their services free of charge.

In these cases, the counsellors should have undergone substantial training or possess professional qualifications in their field, and ideally they are also verifiably skilled in media communications.

In “**peer counselling**”, the counsellors are **specially trained youth**, who are ideally themselves also under supervision, so as to help them cope with the problems they are trying to solve. This type of counselling (employing peers as equals) is very well suited for adolescents. Similar hopes and ideas, as well as a shared language, build trust amongst people of the same age, with a shared outlook or with similar conditions of living. Furthermore, peers are possibly more likely to serve as role models or examples for autonomous activity than adult counsellors could. This type of counselling exists outside of the internet as well.

Some organisations employ **volunteer counsellors** who typically complement the full-time counsellors on weekends or in the evening. They have usually undergone a short training and are supported by a supervisor.

A less professionalized version of peer counselling is that which happens amongst the users of an internet platform (for example, a forum or group chat) who coincidentally find themselves in the same online “community of purpose” and, depending on their own experiences, spontaneously offer advice in response to questions or problems that others describe. This type of counselling is only possible on the internet; there is no equivalent outside of virtual reality. In Belgium, such

an online community was founded by young people themselves and called “peer advice about suicide” (<http://stopzelfmoord.tk>).

In this case, quality depends more on the service provider (the organisation that maintains the platform and their counselling policy) than on the person(s) who actually do the counselling. In other words, a self-help forum that is moderated by a youth organisation may be more reliable and helpful than a personal session with a counsellor who has commercial interests.

However, caution is advised in cases where a counselling platform is not run by an organisation or qualified professional.

Advantages and Disadvantages According to the Qualification of Counsellors:

a. Counselling by professionally qualified counsellors

Here, it is important to distinguish between trained professionals and semi-skilled staff.

Professionally qualified counsellors

Advantages:

- Often, contact is possible beyond online counselling (offer of face to face counselling);
- Youth will be directed to appropriate authorities or other services;
- Tangible support;
- Confidentiality is ensured through legal and ethical principles for counsellors.

Disadvantages:

- Restricted to opening hours;
- Particular services may be subject to a charge.

Volunteer staff

Advantages:

- Support can be found on the weekends, in the evening or at night, outside of the regular office hours of professional counsellors;
- Youth will be directed to appropriate authorities or other services.

Disadvantages:

- Lay people can unwittingly give bad advice (for example, if they misjudge a situation or they are not aware of a change in legislation).



b. Counselling by peers**Advantages:**

- Support can be found on the weekends, in the evening or at night, outside of the regular office hours of professional counsellors;
- Contact with other affected people can enhance a sense of belonging and give hope that one's difficulties can be overcome;
- Recognising that one is not alone can help to normalize the issue;
- Youths talk to each other on equal terms.

Disadvantages:

- Lay people can unwittingly give bad advice (for example, if the legal situation has since changed, or when insufficient information leads them to misjudge a situation)
- Bullies and "trolls" can deliberately post hurtful or compromising replies
- Some of the self-appointed counsellors may be motivated by the urge to demonstrate their own superiority. Instead of responding to the actual need of the person seeking advice, their answers serve to cultivate their own image. Often, this becomes apparent in comments that use direct instructions and prevail on the person asking to take a certain action ("All I can tell you is that you absolutely need to talk with him ASAP!").

Special caution is advised when a service is ostensibly about "counselling" but in fact has other goals. In particular, forums that address self-harming or endangering behaviour (such as anorexia, self-harm, suicide, reckless behaviour and so on) may have "counsellors" who are affected themselves, but undiscerning, and who merely want to "help" others continue their self-harming activities.

Moderating in Online Counselling

In order to circumvent the above-mentioned disadvantages of peer counselling, it is necessary to moderate the forum or group chat.

The purpose of moderating is to create a secure and trustworthy environment, corresponding to the platform's terms of use, and to sanction noncompliance (for example, by expulsion from the platform, blocking IP-addresses and more). In topical chats, the questions and the answers by the experts are moderated. Moderators are responsible for having the conversation run smoothly, they try to motivate and handle conflicts. In some cases, the moderators do counselling as well; in any case, professional qualifications are necessary since the moderator needs to correct misinformation posted by other users.

However, moderators cannot be online 24/7. Therefore, on platforms that are accessible around the clock, rules may still be violated until such a time when moderators can respond. Conversely, it is possible to prevent posted messages from going online until they have been approved by a moderator (but that reduces the advantages that stem from being constantly available). Advantages and disadvantages of both approaches must be carefully considered for the specific target group in question.

3.1.4 Chat, E-mail, Forum – Which is Best for Me and My Situation?

Aside from the fact that there may not always be a choice between various media, *the choice* itself is ultimately not crucial for successful counselling. Rather, the question is *how* responsibly moderators use the medium and *how well* they can accommodate young people's needs. It is necessary to have a basic understanding about how young people behave on the net, a requirement that is easy to verify by seeing if the counselling webpage appeals to young people.

Regardless, when it comes to particular topics, some types of media are better suited than others.

Properties of Immediate or Delayed Communication in Counselling Services (synchronous/asynchronous)

With synchronous media communication, both communicating partners are online at the same time and communicate with each other (for example, on the telephone or in a chat). With asynchronous communication, one partner leaves a message for the other which is received at a later point in time (for example, on an answering machine, via e-mail, in a forum).

Advantages of synchronous services:

An immediate reaction is possible. Relevant topics can be discussed without delay and misunderstandings can be cleared up. Information given is more binding, since questions can be answered immediately, and it is possible to respond precisely to the situation of that particular young person. During the conversation, the young person can be assisted in structuring his or her own story.

Disadvantages of synchronous services:

Inaccuracies in language and content are more likely to occur; factual information that goes beyond that particular conversation is hard to remember; it is possible to abruptly end the conversation if the communication doesn't work out; it is necessary to make an appointment in order to be online at the same time. Further concerns include: limited possibility to discuss the issue with other counsellors; in chats it is usually the client who has the lead in conversation and this might be an unusual situation for the counsellor.

Advantages of asynchronous services:

It is possible to examine the situation in more depth, and there is more time to formulate an answer and research necessary information. Since communication partners don't have to be online at the same time, the counselling organisation is accessible 24/7, and it is possible to ask one's questions or describe one's problem at all hours.

Disadvantages of asynchronous services:

The delayed response makes it impossible to give immediate help; feelings and situations may change in the time between inquiry and response; it is harder to clear up misunderstandings or ambiguities, and further inquiries lead to even more delay.

Writing as an instrument of reflection and self-help

The use of asynchronous media, especially, activates the positive effects of narrative writing. Describing a problem encourages reflection of the situation and can thus lead to new insights already. Giving the text structure helps to bring order into one's own thoughts as well. Putting a problem "on paper" helps distance oneself from it; the problem becomes "captured in writing" and thereby more manageable. Detailing one's own emotions brings relief, and the creativity released strengthens one's capacity to act. The act of writing alone means that one took action – one isn't helpless any more. Through writing, one enters into a relationship with the imagined reader, which reduces feelings of loneliness and isolation.

3.1.5 Criteria for Reputable Online Counselling

There are no general rules for counselling services. Considering the diversity of target groups, media and counselling forms, the common denominator is much too small to justify an attempt to vouch for quality in this way. In some countries (Germany, for example), seals of quality have been introduced; in others, recommendations are available. However, the different budgets of counselling organisations, on the one hand, and the constantly evolving technology on the other hand, stand in the way of attempts to standardise.

Whatever the case may be, the counselling service must always be run in a responsible manner. This means that reputable, professional providers of counselling services who are committed to their target group have to consider how to both meet their responsibility as counsellors and create an offer appropriate for the target group in question.

Criteria for Good Online Help for Young People¹⁵

- General**
- The **target group** (age, region) and the **focal point of the counselling platform** are clearly evident.
 - The website's **language and design** are **attractive** and suitable for the age of their target group.
 - The website's **navigation** is clear and user-friendly.
 - The **information** on the website is **up-to-date** (links, information, FAQ, etc.)
 - The core **issues** of the counselling service are **transparent** and easy to find.
 - The counselling service complies with the **legal requirements**, especially when it comes to the protection of privacy.
 - **State of the art** technological configuration.
 - **Low-threshold** service (no lengthy registration requirements, no request for personal data).
 - The **terms of use** (netiquette, undesired content, anonymity/pseudonymity, etc.) and the consequences for noncompliance should be oriented towards the safety of those seeking counselling and have the goal of creating a trustworthy atmosphere. This is especially important for services with many visible users such as forums or group chats.

