



Tackling
online sexual
harassment
amongst
young people

Piloting innovative
educational resources aimed
at increasing reporting



PROJECT deSHAME

Digital Exploitation and Sexual Harassment Among Minors in Europe
Understanding, Preventing, Responding



Co-financed by
the European Union

“This is what kids our age need, they need to learn about sexual harassment, online, offline, it doesn't matter. It's not really addressed well enough and I think it needs to be.”
Boy, 14-15, UK

About this report

This report looks at the feedback from young people and teachers in response to the piloting of resources created by Project deSHAME.

Project deSHAME is a collaboration between Childnet (UK), Kek Vonal (Hungary), Save the Children (Denmark) and UCLan (UK), co-financed by the European Union. It aims to increase reporting of online sexual harassment among minors and improve multi-sector cooperation in preventing and responding to this behaviour.

In close consultation with young people, professionals, industry and policymakers, Project deSHAME has previously conducted research to improve understanding and raise awareness of online sexual harassment. This research can be found at www.deshame.eu.

1. Acknowledgements

Expert Advisory Board

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 National Crime Agency's CEOP Command
 National Police Chiefs Council
 NSPCC/Childline
 National Education Union
 Professionals Online Safety Helpline

Youth Advisory Board

Maria, Freja, Frederik, Zandra, Alberte, Frederik, Anita, Magnus, Olivia, Andreas, Afua, Charlie, Harry, Holly, Isha, Liam, Lillie, Mohamed, Reece, Sophie

“I think it’s a good place to start considering that we don’t know much about online sexual harassment. Especially as it’s such a blurred topic to talk about when it’s hard to determine what happens on the internet. When it’s not concrete.”
 Young person 13-17, Denmark

2. Aims of the project

Project deSHAME is a collaboration between Childnet (UK), Kek Vonal (Hungary), Save the Children (Denmark), and UCLan (UK), co-financed by the EU. Together we aim to tackle peer-based online sexual harassment among 13–17 year olds by empowering local communities, including schools and police, to work together to increase reporting among young people.

2.1 Objective

In close consultation with young people, professionals, industry and policymakers, Project deSHAME will improve understanding and raise awareness of an emerging area of gendered violence against children – online sexual harassment. We have developed a range of education, training and awareness materials as well as practical tools for multi-sector prevention and response strategies. The project will transfer this learning to other European countries and partners worldwide in order to promote young people's digital rights.

2.2 Activities

- **Improving understanding of online sexual harassment among teenagers and identifying effective multi-sector strategies** for preventing and responding to this issue through a cross-country comparative analysis, including qualitative and quantitative research with young people, case study analysis, needs-assessment of key stakeholders, collation of good practices, and through convening an Expert Advisory Board.
- **Develop, implement and evaluate effective awareness raising activities co-created with young people** to encourage victims and witnesses to report online sexual harassment against children and to recognise and promote children's rights online. This will include delivering a youth-created campaign and associated educational and campaign materials, as well as national youth advocacy events.
- **Develop practical tools to enable professionals from multiple sectors to effectively collaborate** to prevent and respond to online sexual bullying against children. This will include practical training tools for teachers and police.
- **Promoting cross-border cooperation and mutual learning** through dissemination activities to share the project's tools and methods with other Member States, including national events, an international event, impact report and establishing an informal network to enable continued knowledge-sharing about this emerging issue after the end of the project.

2.3 'Step up Speak Up' Campaign Toolkit

This Campaign Toolkit has been designed to address the issue of online sexual harassment amongst young people aged 13–17 years. Using the findings of quantitative and qualitative research, and working alongside both young people and educators, it aims to give young people the opportunity to explore their own attitudes and opinions, and to discuss ways to challenge unacceptable online behaviour. The reporting process is a key theme that runs throughout the toolkit, and the different reporting options are explored and clarified. Opportunities for adaptation and extension are provided for all activities, plus additional information for educators to understand the background of the issues at hand, and guidance on discussing these with students. The toolkit includes:

- 4 lesson plans covering ground rules, understanding, responding and reporting peer-based online sexual harassment.
- A teachers' toolkit to support educators delivering the lesson plans.
- 3 films aimed at raising awareness amongst young people and those supporting them.
- A poster to signpost to further support in educational settings.
- An assembly presentation (with scripted guidance).
- A peer-led workshop plan for young people to deliver themselves.

Supporting guidance for educators and law enforcement:

- Senior Management Handbook for school leadership team on how to prevent and respond to this issue.
- Guidance on supporting children who display harmful sexual behaviour online.
- Web-based learning modules for teachers to help them understand the issue.
- Guidance for police on handling victims and perpetrators, including materials they can use with members of the public.

3. Defining online sexual harassment

Online sexual harassment is unwanted sexual behaviour on any digital platform.

It can make a person feel threatened, exploited, coerced, humiliated, upset, sexualised or discriminated against.

This harassment could use a variety of online content such as images, videos, posts, messages, comments and pages. It can happen in public or in private online, and can happen across several different online spaces at the same time. It can overlap with offline harassment or abuse too, as well as intersect with other forms of discrimination.

Such harassment takes place in a gendered context and is deeply rooted in structural relationships of inequality between women and men. This produces disproportionately negative outcomes and experiences for women and girls.

Online sexual harassment can intersect with discrimination and hate crimes, relating to a person's actual or perceived gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion, special educational need or disability. Young people in these groups may face unique forms of online sexual harassment, resulting in a more negative impact in both the short and long term, as well as multiple barriers that can prevent them from accessing support.

