



cyber(**smart:**)

Teacher Resource

Tagged

Background Information



Tagged

Welcome

When a group of high-school friends post a rumour about a rival it sparks a chain reaction that leaves no one untouched. Cyberbullying, sexting, filmed fights and police action ensue – will these friends avoid being *Tagged* forever?

Developed by the Australian Communications and Media Authority's Cybersmart program, *Tagged* is recommended for use with students aged 14 and over. *Tagged* comes with lesson plans and compelling character interviews. It explores themes of personal and peer safety and responsibility that are crucial to maintaining positive online behaviour and digital reputation into adulthood.

The Australian Communication and Media Authority (the ACMA), as part of the Australian Government's commitment to cybersafety, manages Cybersmart: a national cybersafety education program.

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Introduction to the issues

Your students have never known a world without the internet.

As 'digital natives', their online lives are crucial to your students' identities and understanding of the world.

However, being more technologically adept than most of the teachers and other adults in their lives doesn't mean that they display the social and ethical responsibility required to have positive online experiences.

In fact, negative experiences often result from a lack of comprehension of:

- The permanence of what is posted online, affecting what is referred to as a person's 'digital reputation'
- Privacy and personal boundaries in friendships and deeper relationships
- What constitutes bullying behaviour

As an educator working with teenagers you have probably been aware for some time that social networking sites and smart phone technology can combine to create incidences of bullying known as cyberbullying. Another escalating social trend is the taking and sending of sexual images amongst peers or between those in romantic relationships. This is known as sexting.

If there haven't been incidences in your school that you're aware of, a cursory search of the internet will reveal many high-profile media cases illustrating the damaging consequences of both trends. These cases can serve as good platforms for introducing discussion of these issues with teenagers. In Australia and around the world, it is

possible to see many cases where people have suffered the loss of romantic relationships, career prospects, personal reputations and - all too often their lives, due to instances of sexting or cyberbullying. These outcomes are not restricted to teenagers. Adults suffer similar consequences, as illustrated by many cases focused on by the media. However, teenagers are often far more vulnerable to the negative fallout from these online actions.

Why are teenagers more vulnerable?

Adolescence is a time of curiosity, experimentation, the testing of boundaries, and the formation of a sense of identity and self-worth. As every important relationship is the 'first', best friends or sexual partners are often trusted completely. Teenagers are natural risk takers. Lasting consequences of any actions are often disregarded by teens.

This combination of well known social and emotional stages is part of what makes teenage life so creative and exhilarating. However, providing support, guidance and harm prevention is crucial to allowing the natural pathway to adulthood to progress without becoming caught in disturbing junctions that are unique to this current age of digital reputation.

Being more technologically adept than most of the teachers and other adults in their lives doesn't mean that they display the social and ethical responsibility required to have positive online experiences.

How are things different for this generation?

Every generation has experienced schoolyard bullying. Why is cyberbullying so different, so insidious? Because it is relentless. In the era of constant, 24-hour connectivity at home and at school, there is often no escape to a place without harassment. This is why advice on how to recognise and deal with bullying must change to reflect the nature of the bullying.

Cyberbullying and sexting are new concepts for most of the adults in teenagers' lives today. As these negative events take place in silence and on screens, it is important for parents and teachers to understand the very high likelihood that this is occurring in schools even if they don't see the evidence. Acting from an assumption that these kinds of negative online interactions are happening can open a dialogue between teachers and students from the outset.

Your school's internal policy

You will need to explore your school's policies/role in both disciplining and also supporting students. If the school doesn't have a policy it needs to develop one, especially in relation to the support it will provide students.

The role of the bystander

In incidences of sexting and cyberbullying, there is rarely one victim, one bully, or one bystander. In fact, victims of cyberbullying are very likely to repeat the same behaviour themselves. Sometimes teenagers who do the wrong thing – film a fight or a sex act, tag a private photograph, make offensive or inflammatory comments – and publish this material online; do so in the heat of the moment; acting out of ignorance and immaturity. Without being fully aware of the consequences, these 'bullies' often end up as victims themselves, as their momentary episode of selfish or anti-social behaviour can expose them to dramatic and long-term social and legal ramifications including expulsion from school or police action.

Bystanders can experience guilt, confusion, loneliness and depression, and their lack of empowerment or knowledge of how to take responsibility often contributes to bullying acts in ways that are just as negative to a victim as the bullying itself.