- Transparency**
- **Site notice**, "About Us": Information about the operators of the webpage and the address of the person or organisation are easy to find.
 - The website makes it clear for whom its counselling services are intended and available, and for whom not.
 - Information about **confidentiality** and non-disclosure policies is provided.
 - It is easy to get **an idea of who the counsellors are** that are online at the moment (gender, professional or volunteer, education or qualification, optionally name or a photo).
 - It is easy to get an idea of the various **types of online counselling** available at the website.
 - It is clearly evident who **authored the content** on the website (was it written by other users, by counsellors or by unaffiliated experts?).
 - The providers themselves point out the **pros and cons of the counselling services offered**.
 - It is made clear whether the counselling services offered are **appropriate for acute emergency situations**. If not, **emergency contacts** for acute situations or crises are provided.
 - It has to be apparent **how quickly** the counselling will proceed (timeframe).



¹⁵ Sources: Bocklandt, P. (red.) (2011) Niet alle smileys lachen. Leuven, Acco (p. 135); Eidenbenz Franz: Standards in der Online Beratung. In: Kühne, S., Hintenberger, G.: Handbuch Online-Beratung. (2009), p. 213; Gerö, S. (2009): "Beratungskonzept, Nutzungsbedingungen und Qualitätssicherung für Online-Beratungsangebote. Eine Checkliste V2.0." MERZ/medien + erziehung, 2009(3), p. 65-71.

Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The communication between the counsellors and those seeking advice is secured through encryption (SSL). → The counsellors aim for maximum confidentiality. → The website draws users' attention to the steps they can take to ensure maximum safety for themselves. → The counsellors make sure that the identity of young people in need of help is not conveyed by their own mistake or out of carelessness. → Public visibility of postings: Users understand if their questions and the answers they receive will be visible to others online and/or they can choose if they wish their posts to be made public. → Counselling content that is not meant to be public can only be accessed after a login on the website (web-based e-mail counselling; no e-mails should be sent to users' personal computers). → The website offers protection from unsolicited contacts.
Anonymity and Privacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Anonymity is ensured through appropriate technical measures. → The users know what they can do themselves to ensure maximum protection of privacy. → Online counselling content and user data is saved no longer than necessary. → If counselling protocols are used for research purposes, the users are informed. → Is the offer free or subject to a charge? Not having a credit card, young people are probably unable to access services for pay. If the offer is free, the source of funding should be declared (only sponsorship by the public sector ensures neutrality of counselling services).
Sequence and Procedure of Counselling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The duration of counselling (one time or longer-term) is declared. → Online counselling is not merely aimed at encouraging users to attend f2f counselling sessions. However, some online counselling services offer the option of coming for f2f counselling after some time has passed (and trust has been gained).
Helpful Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → A "Shut this Page" Button enabling users to close all activity on the counselling webpage without losing previously created content. → Links to other counselling facilities with references to their focus areas may be helpful. → Complaint management.

Signs of inadequate counselling policies:

- Advertisements
- Complicated registration procedures
- Confusing navigation
- Automatically generated replies
- Unmoderated chat rooms
- Fees
- Identity of counsellors is not clear

Furthermore, many countries have specific guidelines for professions such as psychologists or psychotherapists. It can be a sign of integrity NOT to offer certain types of communication. Specific legal advice on the web, for example, is a sensitive issue, given that complex issues take a long time to clarify and deadlines may be overlooked (liability issues).

3.2 Other Types of Counselling

Besides the types of counselling available on the internet, other services are available, depending on the region.

- Traditional offline counselling in counselling centres
- Specially trained teachers at schools that are available for counselling
- Telephone hotlines
- Social work services, such as outreach work or street workers

In Austria, an overview can be found on [help.gv.at](https://www.help.gv.at) under the headings:
Home > Soziales und Notfälle > Gewalt > Gewalt gegen Kinder und Jugendliche >
Weiterführende Links zu Beratung und Hilfe

<https://www.help.gv.at/Portal.Node/hlpd/public/content/29/Seite.290114.html>

For the Flemish region of Belgium, an overview can be found at *De sociale kaart for Flanders* under the link www.desocialekaart.be/zoeken/index.cfm and for Brussels under www.1712.be.

3.3 Counselling Services in Europe

The “helplines” within the framework of the Safer Internet Programme of the European Commission are listed below. In all countries, these are contact points for young people for all occurrences related to the use of digital media. In some countries, these are general helplines young people can contact for support in any problematic situation.

Country	Organisation	Website
Austria	147 Rat auf Draht	www.rataufdraht.at
Belgium	Clicksafe.be	www.clicksafe.be
Bulgaria	Helpline.bg	www.helpline.bg
Cyprus	CyberEthics/Cyprus Neuroscience and Technology Institute (CNTI)	www.cyberethics.info
Czech Republic	Safety Line Association – SLB	www.internethelpline.cz www.pomoconline.cz
Denmark	Cyberhus	www.cyberhus.dk
Estonia	Lasteabi.ee	www.lasteabi.ee

Country	Organisation	Website
Finland	Mannerheim League for Child Welfare	www.mll.fi/nuortennetti
France	e-enfance Netecoute	www.e-enfance.org www.netecoute.fr
Germany	Nummer gegen Kummer	www.nummergegenkummer.de
Greece	University of Athens – Adolescent Health Unit (AHU)	www.saferinternet.gr/helpline
Hungary	Kék Vonal Child Crisis Foundation	www.kek-vonal.hu
Iceland	Save the Children Iceland	www.netsvar.is
Ireland	Childline (ISPCC helpline)	www.childline.ie
Italy	Sicurinrete.it	www.sicurinrete.it
Latvia	State Inspectorate for Protection of Children's Rights	www.bti.gov.lv
Lithuania	Childline	www.vaikulinija.lt
Luxembourg	BEE-SECURE	www.bee-secure.lu
Netherlands	Helpwanted	www.helpwanted.nl
Norway	Cross your heart	www.korspahalsen.no
Poland	Nobody's Children Foundation “Child in the Web” Programme	www.helpline.org.pl
Romania	Save the Children Romania	www.helpline.sigur.info
Russia	Saferunet.ru	www.saferunet.ru
Slovakia	Pomoc.sk	www.pomoc.sk
Slovenia	Nasvet za net	www.nasvetzanet.si
Spain	Protegeles	www.protegeles.com
Sweden	BRIS (Children's Rights In Society)	www.bris.se
United Kingdom	Professionals Online Safety Helpline	www.saferinternet.org.uk

3.4 Tips for Children and Youth: Get Help!

- **Trust your inner voice.** Every human being has a natural intuition that keeps him or her vigilant in risky situations. Trust your intuition and talk to a trusted person, if you have just the slightest bit of doubt. Otherwise, a quiet doubt can quickly become a major crisis.
- **Test the “real thing”.** Even for small problems, it is advisable to seek help. That's how you learn the procedures for helplines and counselling services and are then already prepared when you are facing a major problem.
- **What troubles you?** Before you seek help, it is important for you to be clear about your problem and put it on yourself. Then the counsellors will be able to understand your concerns more quickly and help you better.
- **Keep records.** Secure all evidence that you need so that your story is believable and you can prove it (e.g. screen shots on the internet, text messages on your mobile, etc.). This will ensure that you will get the necessary help.
- **Inform yourself.** Before you contact a helpline, see what you can find in brochures and on the internet about your problem in order to gain a first impression of your situation. Pick different expert sites and compare them. Not all websites are trustworthy!
- **Choose the matching service for yourself.** Go for the counselling service that meets all your needs: Do you prefer to talk about your problem? Do you find it easier to write? Or do you want to remain anonymous? All options are open to you.
- **Reliability is the key.** Inquire about the counselling service of your choice. Ask your friends and other people you know about their experiences. Not all counselling services are reliable!
- **Get yourself help in your family or among friends.** It is sometimes easier to look for help in the family or among friends before you contact an official counselling service. Also other people you know may share with you their experiences. However, if no support can be expected from them, then go for the counselling service.
- **Speech is golden.** The best way to discuss difficult issues is a personal conversation. In this way you can get a quick assistance and get rid of your problem.
- **Writing is silver.** If you don't feel like talking about your problems, get in touch with an internet helpline. Writing is often easier than talking.
- **Don't bottle up your problems.** Everyone has their little and big secrets. “Beautiful secrets” like the first crush are nice to share with your best friend. But there are also “nasty secrets,” such as when somebody is harassed or offended. You should never keep such secrets to yourself, even if you were asked to. Don't lose your heart and talk about it.

4. Exercises

The exercises below can serve as suggestions for designing lesson plans if you are a teacher, and for approaching the topic “sex and violence in digital media” in your work as a youth worker or social worker.

At the outset, each exercise contains a recommendation for a possible relation to the curriculum or teaching subject, and for the pupils’ age. Many of the exercises can be modified for use in other subjects or age groups.