Among young people this is typically taking place in a peer-to-peer context, focused around schools and local communities, and very often being played out online in front of an active, engaged audience. Whilst it typically takes place amongst peers, it is also possible for adults to sexually harass young people (or other adults) online, although this is not explored within the scope of Project deSHAME.

In this project, online sexual harassment has been categorised in four main types. These different behaviours are often experienced simultaneously and can overlap with offline experiences of sexual harassment, sexual abuse, bullying, relationship abuse and stalking.

Non-consensual sharing of intimate images and videos A person's sexual images and videos being shared without their consent or taken without their consent	Exploitation, coercion and threats A person receiving sexual threats, being coerced to participate in sexual behaviour online, or blackmailed with sexual content	Sexualised bullying A person being targeted by, and systematically excluded from, a group or community with the use of sexual content that humiliates, upsets or discriminates against them	Unwanted sexualisation A person receiving unwelcome sexual requests, comments and content
Sexual images/videos taken without consent ('creep shots') Sexual images/videos taken consensually but shared without consent ('revenge porn') Non-consensual sexual acts (e.g. rape) recorded digitally (and potentially shared)	Harassing or pressuring someone online to share sexual images of themselves or engage in sexual behaviour online (or offline) Using the threat of publishing sexual content (images, videos, rumours) to threaten, coerce or blackmail someone ('sextortion') Online threats of a sexual nature (e.g., rape threats) Inciting others online to commit sexual violence Inciting someone to participate in sexual behaviour and then sharing evidence of it	Gossip, rumours or lies about sexual behaviour posted online either naming someone directly or indirectly alluding to someone Offensive or discriminatory sexual language and name-calling online Impersonating someone and damaging their reputation by sharing sexual content or sexually harassing others Personal information shared non-consensually online to encourage sexual harassment ('doxing') Being bullied because of actual or perceived gender and/or sexual orientation Body shaming 'Outing' someone where the individual's sexuality or gender identity is publicly announced online without their consent	Sexualised comments (e.g. on photos) Sexualised viral campaigns that pressurise people to participate Sending someone sexual content (images, emojis, messages) without them consenting Unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favours 'Jokes' of a sexual nature Rating peers on attractiveness/sexual activity Altering images of a person to make them sexual

4. Methodology

4.1 Background

Project deSHAME takes an evidence-based approach in the development and evaluation of educational resources for young people, teachers and police officers, focusing on online sexual harassment among young people in three European countries (Denmark, Hungary and the UK). Extensive research was initially conducted to ascertain the prevalence and scale of the issue and can be found in '[Young people's experiences of online sexual harassment](#)' (2017).

4.2 Objectives

The aim of this phase of the project was to gain feedback on the resources Project deSHAME developed using a multimethods approach.

Through close consultation with young people, professionals and experts, Project deSHAME developed a wide range of resources in order to tackle online sexual harassment amongst young people. In order to ensure these resources would be meaningful, relatable and valuable to schools and young people, elements of the resources were piloted in schools across the three countries. These included four lesson plans, a poster, an assembly, a film and a toolkit for teachers to guide them in delivering the lessons.

4.3 Methodology and analysis

This report presents findings from quantitative and qualitative research conducted with 13–17 year olds and teachers across Denmark, Hungary and the UK.

The project utilised both quantitative and qualitative research methods, including web-based questionnaires (e.g. staff, pupils), focus groups (e.g. pupils) and consultations with professionals.

- **School Audit Questionnaire:** An online questionnaire was completed by the Headteacher or nominee in participating schools prior to data collection.
- **Pupil Pre-Pilot Questionnaire:** An online questionnaire was translated into English, Danish and Hungarian and completed by pupils aged 13–17 at school. This was to understand prevalence and attitudes before the resources were delivered.
- **Pupil Post-Pilot Questionnaire:** An online questionnaire was translated into English, Danish and Hungarian and completed by pupils aged 13–17 at school. This was to gain feedback on the resources after they were delivered.
- **Pupil focus groups:** Focus groups were conducted with single-sex and mixed-sex groups of pupils aged 13–17 years in schools in each country, after the resources were delivered. The sessions were audio-recorded and transcribed before analysis.
- **Teacher Questionnaire:** An online questionnaire was translated into English, Danish and Hungarian and completed by teachers after they had delivered the materials at school.

All quantitative data was collected by online questionnaires using SurveyMonkey.

Where there were less than 100 responses in each country for a question, we did not include the country breakdown and just the total amount for the sample. Due to the differing sample numbers in pre and post pilot surveys, any results presented are an indication of impact.

629

Young people aged 13-17 completed an online survey before the resources were delivered.

535

Young people aged 13-17 completed an online survey after the resources were delivered.

64

Young people aged 13-17 took part in focus groups after the resources were delivered.

14

Schools took part and 17 teachers completed an online survey with their feedback.




4.4 Participants

Recruitment

It is important to note that the research did not use random stratified sampling. As a result, the data cannot be claimed to be statistically representative of the population of young people aged 13–17 in each country or be scaled up to estimate national rates of prevalence. Schools in Denmark, Hungary and the UK were selected to reflect national demographics as far as possible.

The same process for advertising and recruiting schools and participants was used in all partner countries. Childnet (UK), Kek Vonal (Hungary) and Save the Children (Denmark) used their existing national networks of school contacts to advertise the project and recruit schools. Any schools expressing an interest in participating were sent an information pack, including an information sheet for the school and parents and copies of all research materials. Those schools who decided to participate signed a consent form.