What can teachers do?

You don't have to be an expert in online technology to help teenagers navigate their use of it safely.

Although much has changed due to the significant use of online technology by Australian teenagers, codes of behaviour - of ethics and of social and personal responsibility - are applied to online interactions in the same way as they are applied in other social settings. These are areas of life that are culturally determined and must be taught by trusted adults, not left for teenagers to figure out solely for themselves.

By exploring the core ethical and social issues raised through this resource, you can help students to understand consequences, develop responsibility, act with care and bravery towards others, and protect their digital reputations now and into adulthood.

Definitions

Sexting

Sexting refers to the sending of provocative or sexual photos, messages, or videos, generally using a mobile phone. It can also include posting this type of material online.

Sharing sexually suggestive images or text messages may be seen as innocent flirting or amusement, but sexting can have serious personal, social and legal consequences.

An adolescent's complicated relationship with their body image, emerging sexuality and personal identity is difficult enough to navigate without being made public in a graphic way.

Added to the stress of sexualised images being broadcast to unknown third parties and made difficult or impossible to delete, is the complication that taking or sharing these images, even consensually, by a person under the age of 18 exposes teenagers to a range of serious legal implications. In Australia, such images are considered child pornography and can (and have been) prosecuted as such.

Digital reputation

Digital reputation, like any other form of reputation, refers to the generalised view others take of a person's identity. The digital component refers to the evidence of a person's interactions, comments and behaviours online and how this combines to form a whole impression of an individual.

A digital reputation is as real, lasting and important as an individual's general reputation. It affects a person's image and how their identity and beliefs are understood.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying occurs when the internet, email or mobile phones are used to deliberately and repeatedly engage in hostile behaviour to harm or upset someone. Cyberbullying can result in those involved experiencing social, psychological and academic difficulties.

Cyberbullying behaviours include:

- sending abusive texts or emails
- posting unkind messages or inappropriate images on social networking sites
- tagging unflattering, private or offensive images with a person's name to discredit or hurt them
- impersonating others online
- excluding others online.

Links and Resources

ACMA Cybersmart Division Policies and Procedures

<http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/Schools/Cybersafety%20policies%20and%20procedures.aspx>

This section provides an outline of policies and procedures schools may follow to assist them in providing a holistic approach to cybersafety. It outlines a proposed method for establishing a school-wide approach to cybersafety and links to cybersafety policies and procedures provided by the states and territories for use or adaptation by individual schools.

New Millennium Learners

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/39/51/40554230.pdf>

Research findings from the Center for Educational Research and Innovation focusing on learning implications of technology.

Click and Connect: Young Australians' use of online social media

http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC_311797

Research conducted for the Australian Communications and Media Authority (July 2009),

Commonwealth of Australia CRIMINAL CODE ACT 1995

http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/cca1995115/sch1.html

See section 474.19 (Using a carriage service for child pornography material) and 474.20 (Possessing, controlling, producing, supplying or obtaining child pornography material for use through a carriage service)

National Safe Schools Framework

http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/verve/_resources/NSSFramework.pdf

Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship

http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/verve/_resources/SOL_Civics_Copyright_update2008.pdf

Statements of Learning for Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/verve/_resources/SOL_ICT_Copyright_update2008.pdf

Privacy and Personal Information

<http://www.abc.net.au/technology/techexplained/articles/2011/04/11/3158229.htm>

The ABC techexplained. Understanding privacy settings, passwords and personal information online and in social networking.

The Line

http://www.theline.gov.au/parents_and_teachers/information

The Line is about defining what is and isn't acceptable in relationships. It is about engaging young Australians in a dialogue about what respect means.

Cyberbully411

<http://www.cyberbully411.org/>

Includes information for students on how they can approach their parents to discuss difficult issues as well as online discussion forums on cyberbullying and other issues.

Connect Safely

<http://www.connectsafely.org/NetFamilyNews/do-no-harm-message-to-educators-parents.html>

Advice for parents and educators struggling with the challenges of guiding youth towards safer online behavior.

Slide notes

The following pages contain notes which should assist with the presentation of the included slide content.

Middle or Upper?