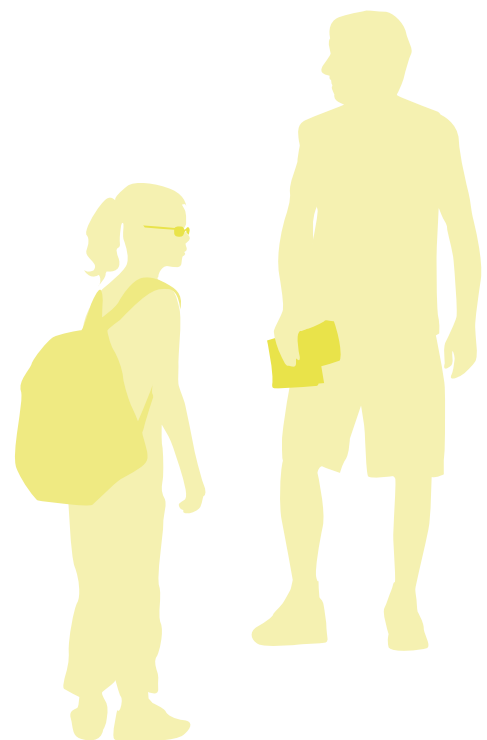
The exercises are broken down into the following categories:

1. Coping with each other
2. Coping with media
3. Coping with violence
4. Coping with sexual violence
5. Looking for and finding help

The following topics are addressed in the exercises:

- Violence
- Sexual violence
- Cyber-bullying
- Dealings with others, relationships
- Naming emotions
- Sexuality
- Help, counselling services
- Finding solutions
- Empathy
- Appreciation
- Personal development
- Media literacy
- Legal issues
- Copyright
- Right to your own image
- Language use
- Prevention
- Safety
- Internet scams

Use these exercises for inspiration and new ideas!
Have fun and good luck!



COPING WITH EACH OTHER

Exercise 1: “Treasure Chest”

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, social learning
Age	6 to 16 years
Topics	Prevention, personal development, appreciation, interpersonal conduct, emotions, empathy

Goals

- To express appreciation and give positive feedback
- To recognise and voice one's emotions
- To accept feedback

Procedure

This exercise is especially useful in the beginning stages of working with a class, or at the start of a big class project that requires intensive cooperation. This exercise should not be used in classes that have unresolved conflicts.

Version 1

The pupils sit in a circle. They have the option of receiving positive feedback by the others, if they choose to do so. The teacher writes on the board, *“I especially like about you ...”*

It is important to focus on concrete examples.

For instance: *“I especially like about you that you are not petty.”*

Better: *“I especially like about you that I can always borrow things from you.”*

Please note: Some young people are embarrassed by feedback. Always let the pupils decide by themselves if they would like to receive feedback from their classmates.

Version 2

The feedback is given in writing. To that end, each pupil's name is written onto one piece of A4 paper. Those sheets are then handed around, and each person writes a line of feedback for everybody else and then folds it back so that the next person can't read what the last person wrote. The finished “treasures” are then given to the respective pupils.

Please note: Sometimes, pupils do not want to give feedback to everyone. Therefore, ask the pupils at the outset to formulate positive feedback for EVERYONE.

Version 3

Each pupil receives a number of cards equal to the number of pupils in the class. The pupils then label them with the names of the person they are giving feedback to. The cards are written anonymously. At the end, each pupil receives an envelope on which he or she writes his/her name. These envelopes are then passed around and the “treasures” are put into the respective envelopes.

Please note: Sometimes, pupils do not want to give feedback to everyone. Therefore, ask the pupils at the outset to formulate positive feedback for EVERYONE.

COPING WITH EACH OTHER

Exercise 2: “Emotion Cubes”

(Adapted from: Martin Kern & Alexander Schmelzer, developed for “i-s-i – Impulse.Schule.Internet”, workshop materials for elementary schools)

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, social learning
Age	6 to 10 years
Topics	Privacy, (online-) communication, chat rules, empathy, emotions
Time required	About one hour
Materials	Cube template, impulse poster “Smileys”

Goal

→ To develop an awareness of how feelings influence daily life and decisions

Preparation

Copy, cut out, colour and glue together the template for the “emotion cube” below. Depending on the chosen game rules, one or more emotion cubes may be needed.

Procedure

In this exercise, the pupils discuss smileys (also called emoticons) and their meanings. Feelings influence our life and sometimes our decisions: What can I express with smileys? Which feelings may lie behind them? What are things I would like to talk about? What would I rather not talk about? Who are the people I like to confide in? Where do I find help if I have a problem? Which situations make me uncomfortable? When do I follow my instincts?

There are several possibilities for playing this game:

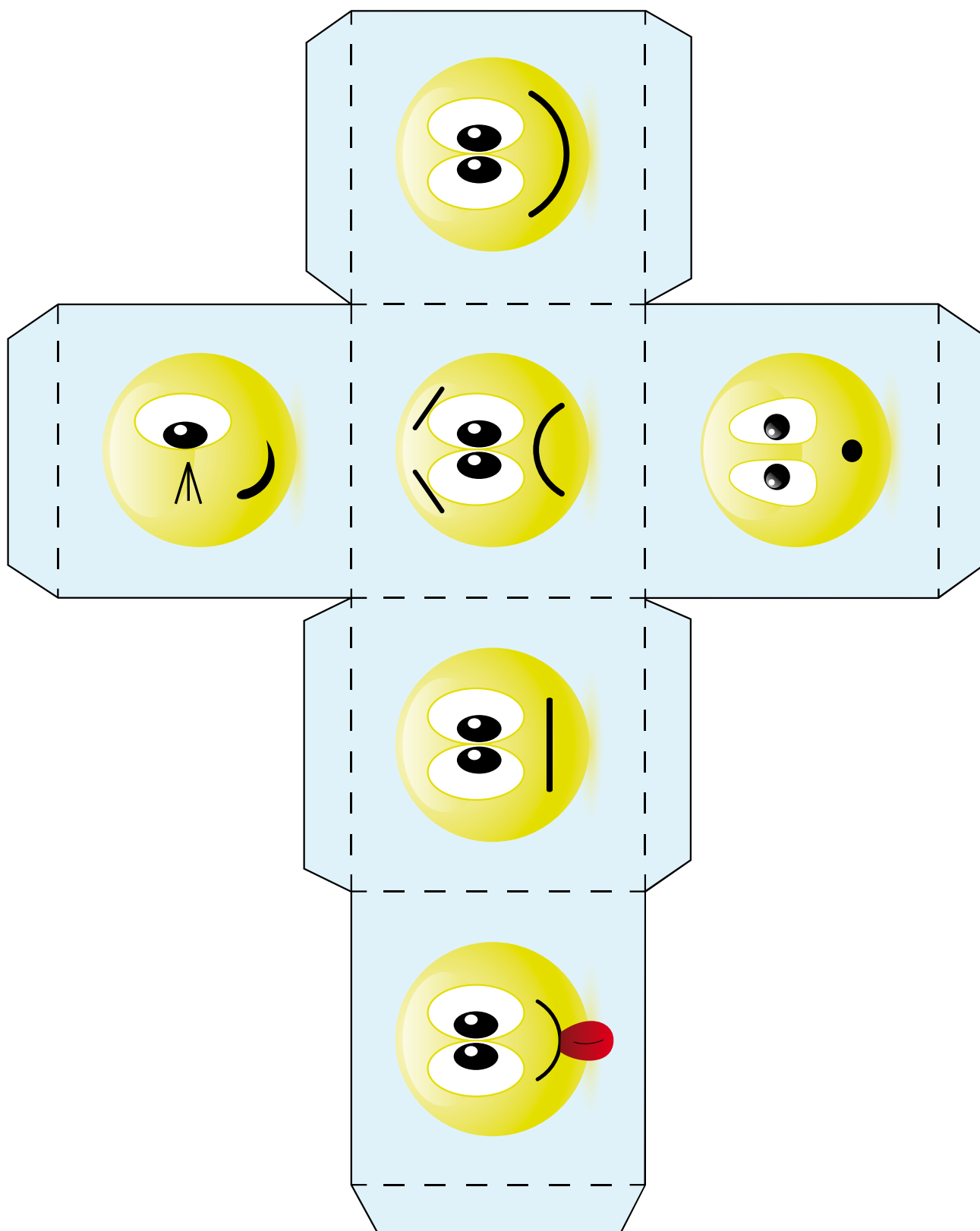
- 1) The children take turns throwing the emotion cube and each one tells a personal story that reflects the feeling/smiley that came up.
- 2) Each child throws the emotion cube three times and then chooses one of the three emotions/smiley to impersonate. The other children have to guess which emotion they are portraying.
- 3) Each child has one emotion cube and lays it down so that it shows his or her current mood. Then, everybody takes turns to talk about it.

Alternative:

Different emoticons are created and enlarged on the computer and then printed and coloured.