Participants

Sample	 Denmark	 Hungary	 UK	Total
13–17 year olds completing pre-pilot online survey	165 respondents	204 respondents	260 respondents	629 respondents
13–17 year olds completing post-pilot online survey	195 respondents	156 respondents	184 respondents	535 respondents
13–17 year olds participating in focus groups post-pilot	11 young people across 2 focus groups	42 young people across 5 focus groups	11 young people across 2 focus groups	64 respondents
Teachers participating in online survey post-pilot	3 respondents	9 respondents	5 respondents	17 respondents

Demographics of pupil survey respondents in quantitative survey

Age

The majority of the overall sample in the pre-pilot were aged 14 or 15 (30% and 25% respectively). This is generally consistent with the post-pilot (26% and 24% respectively) and initial samples (36% and 34% respectively).

Gender

There was an almost equal gender split in the pre-pilot sample (47% female and 48% male), with some variations in the gender composition of the national samples. This is generally consistent with the post-pilot (46%) and initial samples (54% female and 41% male). Only 1% identified as transgender and 5% preferred to self-describe. This sample size prevents a further analysis of the unique experiences of transgender young people and those participants who prefer to self-describe. Overall, the responses to both pre and post-pilot questionnaires did not differ greatly between genders and therefore results presented will not provide a gender breakdown.

Ethnicity

The majority of the British sample were white (74%). This is generally consistent with the post-pilot (78%) and initial samples (82%).

The majority of the Danish sample were ethnically Danish (64%), though a relatively high proportion were from other ethnic backgrounds (36%). This is generally consistent with the post-pilot sample (63% and 37% respectively), but lower than the initial sample (90% and 10% respectively).

The Hungarian respondents were not asked their ethnicities due to it not being regular practice.

Sexual orientation

The majority of the pre-pilot sample (79%) were heterosexual. This is generally consistent with the post-pilot (79%) and initial samples (85%). The sample size prevents further analysis of the unique experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people.

Special educational needs, disabilities and health problems

- 12% of the pre-pilot sample had special educational needs. This is generally consistent with the post-pilot (14%) and initial samples (11%).
- 15% of the pre-pilot sample had physical or psychological health problems. This is generally consistent with the post-pilot (19%) and initial samples (19%).
- 7% of the pre-pilot sample had a disability. This is generally consistent with the post-pilot (5%) and initial samples (6%).

4.5 Ethics and safeguarding

The project was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the British Psychological Society, and was approved by the School of Psychology Ethics Board at UCLan.

Consent

The following informed consent procedures were followed for participants.

- Pupil survey: Consent for the school to participate was obtained in writing from the Headteacher. Parents were provided with information about the online survey and had the opportunity to withdraw their child from the study.
- Pupil focus groups: Parents gave written consent for their child to take part in the focus groups. Participants also provided written consent prior to the start of the group sessions.
- Teacher survey: Participants provided written consent prior to the start of the sessions.

Safeguarding

Given the focus of the project and the involvement of young people, careful consideration was given to the protection and safeguarding of participants.

Specific actions taken included:

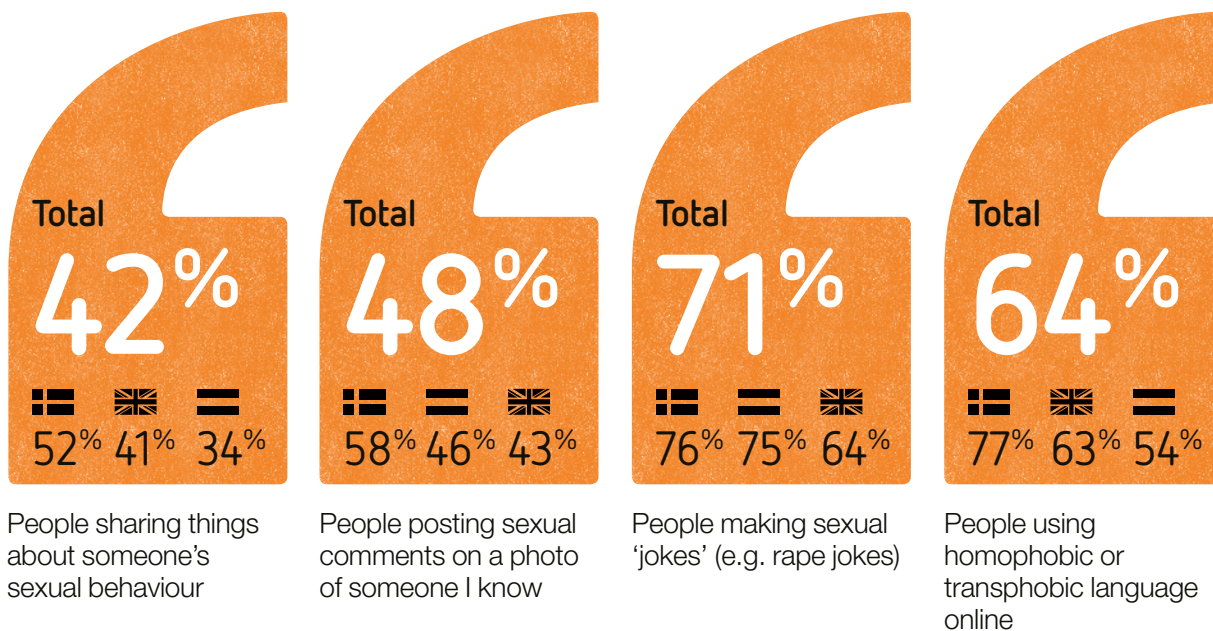
- Clear descriptions of the nature of questions asked in the questionnaire and focus groups, and the associated potential for distress, were included in the briefing materials for schools, parents and participants.
- Briefing and debriefing information included what young people should do if participation raised any concerns about their online experiences or if they were distressed as a result of taking part. This involved advising them to speak to a teacher or other trusted person, and signposting them to other reporting routes and organisations able to provide support and information about internet safety.
- Ensuring that clear information was provided to schools about the type of support they should have in place for young people, should they be concerned or distressed as a result of participation.
- Making it clear that any information disclosed in the online survey or discussed in the focus groups about an individual which related to illegal activity or risk of harm to the individual or other participants, would be disclosed to the school and dealt with according to the relevant safeguarding procedures.
- Information that could identify an individual is not published in the report, and all case studies are created from the experiences of multiple young people.

