



Change Attitudes Among Teenagers
on Cyber Violence Against Women
and Girls Together with Us



CyberSafe Replication Guidelines

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What is this document, and how to use it?

The CyberSafe Replication Guidelines has been created under the CyberSafe project – Changing Attitudes among teenagers on Cyber Violence against Women and Girls. The project is funded by the European Union, aiming to support organisations or professionals in EU countries working to combat gender-based violence on how to address the emerging phenomenon of Cyber Violence in school settings and use the results of CyberSafe in their social environment as a comprehensive and effective intervention towards raising awareness, and on combating incidents of Cyber Violence against and Girls.

This Guideline tells how to effectively use all the tools and materials of the CyberSafe project. Therefore, the Guidelines provide information on how to replicate the entire CyberSafe project. It includes all the necessary information about the process, the stages and the critical results and steps on how to work together to combat Cyber Violence against girls and women.

 [stoponlineviolence](#)

 [cybersafe.project_](#)

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[#CyberSafe](#)

Chapter 1: About CyberSafe

CyberSafe is an international project funded by the European Union and implemented during 2018–2021.

9 organisations and Research Institutes by 8 European countries developed and implemented an innovative educational prevention programme – the CyberSafe Toolkit – to address the issue of Cyber Violence against women and girls among young people 13–16 years old in school settings.


Serious Games Interactive (SGI, Denmark) is an award-winning research-based company specialising in the development of educational technology tools. The company has developed +150 games and simulations for diverse target groups such as Lego Education, Swedish Media Council and Sex & Samfund. SGI has cocreated the MOSAIC serious game on stereotypes and inclusion. In CyberSafe it led the efforts to develop the online serious game.

Northern Ireland Rape Crisis Association

(NEXUS NI, United Kingdom) is a registered Charity offering specialist support to both men and women victims of sexual violence. As part of its mainstream activities, it provides counselling to minors as well as delivers educational workshops in post primary school across the province, for young people (11+) on sexual relationships, exploitation and grooming. NEXUS NI's main role in CyberSafe was to implement activities with teenagers, through its permanent collaboration with 48 schools in Belfast, Derry, Enniskillen areas.

International Child Development Initiatives

(ICDI, Netherlands) is an organisation that promotes psychosocial development of children growing up in difficult circumstances world wide. ICDI develops and delivers tailor made training, provides advice, conducts research, and designs and implements projects, concerning children, 8-18 years. ICDI has extensive experience in a diverse range of topics, including (online) child sexual abuse, (online) bullying, child protection and safeguarding and child development. In CyberSafe, ICDI was responsible for development of the educational material and coordination of WP3.



Women's Support and Information Centre (WSIC, Estonia) has extensive expertise in gender violence issues, in particular intimate partner violence and as part of its activities it organises relevant workshops for children in collaboration with local authorities. It is Estonia's first gender violence organization and has worked in 9 international projects since 2006, including 6 DAPHNE. In CyberSafe, WSIC engaged in activities with teenagers, through its collaboration with Tartu City Council.

Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies at University of Tartu (UT, EE) has extensive experience in monitoring and evaluation of gender-based violence projects and has conducted research on gender-based violence in Estonia. In CyberSafe, University of Tartu carried out an impact assessment and coordinated the efforts to scientifically validate the developed online educational tool.

Women against Violence Europe (WAVE, Austria) is a Network NGO (160 members) composed mostly of European NGOs working in the field of gender violence. WAVE managed EU-wide project dissemination and will coordinate dissemination of the CyberSafe results.

University of Ljubljana (UL, Slovenia) Faculty of Social Sciences has participated in a large number of European projects, addressing issues and topics of data protection, Internet and new media, fundamental rights, ICT and youth: Children Protecting Personal Data and Privacy (DG-Justice, FRC), Prosociality Against Violence and Exclusion (DG-Justice, Daphne III), Safer Internet programme in Slovenia, and is part of the running CYBERVAW DG-Justice (REC) slovenian project. Based on its expertise UL led the process of developing the framework for the CyberSafe toolkit in the project.

Azienda Speciale Retesalute (Retesalute, Italy) is an Italian Public Body with 24 associated local municipalities within Lecco Province. Retesalute engages with educational interventions for children daily working on several topics, including gender violence. It has extensive experience in EU and national projects. Based on its work field, in CyberSafe Retesalute engaged with implementing activities with teenagers, through its associated Local Municipalities and collaborating schools.

