Pressure online

Year: Y6

Subjects and Issues

Bullying Peer pressure Respect Risk taking
Safeguarding Social norms Trust
Internet safety Peer influence Consent
Privacy Decision making Sexting
Online safety and behaviours

NB: The film Lucy and the Boy (Activity 2) was designed for parents and children to watch together and discuss. Please review its content before delivering the lesson to assess its suitability for your class.

Introduction

Sitting in a circle for this discussion can help children to feel involved and more likely to join in.

First set up a safe environment, explaining that you are going to be discussing some things that about risky situations. During the discussions children may want to share stories, but that it's very important that **NO NAMES ARE MENTIONED**. Ask children instead to say **'A PERSON'** or **'A FRIEND',** or **'I KNOW SOMEONE…'**.

You can refer to the Creating a safe learning environment guidance for more details of setting ground rules/class agreement etc.

Begin by explaining that there may be times when we are put under pressure to behave in a certain way and do something that is risky, unhealthy, or makes us feel uncomfortable.

Make a verbal list of all the pressures we can think of [e.g. meida, social media, friends, classmates, **family.**] NB: remind children not to name names, if they are talking about personal experience, but to say 'I know someone' instead.

Go over the school policy about Bullying and what a person could do if these things were happening to them? Depersonalise the language here using 'person' or 'someone' rather than 'you'.

Ask who is there to help in these situations [teachers or other adults at school, parents/carers or other family members, trusted adults e.g. at a club, in the community.]

Activity 1 - Sharing photos

Show some photographs (physical versions - not on the IWB). Explain that you are going to share them. If using additional photos, real or taken from magazines, they can be passed around the class, collected up and put them away.

Ask:

- What was in the photographs?
- Can anyone share them? [No]
- Why not? [don't have copies of them]

Ask for a show of hands from anyone who has ever shared - or knows people who have shared - a photograph online, either by email, on a smartphone, for example on Instagram, Snapchat etc. (If children mention social media platforms, remind them of the age restrictions for these apps is 13 years of age. Ask why they think there are laws about when children can use these apps and if necessary, explain that this is to help children manage their online behaviour and to keep them safe.)

Ask:

- If we share photographs in this way, what might the consequences be? [they could be shared by others, including with people we don't know - strangers. Also, AI could be used to change the photos and they could be used in an unkind way to hurt or embarrass someone.]
- Has anyone ever felt under pressure to share a photo online?

- Without mentioning anyone's name, where might this pressure to share when we don't want to come from? [NB - this could be friends, or children might just feel pressure to conform coming from within themselves. This is a key behaviour of social norms theory**]
- Is it ok for someone to share a photograph of another person without asking their permission (consent)? [Explore the reasons why this might not be acceptable.]

Explain that sometimes because 'everyone is doing it' we feel we have to join in too. Can you think of any times you joined in with something you didn't really want to? What made you do it? [Remind children that they only need to share what they are comfortable with, and not to mention any names of people involved.]

Activity 2 - Lucy and the Boy

Introduce the NSPCC film Lucy and the Boy* (NB: this film is hosted on YouTube. Please ensure that film plays or adjust your computer settings to enable it in advance of the lesson and also cue up the film before the lesson, to avoid possible adverts at the start).

NB: The film Lucy and the Boy was designed for parents and children to watch together and discuss. Please view it before the lesson to assess its suitability for your class.

After watching the film, ask:

- Were there any parts up until the end of Lucy's school day where you felt a bit uneasy or uncomfortable about who she might meet?
- Were there any clues that the boy was not who he said he was?
- What could be the consequences of sharing a photograph online? Ask children to discuss in groups, then feed back their ideas. [e.g. AI (Artificial Intelligence) could be used to make it something else, make a person look silly, add music, pass it on to lots of unknown people, etc.]

Summing up

If someone is putting pressure on you to do something you don't want to do, whether it's face-to-face or online, what can you do? Who can you get help from? What can you do to make yourself feel safer?

