



## LESSON 9. CHATTING ONLINE

### **Purpose:**

This lesson aims to promote being kind and respectful when communicating online, especially with friends and classmates. It will also examine what friendship online looks like and explore different forms of online communication including messaging, video and pictures.

### **Learning outcomes:**

When they have finished this lesson, pupils will:

- Recognise that how you treat people doesn't change in the online world - being kind and showing respect to friends and others is just as important online as it is offline.
- Describe what appropriate online friendship and communication looks like.
- Understand how mean comments, exclusion can make others feel and that it is wrong to use bullying behaviour.

### **Curriculum Links:**

**SPHE 3rd & 4th Class Curriculum**

**Strand: Myself and others**

**Strand Unit: My friends and other people**

- practise and recognise the importance of care and consideration, courtesy and good manners when interacting with others
- recognise, discuss and understand bullying
- explore and examine ways of dealing with bullying

### **3rd & 4th Class Stay Safe Programme**

The Stay Safe Programme is a personal safety skills programme for primary schools. Stay Safe is a mandatory resource and must be used within the context of the SPHE curriculum to cover relevant content objectives. This HTML Heroes Programme can be used as an additional support when teaching the prescribed Stay Safe Programme content.

- Topic 2. Friendship and Bullying

### **CONTINUING THE LESSON WITH THE HTML HEROES: 3RD & 4TH CLASS EDITION**

The online safety themes and topics in this lesson could be used as a follow on from lessons:

- Lesson 6: Respectful Communication Online, further lesson activities here: <https://www.webwise.ie/lessons/6-respectful-communication-online/>
- Lesson 7: Anonymous Online, further lesson activities here: <https://www.webwise.ie/lessons/7-anonymousonline/>

### **Resources needed:**

- Computer connected to projector/whiteboard
- Activity Sheet 1: Kind Online: Feels like, Looks Like, Sounds Like
- Plenary Activity Sheet: Emoji Exit Ticket
- Take-Home Handout
- HTML Heroes Short Story: *'Ruby becomes an Upstander'* available at <https://www.webwise.ie/html-heroes/>

### **Methodologies:**

Discussion, think-pair-share, storytelling, conscience alley, group work, independent or collaborative writing, share session

### Key vocabulary:

- **Bystander** - someone who sees something that is wrong but simply “stands by” and doesn’t do anything to support someone or speak up. A bystander will witness a situation/ behaviour but take no action.
- **Cyberbullying** - is using digital technology to hurt or bully someone deliberately. Digital technology can include devices such as a smartphone, computer, tablet, game console.
- **Emoji** - is a small digital image or icon used to express an idea or emotion.
- **Exclude** - in an online context exclusion could involve blocking someone from a popular group such as a school or class group in WhatsApp or SnapChat, deleting them from friendship lists, and/or using ‘ignore functions’.
- **Ignore** - to pay no attention or choose to not notice something or someone.
- **Kindness** - being considerate and showing concern for the wellbeing and feelings of others.
- **Respect** - treating someone with care and kindness and giving your attention to them; someone who is well liked or thought of.
- **Upstander** - someone who not only recognises when something is wrong, but as a result, stands up for his/her beliefs by taking action. An upstander will help/support whomever is being hurt, or will speak up to correct the situation/make it right.

### Teacher’s Note:

#### Discussing Messaging and Social Media

It is important that the discussions in this lesson focus on online activities and communication, rather than on specific online services. You should try to focus discussions on the needs that motivate pupils’ internet use and not the tools they use to achieve these goals. In general, children use the internet to socialise, to share media, to find information, to play games, to communicate, and to learn. You should be aware that some of the children will be interested in using social networking and media sharing apps

and tools for the first time. Many of them will be haggling with their parents for permission to do this. Your words may be brought home and used as part of these negotiations. In this context, it is better to talk about “sharing photos” than “using Instagram”.

### **Age Restrictions on Social Media**

- **Most social media platforms and services have a minimum age requirement, for the majority of these services it is 13 years old and some are set at 16 (WhatsApp).**
- Under the new E.U. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Ireland has now set the Digital Age of Consent to 16 years old. This is the age at which children can legally consent to companies/organisations processing their personal/data or information for example when you sign up to an online platform or social media account. For children under the age of 16, consent must be given/authorised by the parent or guardian of the child.