5. Young people’s experiences of online sexual harassment

Before piloting the resources, young people took part in a pre-pilot survey. The questions looked at key experiences of online sexual harassment.

Young people witnessing online sexual harassment

The questionnaire measured bystander experiences of a variety of online behaviours which constitute online sexual harassment. The most commonly reported were seeing people making sexual jokes (71%) and people using homophobic or transphobic language (64%). The least frequently reported were people sharing personal details of someone who was seen as ‘easy’ (11%) and people sharing images or videos of someone they knew doing sexual acts (19%).



Percentage of young people aged 13-17 who had seen the following once or more	UK	Denmark	Sweden	Total
People sharing nude/nearly nude images supposed to be of a particular person, but could be an image of someone different taken from a website/photo	33%	36%	37%	35%
People sharing personal details of someone who is seen as ‘easy’	22%	22%	20%	11%
People being pressured to share nude/nearly nude images of themselves	23%	37%	31%	29%
People sharing nude/nearly nude images of someone I know	24%	24%	16%	22%
People making sexual threats (e.g., rape threats)	22%	31%	16%	23%
People sharing images or videos of someone I know doing sexual acts	18%	22%	13%	19%

Comparison with initial sample from ‘Youth Experiences of Online Sexual Harassment’ (2017)

These results are generally consistent with the initial sample where the most frequently reported behaviours were seeing people making sexual jokes (69%) and people using homophobic or transphobic language (68%). The least frequently reported were people sharing images or videos of someone they knew doing sexual acts (27%) and people making sexual threats (29%).

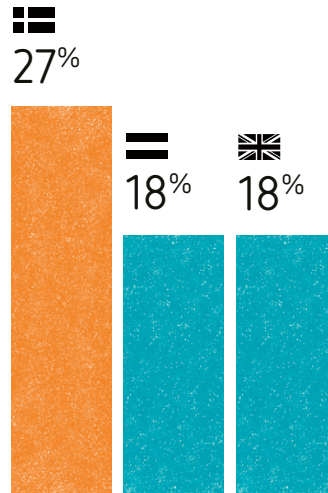
Young people directly experiencing online sexual harassment

The questionnaire measured a variety of online experiences which constitute online sexual harassment. Although the majority of the sample did not report experiencing these behaviours, the most commonly reported were being the focus of sexual gossip and lies (20%) and being sent unwanted sexual images (19%). The least frequently experienced were non-consensual sharing of sexual images (2%) and images of participants being changed to make them sexual (3%).

Comparison with initial sample

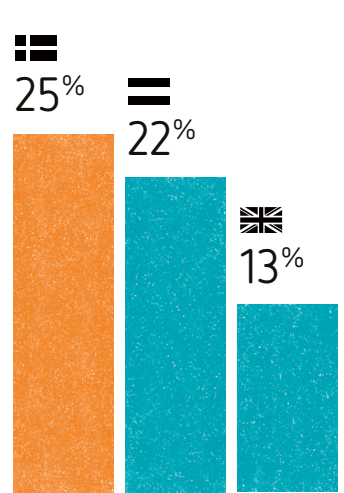
These results are generally consistent with the initial sample where the most frequently reported behaviours were also being the focus of sexual gossip and lies, and being sent unwanted sexual images.

Total
20%



Percentage of 13–17s who have had someone share gossip or lies about their sexual behaviour

Total
19%



Percentage of 13–17s who have had someone keep sending them nude/nearly nude images or sexual messages when they didn't want them

6. Piloting the resources

All resources were adapted and translated for each country to ensure that they were in line with the local education system, institutions and support available, as well as societal and cultural norms and attitudes. Whilst the resources created in each country allowed for this flexibility, the majority of the activities were very similar across the three countries. This was due to the initial research findings showing similar levels of prevalence and attitudes towards online sexual harassment.

Schools were provided the materials and asked to deliver the four lessons, as well as display the accompanying posters, show the film and deliver the assembly. All teachers were also provided the Teaching Toolkit which accompanies the lesson plans. The schools were encouraged to deliver the lessons over a 2-3 month period. Following on from all the activities, pupils were asked to complete an online survey about their experiences of the lessons and if they had learnt anything.

Whilst schools were offered further information about the project, it was important that they delivered the resources without any involvement from the partners. This was to adequately test how the resources would be used once made widely available for educators to download and use from the website.