If appropriate and as time allows, you may want to review the NSPCC underwear rule to conclude the lesson:

P - Privates are private

A - Always remember your body belongs to you

N - No means no

T - Talk about secrets that upset you

S - Speak up, someone can help

For more information visit NSPCC website.

* With kind permission from NSPCC

** For more information about the theory of Social Norms and how it influences behaviour watch this short film by Professor Wesley Perkins.

Adapting lessons for learners with additional needs

Our additional Signposting and Support page provides further guidance on adapting SCARF lessons to meet the needs of learners with additional needs.

Version History

Fri, 29 Aug 2025

- Content updated to include ia wider range of social media image-sharing platforms and also issues around AI-generated images.

- Link to *Creating a Safe Learning Environment* guidance added.
- Photograph resources added for possible use in Activity 1.

Learning Outcomes

Children will be able to:

- Understand the risks of sharing images online and how these are hard to control, once shared;
- Understand that people can feel pressured to behave in a certain way because of the influence of the peer group;
- Understand the norms of risk-taking behaviour and that these are usually lower than people believe them to be.

Key Vocabulary

peer pressure
right to privacy
sharing online
online safety

Resources needed

You will need a copy of your school's policy on bullying for this lesson. If this is not available, use your classroom rules that deal with bullying or similar resource.

A selection of images of people - these can be photographs or pictures cut from magazines, or use the set supplied in the PDF resource below.

Activity 1 - Sharing photos - print this set of photos to share in class if not using other photos or images of people gathered from magazines.

DfE Relationships Education and Health Education statutory requirements

- Relationships Education Online relationships 1. That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.
- Relationships Education Online relationships 3. The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
- Relationships Education Online relationships 4. How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.
- Relationships Education Online relationships 5. How information and data is shared and used online.
- Relationships Education Being safe 1. What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
- Relationships Education Being safe 3. That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.
- Relationships Education Being safe 4. How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.
- Relationships Education Being safe 5. How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about

any adult.

DfE Relationships Education and Health Education statutory requirements (2025)

- **Being Safe** 1. What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including online). This can include learning about boundaries in play and in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources etc.
- **Being Safe** 3. That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe contact, including physical contact.
- **Being Safe** 4. How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online), including those they do and do not know.
- **Being Safe** 5. How to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust.
- **Developing bodies** 2. The correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples. Pupils should understand that all of these parts of the body are private and have skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts.
- **Online safety and awareness** 2. How to critically evaluate their online relationships and sources of information, including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. For example, that people sometimes behave differently online, including pretending to be someone else, or pretending to be a child, and that this can lead to dangerous situations. How to recognise harmful content or harmful contact, and how to report this.
- **Online safety and awareness** 3. That there is a minimum age for joining social media sites (currently 13), which protects children from inappropriate content or unsafe contact with older social media users, who may be strangers, including other children and adults.

- Online safety and awareness 4. The importance of exercising caution about sharing any information about themselves online. Understanding the importance of privacy and location settings to protect information online.
- Online safety and awareness 5. Online risks, including that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once a picture or words has been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up.
- Online safety and awareness 6. That the internet contains a lot of content that can be inappropriate and upsetting for children, and where to go for advice and support when they feel worried or concerned about something they have seen or engaged with online.
- Wellbeing online 9. How to understand the information they find online, including from search engines, and know how information is selected and targeted.

PSHE Association Learning Opportunities

- R23 . About why someone may behave differently online, including pretending to be someone they are not; strategies for recognising risks, harmful content and contact; how to report concerns.
- R24 . How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts including online) whom they do not know.
- R25 . Recognise different types of physical contact; what is acceptable and unacceptable; strategies to respond to unwanted physical contact.
- R28 . How to recognise pressure from others to do something unsafe or that makes them feel uncomfortable and strategies for managing this.