## **LESSON ACTIVITIES**

### **ACTIVITY 1: DISCUSSION - BE KIND ONLINE**

**Step 1.** Begin by telling pupils that in today's lesson we are going to look at being kind and respectful when communicating online, especially with friends and classmates. Ask pupils to think about what are some of the ways people can use the internet to communicate with family, friends and the wider world? Get feedback from pupils on this. Suggested examples include text messaging, video chatting, voice calls, posting comments, uploading video/pictures, writing blogs and remote or distance learning. Next, ask pupils what they think are some of the benefits of being able to use the internet to communicate with friends, family, school and the wider world? Suggested answers might include being able to see family who live far away, instant communication and the ability to communicate with people in real time, or the ability to share your opinions, hobbies with a wider audience and create communities online with other people who share similar interests.

Explain to pupils that while it's great the internet provides lots of different ways for us to communicate including writing, talking, movement, pictures, but with GIFs, memes, emojis and bitmojis sometimes it can feel like chatting on the internet can take on a language all of its own. We must keep in mind that because we can't always see or hear the person as we are chatting to them like we can in real life it's easier for things to be misunderstood or taken the wrong way. That's why it's just as important to make sure we are kind and considerate of others feelings when chatting online as we are when chatting to people face-to-face.

**Step 2.** So let's begin by discussing what kindness means. Make sure to explain that you're talking about kindness in terms of how you behave towards people (or they behave towards you), not how you feel about someone, everyone deserves to be treated with kindness and respect. Distribute the Activity Sheet 1 and ask pupils to complete the Y

chart on what being kind means to them. Prompt questions could include asking pupils to think about the last kind thing you did for someone else e.g. write a thank you note, surprise someone you know with baked treats or hold the door open for someone. Use the think-pair-share strategy to gather pupils' feedback on this.

**Step 3.** Next, ask pupils to think about what kindness could look like online. Prompt pupils by asking them to think of a recent example of kindness they saw online - it could be keeping in touch with an elderly relative living on their own, giving someone a compliment, sharing good news with family and friends e.g. a picture or video of a birthday party, doing something for charity, etc.

Again, use the think-pair-share strategy to gather pupil feedback on this and collate responses on the whiteboard. Conclude by emphasising that how you treat people doesn't change in the online world - being kind and showing respect to friends and others is just as important online as it is offline.

\*There are many free mind-mapping tools available online such as Coogler (www.coggle.it) or Bubbl.us (www.bubbl.us).

## ACTIVITY 2: HTML HEROES SHORT STORY

**Step 1.** Display the HTML Heroes short story: *Ruby Becomes an Upstander* on the whiteboard while you read through the story.

**Step 2.** Once you have finished reading the story, go through the discussion questions to help pupils reflect on the internet safety scenario and safety messages discussed in the story.

### Ruby Becomes an Upstander - Discussion Questions

1. (a) How do you think Ruby felt when she read the nasty comment?  
1 (b) Why was Ruby worried?
2. When Ruby told her dad what had happened, how did he respond?
3. Why did Ruby think that it was a good idea to be an upstander instead of a bystander?
4. (a) Are there different rules if someone says something online rather than in real life?  
4 (b) Please explain your answer.
5. (a) Did sending a message to the bully and asking them to apologise make things better?  
5 (b) Please explain your answer.
6. What can you do if you or someone else you know is being cyberbullied?

At the end of the story and discussion questions emphasise the Key Advice for Children being cyberbullied as outlined in the Stay Safe Programme:

**STOP** – don't reply to the message but do take a screenshot

**BLOCK**– block the sender

**TELL** – a trusted adult

**Teacher's Notes** on how to deal with cyberbullying:

- **Don't reply** to messages that harass or annoy you – Even though you may really want to, this is exactly what the sender wants. They want to know that they've got you worried and upset. If you respond with an even nastier message it makes them think that they really got to you, and that's just what they want. They might even complain about you!
- **Keep the message** – You don't have to read it, but keep it. If you keep getting messages that upset you, you will need to have evidence in order to get help. Website owners, mobile phone companies and the Gardaí will all look for evidence before they will be able to take any action to help you.
- **Block the sender** – You don't need to put up with someone harassing you. If you are getting messages that upset you, you can block the person simply by clicking the block button. On some mobile phones you can block a caller's number.
- **Tell someone you trust** – Talking to your parents/guardian, friends, or someone you trust is usually the first step in dealing with any issue. In the case of school-related bullying messages you should also talk to a teacher you trust or a guidance counsellor. If you need to speak to someone straight away you can also call Childline on 1800 66 66 66. ISPCC Childline also offers a text support service (text 'Talk' to 50101) and an online chat service on <https://www.childline.ie/> to help support young people.
- **Report the Problem** - Report problems to the people who can do something about it. Responsible websites, social media apps, messaging apps and mobile phone operators provide ways for their users to report things such as bullying content or rude material.