7. What young people learned overall

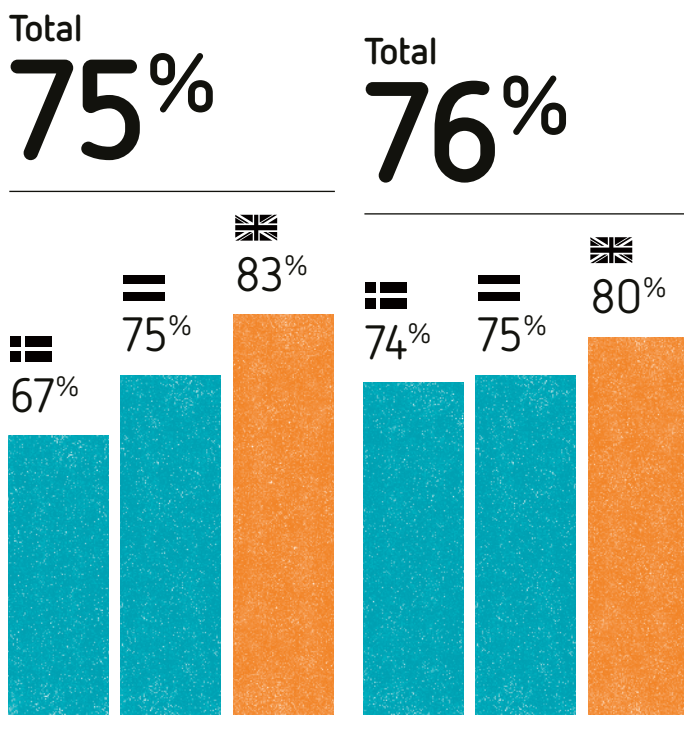
Participants were asked a series of general questions about their understanding and impact of the educational resources piloted. The most effective impacts were on their understanding of the need to support and not blame those who are targeted by online sexual harassment (76%) and knowledge of how and where to report it online (75%). The lowest levels of reported impact related to reflection on the participants' own behaviour online (34%) and making changes as a result (15%). As the resources were aimed at increasing knowledge of the issue and the reporting process, rather than directly addressing those who may engage in these behaviours, these figures are understandable. The lower figures for these items may also reflect the lower proportion of young people who engaged in these behaviours in the sample, although we do not have direct evidence of this in the survey. There are some key differences between countries in the survey results. This may be due to the differences in the schools that piloted the resources, or the differing education systems in each country.

Reporting:

- 75% of respondents said they know how and where they can report online sexual harassment (D 67%, H 75%, UK 83%).
- 58% said they would report something that happened to them in future (D 52%, H 55%, UK 67%).
- 58% said they would report something that they saw happening to someone else in future (D 52%, H 46%, UK 75%).

Knowledge and confidence:

- 76% of respondents aged 13–17 said that they learnt that those who are targeted by online sexual harassment should be supported and not blamed (D 74%, H 75%, UK 80%).
- 60% said they learnt something they didn't know (D 55%, H 54%, UK 71%).
- 58% said it made them feel more confident about what to do if they experienced or saw online sexual harassment (D 52%, H 65%, UK 59%).



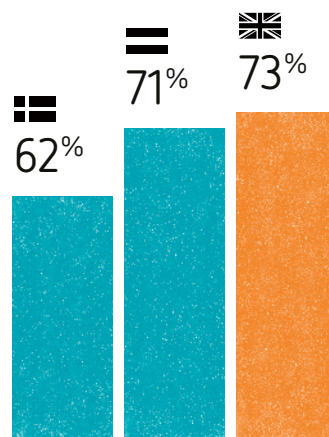
Percentage of respondents said they know how and where they can report online sexual harassment

Percentage of respondents aged 13–17 said that they learnt that those who are targeted by online sexual harassment should be supported and not blamed

“It’s important to talk about these issues, and now we had the opportunity.”
 Boy 16, Hungary

“Before this session I thought that more was needed for it to be online sexual harassment. It turned out that a comment on a picture could also be online sexual harassment.”
Young person 13-17, Denmark

Total
68%



Percentage of respondents aged 13–17 said that they learnt that girls and boys are often judged differently for their online behaviour

Attitudes and reflection:

- 68% of respondents aged 13–17 said that they learnt that girls and boys are often judged differently for their online behaviour (D 62%, H 71%, UK 73%).
- 50% said it made them think about the behaviour of others they had seen online (D 54%, H 38%, UK 57%).
- 34% said it made them think about their own behaviour online (D 31%, H 38%, UK 33%), with 15% saying they have changed their own behaviour online (D 12%, H 25%, UK 10%).

Through the focus groups and open field questions, it was clear that young people appreciated the time spent on the issue. They communicated how important it was for them to be able to address this topic and that they were able to debate and hear their peer’s opinions and attitudes on this issue. Practical, scenario-based learning where young people were given the opportunity to engage in discussion of relatable examples was also mentioned as an important way in which they were able to learn.

“I like these lessons because people don’t really need to know about stem cells, structure of a leaf whatever it is, this is important, this is real life, people do go through these sorts of issues and there are many other subjects and issues like this that don’t get addressed. The more people that get into the real world and they’ll like ‘oh no I never learnt about this...’”

Boy 14-15, UK

“We had rules to follow so nobody was judged about what they said. There were scenarios so we could see examples of what we were learning about.” Girl 13, UK

Before the resources were delivered, participants were asked about the likelihood of their engaging in a variety of reporting behaviours if they experienced online sexual harassment in the future. The most frequently reported behaviour was blocking (87%), followed by telling those involved to take the content down (70%) and speaking to friends (61%). Speaking to teachers (14%) and speaking to helplines (22%) were the least likely behaviours to be engaged in.

Comparison with initial sample

These results are generally consistent with the initial sample where the most frequently reported behaviour was blocking (82%), followed by telling those involved to take the content down (65%) and speaking to friends (67%). Speaking to teachers (14%) and speaking to helplines (15%) were the least likely behaviours to be engaged in.