Template for Exercise 2: “Emotion Cubes”





Impulse Poster “Smileys” for Exercise 2: “Emotion Cubes”

SMILEY	MEANING
: -)	Simple smiley, happy face
: -))))	Very happy or overjoyed
: -D	Laughing, big grin
: ' -)	Crying for joy
; -)	Smiling with a wink
; ->	Playful smile
: -P	Tongue sticking out
: -C	Unhappy
: -(Sad
: -((Very sad
(: -(Very unhappy
; -(Crying
>: -<	Annoyed
: -	Straight face, thoughtful or indifferent
: -/	Sceptical or undecided
: -O	Astonished or shocked
: -X	Silent (closed mouth)
: -*	Kiss



COPING WITH EACH OTHER

Exercise 3: “Model and Photographer”

(Adapted from: Martin Kern & Alexander Schmelzer, developed for “i-s-i – Impulse.Schule.Internet”, workshop materials for elementary schools)

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, social learning, arts education, general studies
Age	8 to 12 years
Topics	Rights to your image, copyright
Time required	2 to 3 hours
Materials	Computer with webcam, job tags to designate models and photographers, guided dialogue sheet, software for image processing (optional) and a digital camera.

Goals

- To develop an awareness for copyrights
- To become acquainted with and understand people's rights to their own image

Preparation

Copy, cut and prepare several job tags for “models” and “photographers” (see below). For this exercise, every group needs access to a computer with a webcam for about 15 minutes.

An alternative without computer use is described at the end of the exercise.

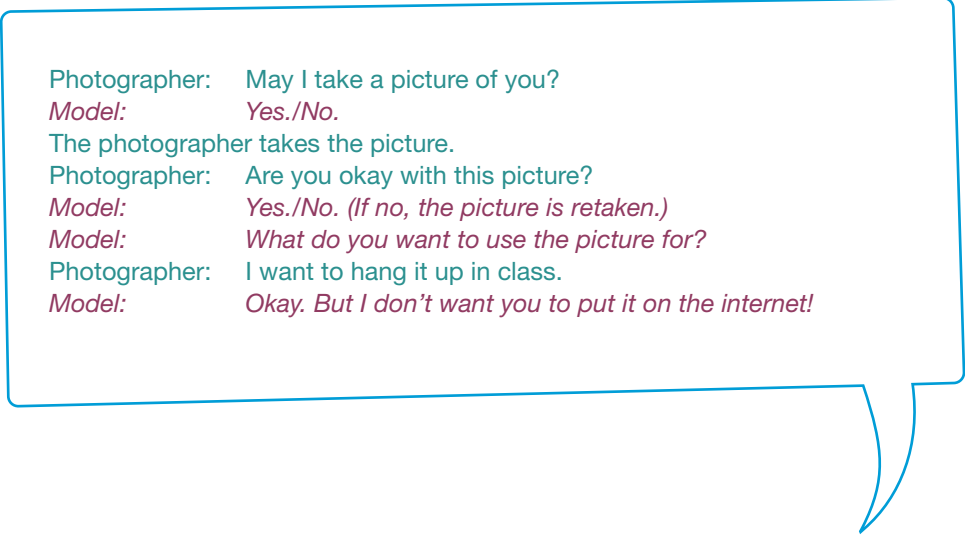
Procedure**Phase 1**

The pupils receive a short introduction into the topic of “rights to your own image”. It is important to convey the following points:

- My image belongs to me.
- Everybody has a right to their own image.
- Everyone must respect other peoples' rights to their own images.
- We need to respect the choice of others not to make certain photos of themselves public.
- There are exceptions to the “right to your own image” where it concerns persons of “public interest”.

Phase 2

The children are divided into groups of two. Each pair decides who will be the “model” and who will be the “photographer”, and each pupil displays their respective job tag. Then, the photographer takes funny pictures of the model with the webcam, and (if desired) uses image processing software to add comical effects. The model decides which pictures have to be deleted and which may be saved, and how they may be used further. To that end, there is a guided dialogue the pupils can use for orientation:



Photographer: May I take a picture of you?
Model: Yes./No.
The photographer takes the picture.
Photographer: Are you okay with this picture?
Model: Yes./No. (If no, the picture is retaken.)
Model: What do you want to use the picture for?
Photographer: I want to hang it up in class.
Model: Okay. But I don't want you to put it on the internet!

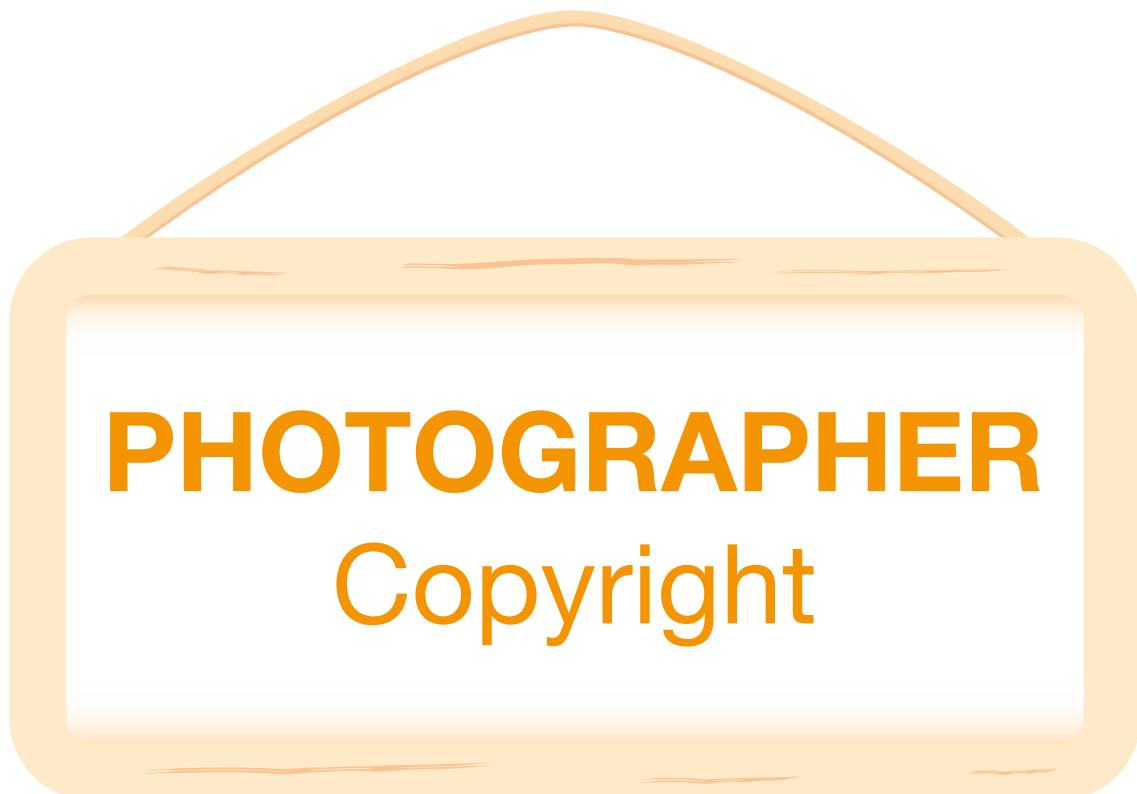
Phase 3

All the photos are gathered and printed. Now they can be hung up in class as a collage with the title “A laughing matter”, provided that all the models agree.

Alternatives:

- The models are photographed with the digital camera, and the pictures are printed in black and white. The photographer may now colour the pictures but must ask the model if they are okay with the alterations.
- The pupils gather unfavourable photos of celebrities and use them to make collages. Then they discuss how a person would feel if pictures like these are published: “Would you like it if such pictures of you were published?”

Template for Job Tags for Exercise 3 “Model and Photographer”



COPING WITH EACH OTHER

Exercise 4: “Quick on the Comeback”

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, social learning
Age	8 to 18 years
Topics	Personal development, prevention

Goals

- To be able to be quick on the comeback in unpleasant situations
- To know how one can defend oneself
- To practice, practice, and practice some more ...

Procedure

Phase 1

The pupils go together in groups and think of situations in which they would like to have quick retorts. Together, they consider how one could react in these situations. In order to arrive at good ideas, they use all possible resources:

- Internet research
- Asking teachers, parents, experts
- Brainstorming together

Each child themselves chooses the retort for the situation they mentioned that is the best fit for him or herself.

Phase 2

Each group chooses one situation they will re-enact as a role play. To that end, roles are assigned within the group.

- Actors: They re-enact the scene (victim, perpetrator, spectators).
- Director: He/she provides for the right setting: Where will the scene be re-enacted, what props are needed? Who else should play a spectator?
- Repartee coach: He/she makes sure that the “victim” reacts as quick-wittedly as possible. He/she makes sure that body language is appropriate and that the answers are good. This person is chosen by the “victim” because he/she serves as a personal coach.
- Observer: He/she observes what worked especially well in the re-enacted scene, and what didn’t work so well. After the play, he/she reports this to the whole class or group and notes tips for the whole class or group.

Tip: If the scene is to be recorded on video, it makes sense to include the pupil’s tips in the closing credits.

Role play – step by step:

1. The scene is chosen.
2. The roles are assigned.
3. The director takes on the setting.

4. The repartee coach chooses a good answer together with the victim and practices the scene in advance.
5. Now, “victim” and “perpetrator” practice. In the process, the repartee coach makes sure that the victim gains confidence and reacts better and better. Eye contact and an upright posture are of special significance.
6. The scene is played in front of an audience and is filmed.
7. Now, the observer reports how the audience reacted and what worked especially well. Together, tips for the scene are compiled. These are delivered by the observers and coaches, and this is later worked into the video.