Union of Women Associations of Heraklion Prefecture (UWAH, Greece) is focused on the promotion of women rights and gender equality and is member of the EUROCHILD Network. Since 2015, UWAH has a permanent collaboration with Secondary Schools Educational Authorities in Heraklion and runs structured interventions at high schools to educate teenagers on gender violence and stereotypes. UWAH has participated and lead several EU and EEA grants projects. In CyberSafe it acted as lead partner and manage the project, and implemented activities with teenagers, through its collaboration with the Secondary Schools Educational Authorities in Heraklion and the Municipality of Heraklion.

Chapter 2: CyberSafe Methodology

The project was developed upon the following key main components:

Cross-border collaboration

Cyber violence against women and girls is a challenge that affects all European societies equally, and thus, cooperation across the EU is a necessity in this context.

Gender sensitive approach

Cyber violence affects primarily women and girls. CyberSafe treats the phenomenon as a continuation or trigger of offline gender based violence, and not as a separate gender-blind issue.

Child participation

Young people were involved at multiple points in the development, testing, implementation and assessment during the creation of the CyberSafe Toolkit.

Under this methodological framework, CyberSafe followed a clear process to develop the CyberSafe Toolkit by applying the following 3 steps:

1

Develop the **CyberSafe Framework and Targeted Behaviours**

This step included:

- Identifying the Target Groups of the project
- Identifying the Target Behaviours through focus groups with young people in 4 countries and overview of existing research and survey results
- Identifying the Behavioural elements/causes that the initiative would aim to tackle

For more information see chapter 3



2

Develop the **CyberSafe Toolkit** based on the Framework

This step included:

- Creation of Guide for Facilitators
- Creation of Online Tool and translation in partner languages
- Pre-testing the prototype through a second round of focus groups with young people in 4 countries
- Apply corrections and finalizing the prototype

For more information see chapter 4



3

Assess the impact of the **CyberSafe Toolkit** – build an evidence-base

This step included:

- Piloting the CyberSafe Toolkit in school settings in 4 countries
- Evaluating the impact of the online education by measuring the change in young people participating in the pilots
- Analysing the results and providing a proof of the behavioral positive impact on the teenagers

For more information see chapter 5



Chapter 3: Understanding Cyber Violence Against Girls and Women

3.1 What is Cyber Violence Against Girls and Women?

Cyber Violence, is an umbrella definition including all forms of violence or harassment that happen with the use of digital devices. Cyber violence exists in many different forms, ranging from online sexual harassment, stalking and bullying, to hate speech, online trolling, identity theft and hacking.

In CyberSafe we put the spotlight on **Cyber Violence against girls**. Girls and women are more likely than boys (and men) to be victims of **severe forms** of online violence, in particular forms that have a **sexual element**, and the impact on their lives can be very **traumatic**.

There is no common definition of Cyber Violence against girls in the EU and incidents are often not reported, so the actual rate of incidence is unknown. Here are some estimates:

- Research by the World Health Organisation shows that **1 in 3 women** have experienced a form of violence in her lifetime.¹
- The EU estimates that **1 in 10 women** (11%) have experienced a form of Cyber Violence from the age of 15 onwards. For young women, the prevalence is even higher, with **20%** of the 18-29 year old women.²
- In a UNICEF Poll, conducted in 30 countries, **1 in 3 young people** indicated they have been a victim of online bullying.³
- A study in the UK found that **51% of UK young people aged 13–17 years** have seen people sharing nude or nearly nude images of someone they know in the last year.⁴

1 WHO 2017, "Factsheet: Violence against women", available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/factsheets/detail/violence-against-women>

2 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), 2014, "Violence against women: an EU-wide survey", available at: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/violence-against-women-eu-wide-survey-main-results-report>

3 UNICEF 2019, press release 3 September 2019: <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/unicef-poll-more-third-young-people-30-countries-report-being-victim-online-bullying>