### ACTIVITY 3: CONSCIENCE ALLEY

**Step 1.** Explain to the pupils that now they are going to participate in a conscience alley activity based on the dilemma or problem Ruby faced in the story and offer advice on the best way to resolve it and in doing so understand she ultimately chose to become an upstander and stand up for her friend being cyberbullied. Remind pupils of the meaning of a bystander and an upstander with the emphasis being on identifying the behaviour or traits of each rather than the terms themselves.

**Bystander:** Someone who sees something that is wrong but simply “stands by” and doesn’t do anything to support someone or speak up. A bystander will witness a situation/behaviour but take no action.

**Upstander:** Someone who not only recognises when something is wrong, but as a result, stands up for his/her beliefs by taking action. An upstander will help or support whomever is being hurt, or will speak up to correct the situation and make it right. To avoid putting vulnerable pupils in the decision-making position, consider you as the teacher taking the role of Ruby in the conscience alley activity.

**Step 2.** Next, split the group in half, asking them to form 2 lines facing each other - this is the 'alley'. Select one pupil to act as the decision maker aka Ruby in the scenario and instruct them to stand at the beginning of the 'alley' or 2 lines facing each other.

**Step 3.** Remind pupils to listen carefully as you read out the scenario to remind the group of her dilemma:

**Dilemma:** *After sharing a picture of herself and her good friend Dolly online, Ruby notices a mean comment under the picture making fun of her friend's unique appearance. To make matters worse, other users are posting laughing emojis after the comment. How would Dolly feel if she saw this? Ruby doesn't know what to do; should she say nothing, join in and leave the comment there for everyone to see or don't join in, remove the picture and block the people leaving mean comments.*

Then, tell the right side they will represent the upstander voice - giving reasons for why the friend should act as an upstander and report what has happened. The left side will represent the bystander voice - giving suggestions for why the friend should just say nothing about what has happened. Give the members of both sides a moment to think and discuss what they will advise Ruby to do. Some examples of the for and against comments could be rehearsed or written down beforehand. Pupils can select which ones are appropriate and stick them in.

**Step 4.** Instruct the person playing Ruby to walk between the lines and as they do each member of both sides gives their advice - either why Ruby should report what has happened or say nothing. As the pupil reaches the end of the tunnel tell them to join one of the lines to indicate the choice they have made. Then ask him/her why they made that decision - which side's advice persuaded them the most.

**Step 5.** Reinforce with pupils that this story is a good example of how to deal with cyberbullying: Stop, Block, Tell. As a final reflection on this, ask pupils to come up with movements to represent Stop, Block, Tell message of how to respond to cyberbullying. For example, a hand showing the stop sign for Stop, arms creating an X for Block and a hand moving from your mouth motioning Tell. Conclude by emphasising that they should always tell a parent or guardian or trusted adult if they see something mean or upsetting online or receive a nasty message online.

## ACTIVITY 4: Reflection

**Step 1.** Use the Plenary Activity Sheet: Emoji Exit Ticket provided and ask pupils to write down one thing they learned about playing online today. Invite pupils to share their responses and recap with the following points:

- How we treat people doesn't change just because you are behind a screen - being kind and showing respect to friends and others is just as important online as it is offline
- Never make mean and nasty comments about others online. Never respond to mean comments and messages. Show them to a trusted adult
- It's important not to keep secrets online - always tell a parent or guardian if you see something mean or upsetting online.
- **Finally - What do we do if we see a nasty message online...**
  - STOP** – don't reply to the message but do take a screenshot
  - BLOCK**– block the sender
  - TELL** – a trusted adult

**Step 2.** Distribute the Take-Home Handout to pupils, go through the activity with the pupils and ask them to complete for homework.