Clues to the solution

The following strategies can help in being quick on your feet:

(This is only true in direct confrontation with one person if no direct violence is to be expected. If confronted with a whole group, the only solution is to run away and get help, the police, etc.)

- An upright posture
- Direct eye contact
- Possible types of answers can be:
 - **To agree and then “reverse”:** *“You retard.” “Right – we fit together so well.”*
 - **To deflect and change topic:** *“I’ll thump you!” “Well, that’s not nice at all. But – another question: Where did you get that cool sweater?”*
 - **To ask a counter question:** *“Wow, you’re a real basket case!” “Basket? What kind? Wicker or plastic?”*

Repartees, however, are not about insulting the other person or taking revenge. First and foremost, it’s about making clear to the other person that her/his stupid comments don’t get to you, that it’s just not worth their while. In a given case, therefore, it’s always a balancing act, and it should be addressed as such.

COPING WITH EACH OTHER

Exercise 5: “No!”

(Adapted from: Joelle Huser, Romana Leuzinger: *Grenzen. Prävention sexueller Gewalt*. Kohl Verlag 2011, p. 82)

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, social learning
Age	6 to 18 years
Topics	Personal development, prevention

Goals

- To practice saying “no”
- To recognise when and in which situations one has difficulties saying “no”
- To practice how one could say “no” in those situations after all

Procedure**Phase 1**

Together, the pupils gather different ways to say “no”.

- NO. I don’t want that.
- Knock it off! I’m not in the mood.
- I find that very uncomfortable! Cut it out!
- Stop.
- Back off!
- Actually, I don’t really want that.
- Somehow, I don’t like that.
- I’m sorry, but I can’t do that now.
- ...

Phase 2

Now, the pupils go together in groups and reflect on which situations they face in their own life in which it is hard for them to say “no”. In a second step, they consider which “no” works (or doesn’t work) in a particular situation. What resources can one find oneself that will help to formulate a “no” for maximum effect?

Phase 3

In a short role play, the pupils practice how they could behave in each individual situation.

Clues to the solution

The following approach can be helpful for children and young people in order to be able to say “no” in an unpleasant situation.

One person harasses or insults another person; the other person does the following:

- 1) Say out loud what the other person did (since the other person often aims to come too close “in passing” or “in secret” or “casually”). For example, one could say: “*You just insulted me*”, etc. It is important not to phrase it as a question, such as “*did you just insult me, or what?*”.
- 2) Say clearly and distinctly: *I don’t want that!*
- 3) Say clearly and distinctly: *Stop it!* (Make sure it is not phrased as a question, such as “*Could you please stop that!?*”)

COPING WITH MEDIA

Exercise 6: “My Media Diary”

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, digital competencies, mathematics, statistics (for the analysis)
Age	10 to 18 years
Topics	Media literacy, violence
Material	Table: “My media diary”

Goals

- To raise awareness for one’s own media consumption
- To reflect one’s own media consumption and especially its share of violent content

Preparation

For this exercise, you have to prepare a table for the “media diaries” ahead of time. The pupils will need them in order to record how many minutes they have spent with each medium. The share of time that was spent on violent content is recorded separately.

Example:

	Mobile Phone		Computer		Books	
	Minutes	Of those, minutes of violent content	Minutes	Of those, minutes of violent content	Minutes	Of those, minutes of violent content
6:00 PM – 6:30 PM	10	0	30	8	0	0
6:30 PM – 7:00 PM	22	5	30	20	0	0

Prepare the grid to reflect time periods of 30 minutes. Make sure that it is possible to record more than one medium at any one time. If you create the grid with spread sheet software such as MS Excel, some of the data analysis can be automated.

Procedure

Phase 1

The pupils are asked to keep their media diaries for one week. Rules for recording are established ahead of time:

- How shall the entries be made?
- Who is allowed to view them?
- How will the diary be used in class?

The media diary will serve to record media use for 7 days, 24 hours a day. Time spent on the following media may be recorded:

- Computer (without internet)
- Internet on the computer
- Mobile phone (calls, text messages)
- Internet on the mobile phone
- Mobile phone apps
- Books
- Newspapers, magazines
- Radio
- Television
- Video/DVDs
- Creating your own videos/music/podcasts/photographs
- Music, including MP3-players
- Games (mobile phone, computer, online)
- Gaming consoles

Phase 2

After one week, the results of the media diaries are reviewed together. Media use of different pupils may be compared (class average vs. personal use) or established individually.

Possible questions for review:

- How high is the share of violent content in your media consumption?
- Did your media diary yield results that surprised you?
- Are there results that you expected?

COPING WITH MEDIA

Exercise 7: “Killer Jokes”

(Adapted from: BMUKK (1992): *Gewalt und Horror in Medien. Unterrichtsmaterialien zur Medienerziehung*, 5.–9. Schulstufe, Heft 3. Wien: BMUKK. p. 9)

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, social learning, arts education
Age	10 to 14 years
Topics	Violence, emotions, personal development

Goals

- To learn to reflect why fictional depictions of violence are sometimes perceived as funny
- To realize that consumption of “funny violence” can also be used to supplant real and assumed fears or for one’s own relief

Procedure**Phase 1**

On the internet, the pupils search for pictures, videos or comics that they spontaneously perceive as “funny” and which also contain (some) violence. All the content they find is compiled, for example on a learning platform, or printed and glued onto posters.

Phase 2

In groups of two, the pupils analyse why the chosen pictures, videos or comics are perceived as funny. Possible questions include:

- Do all pupils find the contents equally funny?
- What is perceived as especially funny by some, and why do others disagree?
- What is typical for these pictures, videos or comics? What are the similarities (for example, do they show misfortunes/accidents, or figures with special attributes)?
- Why do we sometimes laugh when others come to harm?

Each group creates a drawing, a poster or a power point slide to document their results.

Phase 3

All the results are gathered together and discussed by the whole class. The topic of self-filmed violent videos (“happy slapping”) can be addressed as well.

Clues to the solution

Depictions of violence are perceived as funny mainly when they have some or all of the following attributes:

- A calamity befalls others that one does not want to experience oneself
- The consequences of the violent act are not shown
- Sometimes, laughing can serve as a substitute for acting responsibly

COPING WITH MEDIA

Exercise 8: “I’m Scared of ...”

(Adapted from: BMUKK (1992): *Gewalt und Horror in Medien. Unterrichtsmaterialien zur Medienerziehung*, 5.–9. Schulstufe, Heft 3. Wien: BMUKK. p. 23–28)

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, social learning
Age	11 to 16 years
Topics	Violence, personal development, media literacy

Goals

- To reflect on societal roles
- To illustrate age-specific fears

Procedure

This exercise addresses so-called “age-specific fears” to be illustrated in the course of the exercise. If the pupils cannot fulfil the assignment due to a lack of first-hand experience, they should interview someone else who is in the respective age group (see below). Children are allowed and even expected to gather stereotypes.

(Phase 1)

The pupils write down situations that scare them. (This phase should only be attempted if there is a climate of confidence between teacher and pupils, and if no negative events have recently occurred in that class.)

Phase 2

In small groups, the pupils create collages that illustrate the terrifying images that haunt different persons and age groups.

- 3-year-old girl
- 6-year-old boy
- 10-year-old girl
- 12-year-old boy
- 16-year-old girl
- 18-year-old boy
- Mother
- Grandfather
- Computer science teacher
- Religious education teacher
- Headmaster

Phase 3

Reflection and Comparison:

- Who has similar fears?
- Are there differences or similarities between girls and boys, women and men, young and old people? Describe.
- Are there cultural differences?
- Are there differences between different age groups?

Please note: Confronting your own fears or those of others can lead to insecurity and upset. Therefore, it is necessary to create proper closure at the end of the exercise and to enter back into daily life to ensure that pupils don't get stuck in this fearful atmosphere. If any of the pupils express massive fears, the teacher needs to either call for support or continue working with these pupils individually.

Clues to the solution

How can you handle your fears in daily life? The answer will depend on the age of the pupils; however, it is always important to talk about it. Discuss reasonable approaches that fit the pupils' circumstances and age group.

COPING WITH MEDIA

Exercise 9: “Analysing Violence in Media”

(Adapted from: Gugel, G. (2011): *Praxisbox Medien und Gewalt. Problemfelder und Handlungsmöglichkeiten*. Tübingen: Institut für Friedenspädagogik, p. 38)

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, civic education, social learning
Age	12 to 16 years
Topics	Media literacy, violence

Goals

- To analyse films and reflect on the amount of violent content
- To reflect on and question the roles of aggressors and victims
- To analyse and reveal possible motives for the depiction of violence

Procedure

Phase 1

The pupils work in small groups. Each group searches www.youtube.com for a film clip that has at least some violent content. Examples include trailers for a movie or computer game or short animated films. On the basis of the questions presented in “Worksheet to Exercise 9” (below), each group analyses their chosen film.