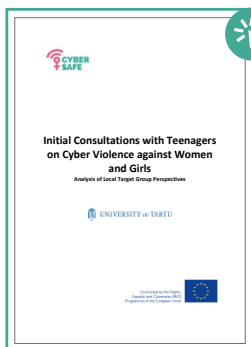
4 Project deSHAME 2017, "Young people's experiences of online sexual harassment", available at: https://www.childnet.com/ufiles/Project_deSHAME_Dec_2017_Report.pdf

- A survey from Plan International among 14.000 girls (15-25) across 22 countries revealed that **58% of the girls** had experienced online sexual harassment, mostly on Facebook and Instagram. For 19% of them, this led to stopping or significantly reducing their use of the platform.⁵
- Young people belonging to the LGBTI community are at particular risk of online violence, with **15% of LGTBI young people aged 15–17** having experienced some form of online harassment in the previous 12 months.⁶

Cyber violence against girls is a growing concern. More and more people have access to the Internet and social media, through smartphones and other digital devices, which also leads to more young people being confronted with Cyber Violence.

The CyberSafe comprehensive report on Cyber Violence can be found [here](#).

This comprehensive report is based on literature review, study of target behaviours and results of focus groups with teenagers from Estonia, Greece, Italy and UK.



5 Plan International 2020, "Free to be online?": <https://plan-international.org/publications/freetobeonline>

6 FRA 2019, "A long way to go for LGBTI equality", available at: https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2020-lgbti-equality_en.pdf

3.2 Main Findings

CyberSafe research found that young people engage in Cyber Violence against girls for many reasons, including:

- **Peer pressure:** engaging in Cyber Violence against girls makes them popular and gets them approval or respect from their friends. Sometimes they are scared to become bullied themselves if they do not participate.
- **Revenge:** committing Cyber Violence sometimes is motivated to shame or to get back at someone. For example, an ex-girlfriend, often resulting from feeling hurt or insecure.
- **Anonymity:** The internet allows people to hide their identity. People do things online they would not do or say offline because they think they are anonymous.
- **Developmental stage:** during puberty, young people explore sexuality, boundaries and often take risks more easily without thinking about the consequences.
- **Normalisation:** Cyber Violence is often not recognised as online violence or unacceptable behaviour. Young people are often not taught what healthy relationships look like.
- **Unawareness of the impact:** Offenders of Cyber Violence acts, often participate because they think it is fun or a joke, unaware of the emotional impact of their abusive behaviour on others. The emotional impact is usually not visible through digital communication.
- **A lack of knowledge on help seeking possibilities:** this may cause the continuation or aggravation of situations of online violence.
- **Previous abuse:** (young) people who experienced domestic, sexual or physical violence are more likely to commit violence themselves, also online.

Additional resources on Cyber Violence against women and girls can be found here

www.stoponlineviolence.eu/resources

Chapter 4: How to Use the CyberSafe Toolkit

4.1 The CyberSafe Toolkit

The CyberSafe Toolkit is the **educational programme** that was developed in the CyberSafe project.

The CyberSafe Toolkit consists of three elements:

1. CyberSafe Online Tool
 2. Guide for Workshop Facilitators
 3. Workshops for using the CyberSafe Online Tool
- The CyberSafe Toolkit is intended for **teachers or other professionals working with young people**, who want to address online violence, including Non-consensual sharing of sexual images (and videos); Exploitation, coercion and threats; Sexualised bullying and unwanted sexualisation, in the classroom or in another setting.
 - The CyberSafe Toolkit provides information and tools to prepare and facilitate four workshops on these topics, in order to encourage and support young people in **safe and responsible online behaviour**. They learn how to **recognise, prevent and respond** to online violence.
 - **CyberSafe workshops** are “learning activities” aiming to raise awareness, facilitate discussion among teenagers and facilitator”on Cyber Violence against women and girls.
 - **CyberSafe workshops are based on the CyberSafe Online Toolkit**
 - **CyberSafe workshops target girls and boys, 13 to 16 years of age**. This age group heavily communicates and builds relationships online. Both girls and boys can play a role in online violence against girls, as a (potential) victim, perpetrator or bystander.

To use the [CyberSafe Tool](#) and run the CyberSafe Workshops, interested organisations are welcome to familiarise themselves with the [Guidelines for Facilitators](#).

4.2 How to Use the Guide for Workshop Facilitators

CYBERSAFE research found that young people engage in Cyber Violence against girls for many reasons, including:

Part 1

General Information

provides background information on the issue of online violence against girls, instructions on how to use the Online Tool and practical guidelines on facilitating a workshop.