When you reach Slide 4 in the slide show, you will be offered the buttons 'Middle Secondary' and 'Upper Secondary' instead of 'Next'. Simply select whichever reflects the age of your audience. The only difference in these is that the 'Upper Secondary' slides deal with the legal situation as students approach the age of 18.

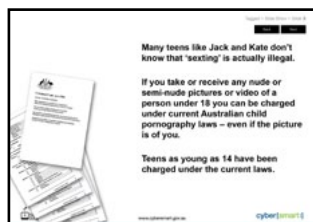
After selecting, be sure to note the slide number in order to align the slide notes.



1

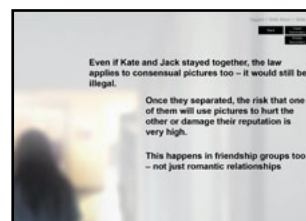


2



3

- Sexting may be considered illegal if participants are under 18. This may be the case even if the image sent involves only one person, or if all participants are willing.
- Sexting images and videos can have implications at school and may result in expulsion.



4

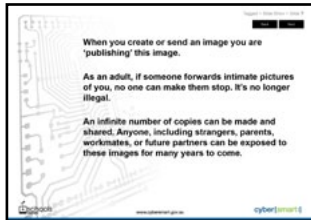
- The social ramifications of sexting can be enormous if images or videos spread beyond friendship groups or couples.
- Sexting images are very hard to retain control of once they are sent beyond the friendship group or couple.



5



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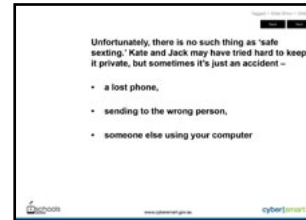


7

- Sexting images can be misused for sexual pleasure by strangers.
- Sexting images and videos can create issues in families, friendship groups and schools.
- Sexting images and videos can give people a negative impression of you.
- Sexting images and videos can have a negative impact on future relationships because the images can remain available online.



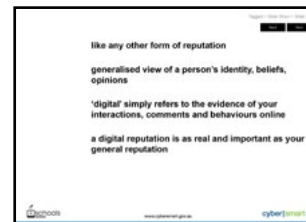
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- Your digital reputation is your responsibility.
- Ethically and legally you must take personal responsibility for the images and videos you take or share, and the comments you make about yourselves or others.

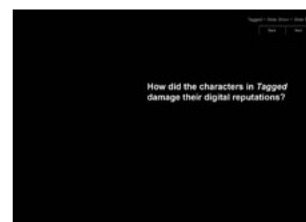


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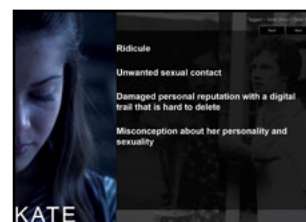
13

- Have you ever posted something about your family or friends during a time you were really angry at them that is not how you generally feel about them? How would it affect your relationship during the good times if they read what you thought about them when upset?
- Do you feel you have similar opinions now as you did at age 10 or 12? What about similar friendship groups or tastes in music? Would you be embarrassed now if some of those views still defined your reputation?



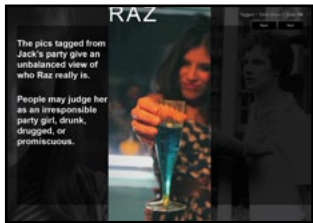
14

- How do you think someone might 'ruin' their reputation in the community? What about online?
- Which do you think is easier to overcome and why?
- How would you like others to see you?
- How do you think you can create an impression more closely aligned with what you really want?



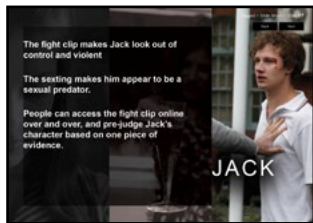
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- Have you ever seen your friends post a comment or picture just to be funny or shocking that you think could be misinterpreted by someone? What conclusions might people draw about your friend based on those comments? Would they be accurate?



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- What would an online search reveal about you? Would it be a balanced view?
- What are some of the words you would never want attached to your reputation? You may wish to list these as a group.

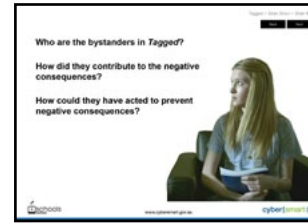


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- If Jack was to be in a fight in the future that was not his fault, or be accused of behaving improperly with women, he may have a hard time defending himself because of his online reputation.