Phase 2

The results are presented on a poster. To that end, the pupils create screenshots that show “proof” of their analysis. The goal is to use graphic means to present the film analysis on a poster. The analysis may be done in the form of a mind map.

Worksheet to Exercise 9: “Analyse Violence in Media”

Which types of violence are shown?

- Intentional or unintentional violence?
- Physical or emotional violence?
- Light, heavy or extreme injuries?

Consequences:

- Are the consequences of the violence shown?
- What consequences are shown?
- How are these consequences shown?
- What feelings does that elicit in the viewers?

Closeness to reality:

- Is the violence shown real or fictional?
- How do you know?

Sanctions:

- Are the acts and the perpetrator shown in a positive or a negative light?
- Are the violent acts condemned? If so, by whom?
- Are the perpetrators (depicted negatively or positively) pursued and punished?
- What penalties are imposed and what happens to the perpetrators?
- Is there retaliation, injury, legal action (such as pressing charges) – or nothing?

Gender:

- What roles do women play? And men?
- How are women and men depicted as victims and perpetrators, respectively?

Which motives are given for the violence?

- Socially legitimized violence: Protecting others, legitimate acts performed in the line of duty, self-defence
- Violence perpetrated to reach personal goals
- Ideological, religious, emotional or sexual motives

Victims and perpetrators

- How are the victims of violence portrayed?
- How are the perpetrators portrayed? Rather positive, neutral, negative?

What message is given with the depiction of violence and its consequences?

- Is violence criticised?
- Is it glorified?
- Is it legitimised?
- Is the message ambiguous?

COPING WITH VIOLENCE

Exercise 10: “That Just Makes Me Furious!”

(Adapted from: BMUKK (1992): *Gewalt und Horror in Medien. Unterrichtsmaterialien zur Medienerziehung*, 5.–9. Schulstufe, Heft 3. Wien: BMUKK. p. 15)

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, civic education, social learning
Age	9 to 15 years
Topics	Personal development, violence, empathy, help

Goals

- To recognise and reflect on the causes of violence in one's own life
- To learn how to react constructively to aggression, and to consider possible solutions

Procedure**Alternative 1 – ABC of Violence****Topic: “What makes me furious and mad?”**

The pupils create an “ABC of violence” by writing down one or more associations for each letter that has to do with violence (situations, people, and causes). They have a maximum of two minutes to complete this exercise. After the list is complete, they develop a solution for each item. The solution may consist of instructions on how to handle such situations. Therefore, it can make sense to develop the solutions on the blackboard with the help of the whole class.

Alternative 2 – Writing Stories**Topic: “Once, when I was really mad ...”**

Each pupil anonymously writes a short story or describes a pertinent situation, making sure to detail the reasons for their anger. Then, they crumple up the sheet of paper and throw it into the middle. Every pupil picks up one of the crumpled up papers and adds a possible solution in writing (a keyword is enough). This is repeated three times. In the end, all the stories are laid out and every pupil goes to get his or her own story back.

Alternative 3 – Story in Pictures and Collages**Topic: “This makes me really furious and mad!”**

Each pupil draws a short story or depicts a situation; creative collages are permitted as well. Then, they crumple up the sheet of paper and throw it into the middle. Each pupil picks up one of the crumpled up papers and writes or draws a possible solution (a keyword is enough). This is repeated three times. In the end, all the pages are laid out and every pupil goes to get his or her own story back.

Clues to the solution

The solutions to the stories will be instructions on how to deal with such situations. They may include such ideas as to blow off steam, to use a punch bag, to go running, to engage a third person for mediation, or to make sure there were no misunderstandings.

COPING WITH VIOLENCE

Exercise 11: “Let’s Fight it Together”

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, social learning, English
Age	14 to 16 years
Topics	Cyber-bullying, prevention, help
Materials	Computer and Beamer to play the film “Let’s fight it together”; self-adhesive circles

Goals

- To reflect together upon different ways out of a cyber-bullying situation
- To use role play to flesh out the anticipated outcomes

Procedure**Phase 1**

Showing the English film “Let’s fight it together” with German subtitles, which is available through Childnet International at http://www.digizen.org/cyberbullying/fullfilm_de.aspx (link to the English version: <http://www.digizen.org/resources/cyberbullying/films/uk/lfit-film.aspx>).

Phase 2

Through role play, the following characters are impersonated by pupils:

- Joe
- Joe’s mother
- Kim
- Rob
- The teacher
- The headmaster

The other pupils help their colleagues by being coaches for the roles cast. In that way, there are six groups with three to four coaches each. Two to three pupils may also act as observers, with the task of putting down in writing the various solutions that are brought up in the course of the role play.

Each role play begins with the same scenario. All those involved have come together to talk. They want to find a solution to the cyber-bullying-situation.

First, the role-playing pupils consult with their coaches. Together, they come up with ways the person in question could act.

Then, the actual role play starts, and all those involved bring their opinions and ideas for how to solve the conflict to the table. The duration is about 10 minutes.

Phase 3

In this phase, one solution out of all the suggestions is examined in detail.

- The role players share brief feedback about how they felt during role play.
- Using small stickers, the class judges how efficient they believe the different solutions to be.
- The class discusses the pros and cons of the solution, on a scale of 1 to 10.
- Additional ideas about further possible solutions can be discussed and amended.

COPING WITH VIOLENCE

Exercise 12: “Happy Slapping: What is Allowed – and What isn’t?”

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, arts education, media studies, social learning
Age	9 to 16 years
Topics	Cyber-bullying, law, media literacy

Goals

- To develop awareness for what may be filmed/published and what may not
- To develop rules for appropriate conduct towards others on the internet
- To create a checklist for private use

Procedure

The pupils draw up a set of criteria to help them decide which videos may or may not be published.

A helpful stimulus (in German) can be found here:

www.youtube.com/user/saferinternetat#p/f/1/6AAy17U0GWg

Phase 1

The pupils discuss what content may or may not be published. Together, they prepare a checklist for creating videos that enumerates at least five criteria for what is “permitted” and five criteria for what is “not permitted”. This checklist is then used as a basis for the pupils’ research.

Alternative for pupils 12 and under:

In groups, the pupils create short videos with their mobile phones that meet their established criteria. It is important to make sure that the pupils don’t hurt or harm each other and that the representations don’t infringe upon anybody’s privacy.

Alternative for pupils 13 and up:

In groups, the pupils search for examples in their own environment (*Facebook*, *YouTube* or other popular internet sites) that meet their established criteria. For each point on their checklist, they should find one example. The videos are then linked in a document on the learning platform, for example in a wiki.

Phase 2

In a final analysis, the criteria are reviewed and the checklist augmented and creatively designed and then hung up in class.

Clues to the solution

A picture or photo may be published when:

- It was taken in a public space.
- The person in the picture was asked for permission.
- It doesn’t show anyone in an unfavourable light.

A picture or photo may not be published when:

- People are shown in an unfavourable way (for example, while drinking, while naked, in a changing room, on the toilet, while taking a shower, etc.)
- The person in the picture did not give permission.
- The picture shows violence.

COPING WITH VIOLENCE

Exercise 13: “Perpetrator and Victim – Who is Who?”

(Adapted from: BMUKK (1992): *Gewalt und Horror in Medien. Unterrichtsmaterialien zur Medienerziehung*, 5.–9. Schulstufe, Heft 3. Wien: BMUKK. p. 11)

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, computer application, arts education, social learning
Age	10 to 16 years
Topics	Violence, prevention, personal development

Goals

- To reflect upon, analyse and describe the roles of victims and perpetrators
- To be able to implement those roles in the course of a story
- To secure an outcome to the stories that is oriented towards solutions

Procedure

The pupils form two rows, facing each other. One row is to represent perpetrators; the other row is to represent victims. Before the game starts, the actors bow to each other just like judo masters do. Then, a dispute is shown through pantomime, with the perpetrators taking the initiative. After three minutes, the roles are reversed – perpetrators become victims and vice versa. This switch is done twice. After each sequence, the actors take a bow. When the game is over, the pupils shake, stomp and yell “the end!” in order to break free of their characters.

Alternative 1:

Instead of using pantomime, small groups of pupils can create live “sculptures” that represent victims and perpetrators. These sculptures are used to portray a conflict. Here, too, it is advisable to “shake off” the roles after the game is over. Afterwards, situations are developed together in which victims and perpetrators can reverse roles.

Alternative 2:

Based on their favourite TV show, pupils discuss how the roles of victims and perpetrators are created in the show. They identify typical features and characteristics of both roles and look for situations, in which one person represents both roles. In the end, they try to find situations from their daily life in which the roles of victim and perpetrator shift or merge.

Alternative 3:


In groups, the pupils develop short narratives from their daily life. The stories may address situations in which the roles of victim and perpetrator are reversed, or they may depict complex situations in which the roles are not clearly delineated. The narratives are then turned into a photo story in MS Word, or into a comic (with a programme such as Comic Life, www.comiclife.com, for example). The goal of the comic is to develop alternative solutions, which may include, for example, mediation through third parties or informing the school.