Part 2

Workshop Plans

includes four different workshop plans. Each workshop focuses on one of the four main types of online violence against girls. Each plan includes a workshop structure, important messages to guide discussions and is used in conjunction with the Online Tool as set out below.



4.3 How to Use the CyberSafe Online Tool

CyberSafe Online Tool is a game-based learning tool to be used during the workshop. It contains two scenarios per workshop that facilitate discussions through two activities: **dilemmas for participants to vote on** and **role-plays**.



Languages

The CyberSafe Online Tool is available in 8 European Languages

- Danish
- Dutch
- English
- Estonian
- German
- Greek
- Italian
- Slovenian

Scan for the CyberSafe Online Tool here:



[www.stoponlineviolence.eu/
cybersafe-toolkit/online-tool/](http://www.stoponlineviolence.eu/cybersafe-toolkit/online-tool/)

The Four Main Types of Cyber Violence

CYBERSAFE Online Tool could be used to teach about 4 types of Cyber Violence against women and girls

1

Non-consensual sharing of sexual images (and videos)

A person's sexual images or videos being taken or shared without their consent.

Example: **'revenge porn'**, where sexual images/videos initially being taken consensually are shared on without consent.

2

Exploitation, coercion and threats

A person receiving sexual threats, being coerced to participate in sexual behaviour (online), or blackmailed with sexual content.

Example: **'sextortion'**, where the threat of publishing sexual content is used to blackmail or coerce someone.

3

Sexualised bullying

A person being targeted by and systematically excluded from a group with the use of sexual content that humiliates or upsets or discriminates against them.

Example: **'doxing'**, where personal information, such as contact details, is posted online accompanied with something of a sexual nature, for example 'she is easy'.

4

Unwanted sexualisation

A person receiving unwelcome sexual request, comments and content.

Example: when a girl receives unsolicited **'dickpics'** (images of a penis).

The online tool allows you to choose any topic from the selection and address them individually.

Structure of the Workshop

Each workshop has a suggested duration of **1 hour and 30 minutes**. You can also choose to spread a workshop over two lessons, leaving extra time for discussion.

1

Introduction

- Short introduction of the topic of Cyber Violence against women and girls
- Establishing a safe environment (ground rules, reporting and support options)

2

Online Tool: *Vote & Discuss*

- Starts with a **real-life case** of online violence included in the online tool
- Students vote anonymously on several dilemma's
- Voting-results are used to start short **group discussions**
- Practical **advice** is given on how to prevent and deal with online violence discussed in the case

3

Online Tool: *Role & Play*

- Students do a **role-play** in small groups using mobile phones. These allow them to experience the role of a victim, perpetrator or bystander in a situation of online violence
- Experiences and observations are shared in a **group discussion**

4

Wrap-up

- Time to debrief and summarise
- Support and reporting options are addressed again

CyberSafe Video Tutorials

For video tutorials about how to access and join the Online Tool, please visit:

Tutorial' Vote & Discuss': youtu.be/5-B5We1YnQ0

Tutorial' Role & Play': youtu.be/LWJrn3Voz84

4.4 Suggested Principles to be Applied when Facilitating a CyberSafe Workshop

We suggest the key properties that the facilitator of CyberSafe workshops should have so to run and develop further the CyberSafe tool kit.

- To have basic understanding of **Cyber Violence phenomena**
- To have a basic understanding of **gender based violence**
- To be familiar with the basic elements of **counseling**
- To be able to build a **trustful relationship** with the teenagers
- To be able to act in discretion throughout the process
- To be a person who would be **able to support** any teenager who is experiencing Cyber Violence at any level
- To be able to **facilitate the discussion** among teenagers and build a resilient environment within the class or group
- To demonstrate **empathy**

Adopting these principles will help facilitators gain a deeper understanding on how to successfully implement the CyberSafe workshop.

Chapter 5: Assess the Impact of the CyberSafe Toolkit

5.1 Introduction

CyberSafe developed the **Behavioural Impact Assessment framework (BIA)** to evaluate the impact of the CyberSafe toolkit used.

CyberSafe Impact Assessment was aimed to validate the results of trainings conducted in schools. The focus of evaluation was to see if the online tool had an impact on students' behaviours.