Comparison with post-pilot sample

The behaviours that were most likely, with regards to reporting online sexual harassment, were consistent with the pre-pilot sample such as blocking (84%), telling those involved to take the content down (65%) and speaking to friends (64%). Importantly there was an increase in the reporting routes most addressed in the activities, as well as a decrease in ignoring such behaviour:

- 11% increase in likelihood of speaking to teachers after the activities were delivered (from 14% to 25%).
- 14% increase in likelihood of reporting to a social network (from 41% to 55%).
- 12% decrease in likelihood of ignoring online sexual harassment (from 37% to 25%).

“Both the psychologist and the teacher can be someone to report to, but in reality you need a good relationship to do so. Trust. We are afraid that they would not understand us.”

Boy 15, Hungary

“We learned something about where to go and where not to go if you experienced an online sexual harassment, or if you think you’ve experienced one.”
Young person 13-17, Denmark

8. Lessons in focus

Recognising: ‘What is online sexual harassment?’

This lesson’s objective was to enable young people to understand what types of behaviour constitute online sexual harassment. Using discussion and interactive activities, students are encouraged to reflect on the kind of behaviour they may see online, explore issues of consent and how this helps to define online sexual harassment. The learning outcomes from the lesson were for students to be able to:

1. Define and recognise examples of online sexual harassment.
2. Understand the emotional impact online sexual harassment can have on those involved.

408 young people aged 13–17 across Denmark, Hungary and the UK took part in this lesson. The survey results evidenced high levels of impact. The strongest were on confidence in recognising online sexual harassment (77%) and understanding its impact on others (75%).

Activity	Timing
Starter	Scenario comparison 10 min
Activity 1	Defining online sexual harassment 10 min
Activity 2	Flirting vs. harassment – Where’s the line? 20 min
Activity 3	Emotions and impact 15 min
Optional activity	Hot seat 45min
Plenary	Shared learning 5 min

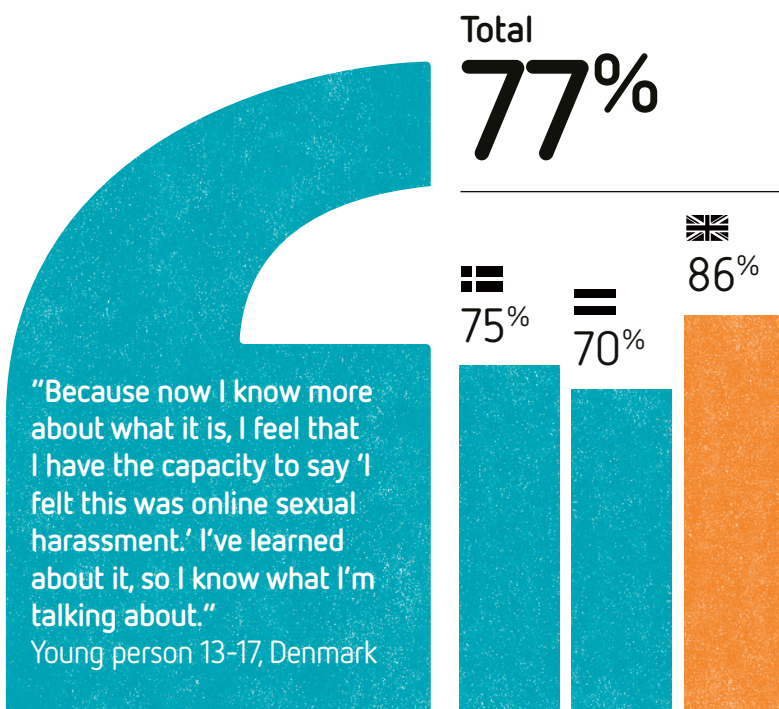
Extract of Activity from the Lesson plan

- 77% of respondents aged 13–17 said they were confident they would recognise online sexual harassment if they saw it (D 75%, H 70%, UK 86%), with 70% saying it helped them understand what constitutes online sexual harassment (D 64%, H 73%, UK 74%).
- 75% said it made them understand the impact of these behaviours on others (D 74%, H 70%, UK 82%).
- 71% said it made them understand why consent online is important (D 70%, H 69%, UK 73%), with 69% saying it made them think more about how consent applies online (D 73%, H 65%, UK 68%).

“Sometimes people would be like ‘what? That’s counted as harassment?’ and our teacher would be like ‘yeah’ and then they’d be like ‘is it?’ Like yeah, like they didn’t know before. They wouldn’t have thought it would have been.”
Girl, 15-16, UK

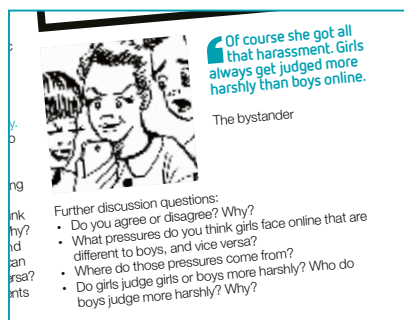
“We have learned that harassment is something that is against our consent”
Girl 16, Hungary

“It taught me how to recognise online sexual harassment if it were to happen to me and it taught me what is right and wrong by giving different scenarios. It also taught me some words and phrases I didn’t know, and it taught me that my opinions towards it are just as important as others.”
Girl, 14, Southampton



Percentage of respondents aged 13–17 said they were confident they would recognise online sexual harassment if they saw it

“The whole class had a discussion cause some people were like, ‘Oh it’s her fault,’ and then the majority of the class were like, ‘No it’s like the bystanders, or the person who shared the photo.’ So it got everyone discussing if it was the victim to blame or other people.”
 Girl, 15-16, UK