Please note: In cases of cyber-bullying, it is quite common for such role reversals to happen.

Example Photo Story about Cyber-Bullying

Photostory Cyber-Bullying


1



Wow, does she look stupid!
Ha ha ha!

Laura is surfing. She sees Nina's new photo on an internet platform and posts a mean comment.


2



Am I really that ugly?
What will the boys think?

Nina gets a notification with Laura's comment to her photo. Other "online friends" also read what Laura wrote.


3



HAHAHA!
What you wrote is awesome!

Everyone is laughing about Nina. Laura's friends like what Laura wrote.

4



What does she want here?

Hi, I'm Nina. Can I talk to you?


The next day, Nina decides to confront Laura. On the internet, she discovers Laura's home address and pays her a visit. Laura is surprised.

5



Eventually, Laura asks Nina to come in and they talk about the incident. Nina tells Laura how angry and sad she was because of the comment, and a little later, Laura apologises.

6



Maybe we'll meet again!

Bye!

Laura has recognised that her behaviour was wrong, and Nina forgives her.

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Exercise 14: “Parents Have a Different Viewpoint, or Words Hurt!”

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, social learning
Age	12 to 16 years
Topics	Language, cyber-bullying, personal development, media literacy

Goals

- To reflect on the aggressive impact of language
- To uncover the different ways language is used by different generations
- To find creative ways to handle the meaning of swearwords

Procedure

The pupils first interview each other and then their parents and ask which swearwords they regard as still bearable and which have crossed the line – both in spoken language and in writing. They draw up a list for each generation. All the words gathered and the individual assessments should be justified in detail. After that, the pupils look for examples of the effects these swearwords can have.

Alternative Version for 6 to 9-year-olds:

The pupils gather swearwords and then find creative substitutes. Then, they ask their parents if they would be allowed to say those swearword substitutes at home and discuss how they could be handled:

- Who may swear when?
- What is okay?
- What is not okay?

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Exercise 15: “To Intervene or Not to Intervene?”

(Adapted from: Programme „Demokratie lernen und leben“ der BLK 25. Materialsammlung zum Training von Zivilcourage (2005). Brandstätter-Morawietz V., Universität Zürich; Frey D., Universität München, Anlage 1)

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, civic education, social learning
Age	12 to 18 years
Topics	Personal development, help, civil courage
Materials	Roll of wallpaper with a scale from 1 to 100, worksheets

Goals

- To gauge one's own willingness to act with civil courage
- To recognise individual differences when it comes to courageous interventions by others
- To recognise that people choose not to intervene for differing reasons
- To establish factors that promote or suppress acts of civil courage

Preparation

A roll of wallpaper is marked with the numbers from 1 to 100. The teacher prepares worksheets with short descriptions of situations that may require an act of civil courage. Some suggestions:

- A pupil complains to a teacher or the school administration about another teacher without talking to that teacher first
- An unpopular pupil is teased, insulted and bullied by the opinion leader of the class. None of the other pupils intervene for fear of becoming the next victim.
- A pupil tells a joke about foreigners. To be sure, the others don't laugh, but they also don't say anything against it.

Procedure**Phase 1**

The marked wallpaper roll is laid down in class. The pupils receive the worksheets with the different situations. Based on their personal judgement, the pupils estimate how likely it is that they would intervene in such a situation (in whatever form). They place the worksheets on the scale accordingly (1 = no way/100 = absolutely). Opinions are expressed by reading aloud and placing the worksheets; at this point, no justification is given.

Phase 2

Once all the sheets are in place, the discussion can start. Would someone like to place the sheets differently? Why? The pupils have the chance to rearrange the sheets and to justify their decisions. Possible points for discussion could be:

- Personal evaluation of situations that require an intervention
- Types of discrimination and violence (verbal, physical)
- Different ways to intervene
- Reasons for not intervening

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Exercise 16: “Love, or Not Love?”

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, civic education, social learning, biology, art education
Age	10 to 12 years
Topics	Prevention, personal development, dealings with others

Goals

- To understand where the boundaries lie and what the difference is between love and abuse/ violation of boundaries/harassment
- To reflect on different ways of treating others

Procedure

Phase 1

Every child completes the sentence, “Love is ...” with a statement that stems from their own experience or from observations from their own environment. Then, these descriptions are illustrated and expressed through pictures (drawings, photos, comics, etc.). To this end, tools on the internet can be used (for example, comic programmes, image editing programmes, graphics programmes).

Phase 2

Now the love stories are transformed into “Not-Love Stories”: Either the children transform their own stories into “Not-Love Stories”, or they take over a love story from another child and adapt that.

Phase 3

After the love stories and not-love stories are created they are hung up in class. Now, a list is compiled collectively:

- How can you recognise love?
- How can you recognise not-love?
- What other words can be found for “not-love”?

A poster is designed.

Love	Not-Love
○ ...	○ ...
○ ...	○ ...

Please note: Since the difference between love and sex is not always easy to grasp for children and young people, this exercise should be introduced once children know the facts of life and only if the climate in class is such that it is possible to talk about sex/physicality/intimacy. If that is not the case, the exercise can be reduced to the question: What is pleasant? What isn't?

Clues to the solution

Love: Love refers to a strong affection for another person and the willingness to care for the physicality of that person.

Sex: Intimacy between persons

Sexual violence against children: Forced physical intimacy

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Exercise 17: “What is Alright? Where is the Limit?”

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, social learning, arts education
Age	12 to 16 years
Topics	Violence, personal development, gender, sexuality, interpersonal conduct
Material	<p>The German website www.spass-oder-gewalt.de served as inspiration for this exercise. However, this exercise may also be done without using the website.</p> <p>www.spass-oder-gewalt.de is an interactive learning platform aimed at preventing sexual violence. The website supports teachers who work with their pupils on such topics as “sexualised violence” and “sexual harassment”. The pupils will learn how to recognise sexualised violence in their own behaviour and environment, how to avoid it and how to gain the civil courage necessary to intervene. The exercises provided on www.spass-oder-gewalt.de can also be useful.</p>

Goals

- For girls: To recognise perceptions in relationships
- For boys: To recognise what is allowed, what isn't, and where the boundaries are
- For the group: To create rules that ensure respectful dealings with others

Preparation

For this exercise, it might make sense to physically separate boys and girls, and to have a same-sex teacher conduct the lessons – a male teacher for the boys and a female teacher for the girls.

Procedure Girls

Phase 1: “Relationships”

A personal reflection on the topic of “relationships”, which can be done in various forms: For example, as a picture, a collage, a poem or an essay. After personal reflection, the girls discuss in their group.

Central questions could be:

- What makes a relationship good?
- How do I and my partner have to act in order to ensure a good relationship?
- How do I recognise if a relationship is going wrong?
- What do I value in a relationship?

Phase 2: “Good Relationships”

Now, the girls discuss what constitutes a good relationship. To initiate the discussion, girls can share both situations they have experienced or witnessed themselves as well as situations that their friends, mothers, etc., have experienced.

The following factors may impact the quality of a relationship:

- Opportunities for self-development and for development as a couple (interests)
- Atmosphere of dialogue
- Appreciation
- Expectations and listening to each other, sharing a common basis for conversations
- Propensity towards violence
- Jealousy, possessiveness
- Physical relationships, sex

Phase 3: “Harassment or Abuse”

Together, the girls reflect on when in their daily life girls their age may face harassment or abuse of any kind. These instances may happen in school (mobbing), in their relationships, in their family, on the internet, by strangers, etc.

In small groups, two or three such situations are further analysed. Together, they consider possible ways to protect oneself in these situations. To that end, the internet can be used as a valuable source, since a lot of information about self-defence can be found there.

Alternative:

The girls consider how they can respond to situations of harassment, molestation or abuse.

Procedure for Boys

Phase 1: "Pornography and Masturbation"

By themselves, the boys reflect on their personal approach to porn and masturbation. This reflection can be done in various ways, for example as a picture, a collage, a poem or an essay. This personal reflection is not shared (for example, not handed in as homework) and remains only with the boy himself.

Central questions may be:

- How old was I when I first consumed pornography?
- How important is porn for me?
- What does it do to me when I see violent content in porn?
- How important is porn to me when it comes to masturbating?
- Has porn influenced my sexual relationships? Could it have an influence?

Alternative:

There should be a time for personal reflection upon the topics "is porn unhealthy?" and "masturbation". Since these topics are very personal, there should not be any group discussion.

Phase 2: "To Be a Man"

The boys form groups and attempt a presentation of when a man is really cool. Aspects are "self-esteem", "vanity" and "pride". Each aspect should be treated separately.

Phase 3: "Rules"

The goal in this phase is to develop rules that can guide social interaction and prevent violence, based on thoughts about being a man.