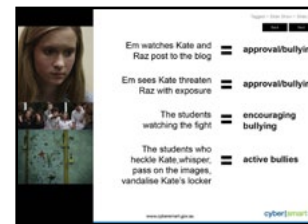


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- By ignoring someone who is cyberbullying others when you go online or who is sharing sexting images to hurt someone, are you really 'not involved'?
- By doing nothing, what are you really doing?
- Do your actions support the bully or the bullied?

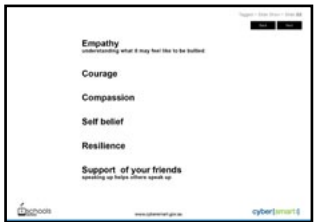


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- The students who 'heckle' Kate over the sexualised images are acting aggressively and destructively. They are harassing her in a very serious and threatening way.
- A bystander is just as involved in bullying by giving unspoken approval and more power to the bully



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- People who have been involved in a sexting or cyberbullying incident need support from friends, family and the school.
- Helping friends and fellow students who are involved in cyberbullying or sexting early on can save them a lot of pain down the track.
- Telling adults can be embarrassing but teachers, parents and police can help block sexting images from being shared more widely and stop cyberbullying.

Regulatory Frameworks

These lessons can help your institution address key education policy and regulation. Specifically, these lesson plans seek to address sections of the National Statements of Learning (NSL) and the Safe Schools Framework. These policies are developed and managed by the Ministerial Council For Education, Early Childhood Development And Youth Affairs

(MCEECDYA). Full versions of these documents can be found online, and can be accessed via the [links and resources page](#) of this document.

Excerpts of key documents can be found in this section.

Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship

Students evaluate Australia's pluralist society and explore the responsibilities of young adults in contributing to a socially cohesive, democratic community.

Students analyse how media and information and communication technologies are used to exert influence.

They have the opportunity to:

- evaluate ways in which individuals, groups and governments use the media and ICT to shape opinion and manage controversy

Source: Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship, MCEECDYA

Statements of Learning for Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

[Students] have opportunities to use ICT to accurately present an identity. Students also reflect on feedback to analyse, improve and describe how their use of a particular ICT could be more effective in future communications.

Students take into account individual rights and cultural expectations when accessing or creating digital information, understanding that values shape how ICT are used.

They analyse and evaluate their ICT use to consider economic, social, ethical, and legal perspectives. They also develop and maintain strategies for securing and protecting digital information.

Source: Statements of Learning for Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), MCEECDYA

Safe Schools Framework

Australian schools:

- affirm the rights of all members of the school community to feel safe and be safe at school
- acknowledge that being safe and supported at school is essential for student wellbeing and effective learning
- accept responsibility for developing and sustaining safe and supportive learning and teaching communities that also fulfill the school's child protection responsibilities
- encourage the active participation of all school community members in developing and maintaining a safe school community where diversity is valued
- actively support young people to develop understanding and skills to keep themselves and others safe

Characteristics of promoting student safety and wellbeing:

- 1.2 The development and communication of a clear vision for a safe, supportive and respectful school. This includes actions that encourage staff to commit to the vision and to feel confident about their participation in its implementation
- 2.2 Teaching, staff modeling and promotion of explicit pro-social values and expectations for behaviour in accordance with these values.
- 3.4 Agreements for responsible use of technology by staff and students.
- 4.1 Evaluation of the current level of staff knowledge and skills related to student safety and wellbeing and their capacity to respond effectively and sensitively to possible situations of child maltreatment, harassment, aggression, violence and bullying.
- 4.2 Ongoing professional learning about emerging changes in research and technology related to student safety and wellbeing.

5.2 The promotion and recognition of positive student behaviour.

5.4 Effective risk prevention plans for the use of technology in the classroom and for playground organisation and supervision.

5.5 Effective risk prevention plans for student behaviour management during off-campus and school-related out-of-hours activities.

6.3 Teaching of skills and understandings to promote cybersafety and for countering harassment, aggression, violence and bullying.

6.4 Teaching of skills and understandings related to personal safety and protective behaviours.

9.4 Working with the justice system in relation to child maltreatment, aggression, violence and cybersafety issues at both a preventative and legal level.

Source: Australian Safe Schools Framework

See: [Links and resources page](#)