We asked the opinion on the statements related to the 5 elements of behavioural change

1. Knowledge/ Awareness
2. Saliency
3. Attitudes
4. Behavioural intentions
5. Social norms

In order to see the tangible and positive outcomes by the use of the CyberSafe toolkit you need to organise a step by step impact assessment mechanism.

5.2 How to Organise CyberSafe Impact Assessment

CyberSafe created the structure that can help organisations using the on-line educational tool to **evaluate the changed behaviours of teenagers involved in the training**.

Follow the 6 steps on the next page if you plan to evaluate the outcomes of your workshops.

1. Before carrying out the workshops, conduct an **information session** with professionals working with children. During the information session, present the education programme and online tool to teachers.
2. Before implementing the trainings, gather the [authorisation letter](#) from the targeted setting if needed, in order to be entitled to assess the setting (schools, sport clubs, youth clubs etc)
3. Bear in mind that the **consent** will be required for students' involvement in the workshops prior to the event. Depending on local context, the consent letter might be asked from parents or students themselves.
4. At the beginning of the workshops, ask participants to fill out the [Pre Questionnaire](#) before the activity
5. After the workshop, use the [Post Questionnaire](#) to gather the responses from participants so to measure the immediate change of the participants' opinions.
6. The results of pre and post questionnaires should be analysed by the facilitator comparing responses before and after the workshops.

If the Facilitator is willing to analyse in depth the results and build new activities (scenarios on the tool) then it is strongly advised to contact the focal person at the University of Tartu, as well as with the country CyberSafe focal organisation.

The facilitators who will be familiar with the CyberSafe Tool use are strongly advised to communicate themselves, and with the CyberSafe country focal organisation.

5.3 Result

The partnership worked together to educate 990 teenagers on Cyber VAWG in 12 schools and 1 sport setting via 43 pilot trainings during 2020–2021.

As a result, we found that some aspects of the behavioural change measurement framework were affected by the trainings conducted with the teenagers using the CyberSafe Online Tool.

	total number of pilots	n of educational and sport institutions involved	students involved
Estonia	3	3	71
Greece	23	3	483
Italy	13	3	269
UK	4	4	167
Total	43	13	990

Out of 5 elements of behavioural change, we observed the positive change in all of them but the most positively affected statements were on the **salience, attitudes** to Cyber VAWG.

Attitudes

- Our research showed that the survivors of the cyber VAWG are the ones blamed by society. Bystanders refrain from helping, and blaming the survivors becomes the facet of moral disengagement. Breaking this pattern was one of the main achievements of the CyberSafe online education tool¹.
- After the training, 148 participants of CyberSafe training agreed with the statement, “It is not a victims fault when they are bullied and pressured to do sexual things in return of the favour”.

70.3 % (n104 off 148) strongly agreed with the statement “It is not a victims fault when they are bullied and pressured to do sexual things in return of the favour”, after attending the CyberSafe Training

1 Koehler, C., & Weber, M. (2018). “Do I really need to help?!” Perceived severity of cyberbullying, victim blaming, and bystanders’ willingness to help the victim. *Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace*, 12(4), Article 4. <https://doi.org/10.5817/CP2018-4-4>

Saliency

- Studies showed that teenagers with a low level of empathy are more likely to abuse online². Better perspective on what survivors of cyber VAWG are dealing with, helps teenagers to empathise with them.
- After the training, 164 participants agreed with the statement, “It is difficult for victims to leave their exploiter because they love them or are frightened of them”.

72 % (n120 off 164) strongly agreed to the statement “It is difficult for victims to leave their exploiter because they love them or are frightened of them”, after attending the CyberSafe Training

Behavioural change is not a quick or straightforward process. It takes time, and the person needs to be motivated and able to change. CyberSafe online tool is one of the proven ways to make a difference in what teenagers think, believe, and behave regarding cyber VAWG.

Learn more about online violence and access the CyberSafe for more information:

www.stoponlineviolence.eu

2 Šincek, D., Duvnjak, I., & Tomašić-Humer, J. (2020). Empathy and gender effects on cyber-violence among Croatian youth. *Psihologija*, 53(4), 377-392.



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Women's Support and
Information Center

There is a way out of violence!



International Child
Development Initiatives



University of Ljubljana
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