Rules are developed that can help prevent male violence and that outline how one can fight back in difficult situations without resorting to violence. Also, the rules help put into writing how one can defend oneself from violence.

Together: Phase 4: "Rules"

In this phase, girls and boys together develop rules for social conduct in class.

Topics:

- Mechanisms to resolve conflicts
- Supporting one another
- How to handle pictures and publishing of pictures
- ...

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Exercise 18: “How to Recognise Fake Users on the Internet”

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, social learning
Age	11 to 14 years
Topics	Media literacy, personal development, safety, cyber grooming

Goals

- To be able to better judge the identity of an unknown person on the internet
- To be able to ask the right questions
- To become aware of the fact that one might encounter fake users prowling the internet

Procedure

Phase 1

By themselves, the pupils formulate criteria that can help to reveal a “fake person” on the internet. To that end, they imagine the following situation:

A grown man tries to impersonate a girl your age. What questions could you ask in a chat to find out if the person on the other end is a grown man or a girl your age? Formulate ten questions that you could ask to make sure.

Phase 2

In same-sex groups (girls with girls and boys with boys), the pupils discuss (on the basis of the individual lists) what might work and what might not. They compile a list together that is structured into sub-categories.

Clues to the solution

Language use in the chat, number of spelling mistakes, type of spelling mistakes; pictures; topics such as music, fashion, cinema, computer games; looking for the person on the internet ...

(Phase 3)

This phase is somewhat complex.

Preparation

Depending on the number of groups, several external persons are needed who will impersonate a “fake person” in a chat with the pupils. A chat room that provides the option of anonymous chatting is also required. This chat room should be in a different environment than where the pupils usually chat themselves (for example, not in their preferred social network). A course in Moodle or another learning management system with a chat option could be used. In order for the exercise to work, all participants have to be able to log on with a nickname and use the system. Each group should have their own chat room with the fake user.

People who could be invited to “play” a fake user:

- A girl and boy of the same age as the class
- A grownup with good IT skills (is able to type fast)
- A grownup with bad IT skills
- A grownup with good knowledge of the age group in question (parent, teacher, educator ...)
- A person who is a little older than the members of the group

Course of the Chat:

The fake user receives the following assignment:

“In the chat room, impersonate a person the same age as the target group (state age). Try to keep up the illusion as long as possible. If you are unmasked and the pupils have guessed your (approximate) real age and gender, admit to it and reveal your true identity. Say goodbye to the group and explain the ways in which the pupils were able to expose you and why they succeeded. Encourage them to use such tests in their daily life as well, but don’t cause them any extra fear.”

The pupils receive the following assignment:

“The person you will chat with is going to claim to be your age. This might be true, but doesn’t have to be. Try to find out if it is the case or not. You have 15 minutes. Try to skilfully use questions to find out who the person really is, but at the same time convince them that you do believe they are the age they told you. The other person should not notice that you are checking him or her out.”

Each group enters a closed chat room with the respective fake user. They chat for about 15 minutes. If the pupils happen to find out the real identity of the fake user any earlier than that, the chat can be concluded sooner.

Follow-up:

The fake user describes in a “letter” to the group how they felt during the chat and what advice they would give the pupils so they can easily conduct such testing in “real life” chats as well.

Together with the teacher, the class reflects on the results.

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Exercise 19: “Becoming a Victim of Sexual Violence”

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, civic education, social learning
Age	14 to 18 years
Topics	Violence, personal development

Goals

- To understand why someone can become a victim of sexual violence
- To be able to gauge one's own risk
- To become aware of risks early on and be able to take countermeasures

Procedure

This exercise can be done across classes or schools, with the groups in different classrooms.

Phase 1: “Research”

The class is separated into several groups. Each group researches on the internet or by interviewing pertinent counselling organisations about the factors that may cause children and young people to become victims of sexual violence, such as:

- Sexual abuse within the family
- Online grooming
- Sexting with blackmail
- Abuse by authority figures (priests, teachers, educators)

In doing so, the following questions should be answered:

- Which persons are most likely to be victimized? (Gender, age, social background, ethnic background, etc.)
- In what kind of situations is abuse/violation of boundaries/harassment most likely to happen?
- What is abuse? What is harassment/violation of boundaries, and what isn't? How is it measured? Who decides?

Result:

From all these facts, a figure (person) is developed for a story line. This figure shall be described in a short story, shall have a name, a residence (...), a job, a previous history, a family ... This figure should incorporate several of the factors that match the descriptions of possible victims and should experience some of the situation(s) mentioned above, or this should at least be implied.

Phase 2: “Development of Possible Solutions”

Now, each group exchanges the story they wrote with another group. The new groups then formulate possible ways out of the crisis for the victims. In doing so, the groups slip into some of the following possible roles:

- Best friend
- Teacher
- Adult confidant
- Kid next door
- Guest in an online forum
- Peer mediator

The groups consider:

- Which approaches could make sense in what cases, and which approaches less so?
- How can the victims even recognise their situation as one of abuse, and address it as such?
- Which measures can they undertake in the short run in order to help themselves?
- What measures will make sense in the medium and long term?

LOOKING FOR AND FINDING HELP

Exercise 20: “I’m Feeling Bad!” – Recognising the need of help

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, civic education, social learning, art education
Age	10 to 14 years
Topics	Help, emotions, personal development

Goals

- To be able to express one’s emotions
- To find solutions

Procedure

Group puzzle. The class is divided into several groups. Each group has the results of the previous group to work with. For the purpose of eLearning, these groups can also be assembled across classes.

1st Group: From word cloud to Story

The following word cloud contains terms that describe feelings that children may have who have experienced abuse. In the first phase, the children find a story that, in their view, goes with these terms.



2nd Group: From Story to Picture

Now, the second group develops a picture or a graphic depiction for the story the first group wrote. This could constitute pictures, photos, photo stories, films, etc.

3rd Group: From Picture to Help

The third group now writes down how the person in story could turn to someone in order to get help. How can he/she tell his or her story? How can it be phrased in a way that the other person is really able to help? (First, clarify who that person is.) The group should be supported in wording this cry for help in a way that makes it easy to understand.

LOOKING FOR AND FINDING HELP

Exercise 21: “Who Can Help Me?” – Getting to know counselling services

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, social learning, geography, arts education, civic education, history and social studies
Age	12 to 18 years
Topics	Counselling services, help

Goal

→ To get to know different counselling services that can be contacted if necessary

Preparation

Prepare paper cards with questions (see “Questions to pupils”) – one question per card. Each pupil or group receives four such cards. Alternatively, print the questions on papers.

Procedure

On the internet, the pupils search for information about different counselling services in their area. They fill out cards that are marked with questions.

Questions for the pupils:

- Who is the target group of this organisation?
- With what issues can I turn to them?
- What services do they offer (counselling via telephone, online counselling, personal counselling, etc.)?
- What is their contact information (hours, address, telephone number, e-mail etc.)?

The pupils publish the gathered information in a format that is available to everyone in need.

Examples for types of publications:

- The pupils can create a poster for the classroom or the bulletin board.
- The pupils can create a subpage to the school webpage.
- The pupils can write an entry to a blog.
- The pupils can design a template for an information sheet.

LOOKING FOR AND FINDING HELP

Exercise 22: “What is to Be Done If ...?” – Help in case of cyber-bullying

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, social learning, arts education, civic education
Age	12 to 16 years
Topics	Cyber-bullying, help

Goal

→ Deeper examination of the issues involved in cyber-bullying

Basic information about the topic can be found in this teaching aid and in the information sheet “Cyber-bullying – Was kann ich dagegen tun?” (Cyber-bullying – what can I do about it?). Also, pupils can research on the internet.

www.saferinternet.at/broschuerenservice.at??? auch dazu

Procedure

Several small groups discuss the following questions:

- What can victims do to stop cyber-bullying?
- How can you help friends that have gotten into a cyber-bullying situation?
- How can you recognise cyber-bullying? What symptoms or clues would you expect?

Each group receives a puzzle piece made from A3-sized heavy paper on which they are to illustrate their most important points in a creative way (photos, collages, text etc.). The puzzle pieces are then joined together to form a complete picture.

To prepare, the class should discuss what exactly constitutes cyber-bullying.

Alternative:

Alternatively, the groups can illustrate their results on power point slides. The slides can then be joined into one presentation and published, for instance, on the school's webpage.

LOOKING FOR AND FINDING HELP

Exercise 23: “Where Can I Find Good Counselling?”

Relation to Curriculum	Language education, social learning
Age	12 to 18 years
Topics	Help, personal development

Goals

- To get to know counselling organisations
- To be able to apply quality criteria to counselling organisations

Procedure**Phase 1**

For the following short situations, the pupils consider which counselling organisations might be especially helpful. At least three should be chosen, and they should be accessible via the internet.

- Sexting
- Grooming
- Happy Slapping

Phase 2

Now, criteria are developed that help decide if the counselling service in question is recommendable.

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Sex and Violence in Digital Media
Prevention, Help & Counselling

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