Extract of Activity from the Lesson plan

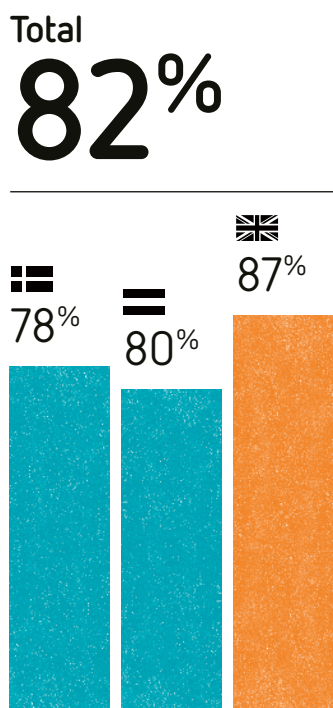
Responding: ‘How can we support victims of online sexual harassment?’

This lesson’s objective was for students to understand how online sexual harassment makes victims feel and how to support those who experience it. It explored the concept of victim-blaming and how this contributes to online sexual harassment. Using scenario-based activities, students were encouraged to understand how victim-blaming could make those involved feel, and consider the gendered context in which it occurs. It also examined strategies to help support victims. The learning outcomes were for students to be able to:

1. Recognise examples of victim-blaming in response to online sexual harassment.
2. Explore the gendered context in which online sexual harassment takes place.
3. Respond to incidences of online sexual harassment in a sympathetic, helpful and supportive manner.

372 young people aged 13–17 across Denmark, Hungary and the UK took part in this lesson. Once again, the survey demonstrates high levels of impact following this lesson. The strongest impacts were on understanding the importance of supporting and helping others targeted by online sexual harassment (82%) and gender differences in judgements for online behaviour (80%).

- 82% of 13–17 year olds said they learnt that it is important to support and help others who are targeted by online sexual harassment (D 78%, H 80%, UK 87%).
- 80% said that they learnt that boys and girls are often judged differently for their online behaviour (D 75%, H 79%, UK 87%).
- 76% said they learnt that people who are targeted by online sexual harassment should not be blamed for their behaviour (D 72%, H 74%, UK 81%).
- 70% said the lesson gave them ideas on how they can support and help others who are targeted by online sexual harassment (D 65%, H 74%, UK 71%).




Percentage of 13–17 year olds said they learnt that it is important to support and help others who are targeted by online sexual harassment.

Reporting: ‘What happens when you report online sexual harassment?’

The objective of this lesson was for young people to know how to report online sexual harassment. It explored how they can report and who they can report to. Using various activities such as role play, young people were encouraged to consider the challenges and barriers they face when making a report, whilst also learning more about the reporting process itself.

Role play #5



1

Character 1: You are a **teenager**. Your ex-boyfriend/girlfriend has been threatening you, saying that they'll share sexual gossip and rumours about you unless you buy them a new pair of trainers. Your mum/dad sees you are upset, and you tell her what's been going on. He/she is really supportive, and wants to go the police, but you don't want to, because you're worried about the gossip.

Objective: Speak to your parent about what's going on. You don't think reporting to the police will help.

Things to think about: Who are you, where are you and why are you there?

Extract of Activity from the Lesson plan

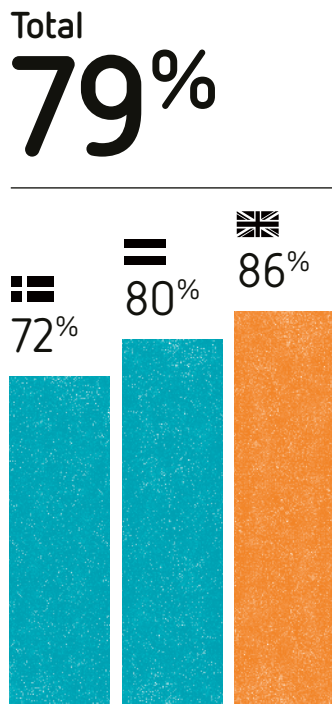
The learning outcomes were for students to be able to:

1. Recognise the reporting routes available to them.
2. Understand their school/setting's reporting process.
3. Explore the challenges young people face in reporting online sexual harassment.
4. Identify the positive effects reporting can have.

335 young people aged 13–17 across Denmark, Hungary and the UK took part in this lesson. There were generally high levels of impact of this lesson based on the survey responses. The strongest impacts were on understanding the importance of reporting online sexual harassment (80%) and how to report it (79%). Whilst 67% said that they now know how to make a report at school, a lower proportion of the sample agreed that they would feel confident making a report in this context (46%). This could highlight the importance of taking a long-term and holistic approach to build trust and confidence over a period of time.

- **80%** said they understand why it is important to report online sexual harassment (D 69%, H 77%, UK 92%).
- **79%** said they now know the different ways they can report online sexual harassment (D 72%, H 80%, UK 86%).
- **74%** said they know how to make a report at school (D 57%, H 69%, UK 74%).
- **64%** said they would feel more confident making a report outside of school (i.e. social media, parents/ carers, police) (D 58%, H 62%, UK 71%).
- **46%** said they would feel confident making a report at school (D 37%, H 59%, UK 45%).

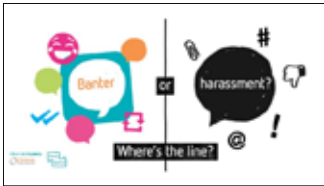
“Now that I participated in this class, I already know what am I to do in these cases.”
Girl 14, Hungary



“I really liked that we talked about who to talk to. Two things I think was really important - who to talk to, and where to draw the line.”
Young person 13-17, Denmark

9. Other supporting materials

In order to further support the lessons, and help ensure the school takes an holistic approach to tackling online sexual harassment, additional materials were provided. These materials were to bolster the targeted lessons and ensure the messages were embedded through the whole school.



Assembly

Schools were provided with an [assembly presentation](#), alongside a script and guidance. It aimed to provide an overview for the topic of peer-to-peer online

sexual harassment and to inform young people how to report it.

230 young people aged 13–17 across Denmark, Hungary and the UK attended the assembly. National comparisons are not presented as there were less than 100 responses in the UK and Denmark. There were high levels of impact of the assembly on many of the evaluative dimensions measured. The strongest impacts were on understanding the impact of online sexual harassment on others (78%) and what to do in response (78%). The lowest impact was on reporting behaviour to school (39%).

- 78% said it made them understand the impact of these behaviours on others, with the same percentage saying it made them understand what they could do in response to online sexual harassment.
- 74% said it made them understand what online sexual harassment is, as well as why it is important to report online sexual harassment.
- 63% said it helped them to understand what the school would do if they made a report, with over half (51%) saying it made them more likely to report a problem to a social media platform.

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Poster

Schools were provided [posters](#) to display, to help raise awareness about the issue of online sexual harassment. A customisable version was made available to share specific details of who, when and where young people can go to for further help in each school.

293 young people aged 13–17 across Denmark, Hungary and the UK reported that they had

seen the poster displayed in their school. National comparisons are not presented as there were less than 100 responses in the UK and Denmark. The strongest impact of the poster was on knowledge about how to report (60%) and future reporting behaviour (56%).

- 60% said they learned how they can find out more about reporting online sexual harassment.
- 56% said it made them think they would report something that happened to them in future.
- 46% said they learned something they didn't already know.

60%

said they learned how they can find out more about reporting online sexual harassment.

Film

Schools were given a short [animated film](#) explaining what online sexual harassment is and the behaviours it involves. The aim of the film was for young people to be able to identify online sexual harassment and recognise the importance of reporting.

95 young people aged 13–17 across Denmark, Hungary and the UK reported that they had seen the film. Due to this number being less than 100, the findings are not presented in this report.

10. Teachers' responses

Overall, teachers were positive about the resources and the support they provided them to deliver the activities. 17 teachers who had delivered the materials across Denmark, Hungary and UK gave feedback. The survey was aimed at receiving more qualitative feedback, as the number of teachers would be low for a robust sample, and for more in-depth understanding of what could be improved.

- The majority of teachers felt that the examples in the sessions generated high levels of discussion of complicated topics such as consent.
- All the teachers said that the language was accessible and helpful.
- All the teachers said the activities were engaging and realistic.

Feedback across the three countries regarding what could be improved differed significantly, primarily due to country-specific issues. However, there were some general changes that were implemented.

11. What we changed based on pilot

Using the feedback from young people, teachers and other experts we consulted, we made changes to the resources. Whilst there were many minor changes, significant amendments included:

- Clarifying the length of the lessons. In the UK, due to longer lesson times, we suggested longer timings per lesson and made it clear to teachers to feel free to allow discussions to continue if it felt beneficial. Denmark and Hungary shortened the activities to fit within 45 minute lesson periods.
- In the UK: Adding additional notes at the beginning of the lesson plan pack to act as a trigger warning to teachers, both in terms of students, but also for staff delivering sessions. We also provided further information on the definition of online sexual harassment as well further questions to define terms such as 'blame' and 'responsibility'.
- In Denmark: Providing further information about victim blaming and consent. We also amended all cases, so that young people were always reflecting on what a 'friend' would do. We ensured that there was some level of physical movement in all the lessons.
- In Hungary: Providing a list of supportive statements in the 'Responding to online sexual harassment' lesson, so students could build on existing statements. There was also a need to further support schools with creating their reporting policies and procedures.
- Updating the resources with new changes to the law, as well as new resources and guidance.

"I could deliver a whole term of lessons on this and they would still be going."
Teacher, UK

12. Resources

All the resources that have been created by Project deSHAME can be found at www.deshame.eu.

They are all free to download and can be used by any professional working with children. We encourage educators to adapt and use the resources according to the needs of the young people they are working with.

13. Conclusion

Overall, the results of the research related to the piloting of the resources suggests that they provide a comprehensive set of materials which can be used in schools and other settings. The findings show that the resources provided young people with many opportunities, in a safe and engaging way, to discuss issues around online sexual harassment. The evaluation has provided evidence that they are able to effectively raise awareness about the related key issues and assist young people in developing a better understanding of how and where to make a report. Young people expressed very clearly that being given adequate time and a safe space to discuss, debate and explore the complexities of the issue was very important. The interactive and practical format of resources allowed young people to understand and explore the issues as well as sometimes challenge their pre-existing assumptions.

Teaching resources cannot be the whole solution however. It is clear that there is a need to take a long term and whole school approach to addressing this issue, as well as ensuring that other stakeholders are effectively informed about relevant action to take when a report is made. The Guidance for Schools and for law enforcement will hopefully begin to address this need.

**“Talk to your friends,
teachers, all grown-ups...
Generally, just someone
you easily can talk too.
And it’s important to do
because then you’re
not alone.”**

**Young person 13-17,
Denmark**

“It taught me how to recognise online sexual harassment if it were to happen to me and it taught me what is right and wrong by giving different scenarios. It also taught me some words and phrases I didn’t know, and it taught me that my opinions towards it are just as important as others.”

Girl, 14, UK

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