



Freie Universität Berlin



STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
A College of Queen's University Belfast



Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON



blurred lives PROJECT

A Cross-National, Co-Participatory Exploration Of Cyberbullying,
Young People And Socio-Economic Disadvantage.

COMIC BOOK

Extended Intellectual Output 2

**Antonella Brighi, Consuelo Mameli, Annalisa Guarini, Damiano Menin,
Trijntje Völlink, Roy Willems, Herbert Scheithauer, Nora Fiedler, Noel
Purdy, Jayne Hamilton, Anne Rowan, Peter K. Smith, & Catherine Culbert**

Cite this report as:

Brighi, A., Mameli, C., Guarini, A., Menin, D., Völlink, T., Willems, R. A., Scheithauer, H., Fiedler, N., Purdy, N., Hamilton, J., Rowan, A., Smith, P.K., & Culbert, C. (2019) *Comic Book (Extended Intellectual Output 2 of Blurred Lives Project: a Cross-National Co-Participatory Exploration of Cyberbullying, Young People and Socio-Economic Disadvantage)*. Belfast: Stranmillis University College. Available online at: <https://www.ou.nl/web/blurred-lives/resources>

A brief introduction to the blurred lives project

Welcome to this resource designed for *pupils* by young people across Europe as part of the *Blurred Lives Project* - a cross-national, co-participatory exploration of cyberbullying, young people and socio-economic disadvantage.

The *Blurred Lives Project* focuses on the online experiences of 14-16 year olds in schools in disadvantaged urban areas in Northern Ireland, England, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands and aims to facilitate pupil voice through the creation of resources for teachers, pupils, parents and social networking providers.

The two-year project (2017-2019) is funded by Erasmus+ under KA2 Strategic Partnerships for School Education, and is led by a team of international experts with a wealth of experience of addressing bullying in schools: Dr Noel Purdy, Stranmillis University College, Belfast; Prof Peter K. Smith, Goldsmiths, University of London; Prof. Dr. Herbert Scheithauer, Freie Universität Berlin; Prof Antonella Brighi / Dr Consuelo Mameli, University of Bologna; and Dr. Trijntje Völlink, Open University of the Netherlands.

In the first phase of the project an online survey was completed by a minimum of 500 pupils in 5+ schools in each country, and explored pupils' online access and negative experiences. Pupils were first invited to provide background demographic information and to detail the nature and extent of their regular online activity. They were then asked to describe a nasty or unpleasant online experience that had happened to them personally over the past couple of months, to indicate who they had reported it to (if anyone) and what happened as a result. They were also asked to describe a nasty online experience that had happened to someone else they know well, and to describe anything nasty or unpleasant that they had done themselves to someone online over the past couple of months. Finally, the survey invited the young people to provide suggestions as to how teachers, parents/carers and friends could help more.

The second phase aimed to provide up-to-date resources for teachers, pupils and parent/carers, and make important recommendations to Social Networking Providers, building on ideas from the pupils themselves. This was done through a combination of Sequential Focus Groups, and Quality Circles, carried out intensively with two classes of 14-16 year old pupils in each country. The first Sequential Focus Group was used to present some of the findings of the survey and to explore pupils' online experiences in more qualitative detail. There followed a series of Quality Circles where pupils worked in groups with experienced facilitators to create original resources for particular audiences: teachers, pupils, parents/carers and social networking providers. The number and length of each session varied between schools and countries, depending on school timetables and availability of time.

However in each case pupils were encouraged and empowered to work together (often outside normal friendship groups) with a common purpose to design appropriate and targeted guidance and/or resources, and to share their resources with others in their class or year group. The resulting resources comprised a rich variety of formats including posters, leaflets, videos, comic strips and presentations. The final two Sequential Focus Groups provided an opportunity for the pupils to provide feedback on the first draft of the resources (after which minor revisions could be made) and on their experiences of participating in the Quality Circles.

The original resources will be made available on the [Blurred Lives Project website](https://www.ou.nl/web/blurred-lives/project) * and on the on the [Erasmus+ Project Results Platform](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/) °. Each partner country is also hosting one or more dissemination events in 2019 for participating schools, parents, teachers and key educational stakeholders.

* <https://www.ou.nl/web/blurred-lives/project>

° <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/>

Specifically, this book contains the comics produced by the students involved in the Quality Circles. Each story is aimed at raising awareness among young people of your age regarding the problem of cyberbullying and offers tools to combat it.

What should I do with this comic book?

This comic book focuses on **Cyberbullying**. It was created starting from the ideas of young people from five European countries and is addressed to young people of your age.

The solutions these young proposed are their own ideas, thus you may not agree and have other solutions in mind. The reflective questions you will find are supposed to help you to reflect on this problem. In addition to comics, you will find useful information regarding the various forms cyberbullying can take and the strategies you can use to prevent and combat this phenomenon.

You can read this book alone or, even better, with one or more friends. You could also show this book to some of your teachers and suggest that they use this resource during school classes.

Here is an **Index** of the comics you will find in this book (in the order: title, Country, school and city):

- ❖ All or Nothing (England, St. Thomas More Language College, Chelsea)
- ❖ Snap Attack (England, St. Thomas More Language College, Chelsea)
- ❖ Blue Hearts (England, Trinity Church of England School, Belvedere)
- ❖ Stop Cyberbullying - Let's make an Instastory! (Germany, Konrad-Wachsmann school, Berlin)
- ❖ Everyone can do something - Stop cyberbullying! (Germany, Gustave-Eiffel school, Berlin)
- ❖ We're like books. Who goes beyond the cover? (Italy, IeFP FOMAL Fondazione Opera Madonna del Lavoro, Bologna)
- ❖ Bullying according to us (Italy, IIS Belluzzi-Fioravanti, Bologna)
- ❖ NO to bullies (Italy, IPSAS Aldrovandi-Rubbiani, Bologna)
- ❖ The Anonymous Moles (The Netherlands, Helicon VMBO, Eindhoven)
- ❖ Ask for Help if You're being Bullied (The Netherlands, Helicon VMBO, Eindhoven)

Acknowledgements

The material and resources collected in this book are the result of many hours of collaborative work to which many people have contributed. So...

Thanks to all the schools and students who actively participated in this project.

Thanks to the team from Northern Ireland: Noel Purdy, Jayne Hamilton and Anne Rowan.

Thanks to the team from England: Peter K. Smith, Catherine Culbert, Binbin Gu, Susanne Robinson and Emma King.

Thanks to the team from Germany: Herbert Scheithauer, Nora Fiedler, Madita Elise Siddique, Maria Stoykova and Annegret Roschlau.

Thanks to the team from Bologna, which took the lead in creating this comic book: Antonella Brighi, Consuelo Mameli, Annalisa Guarini, Damiano Menin, Laura Menabò, Felicia Roga, Luana Fusaro, Sandra Nicoletti, Margherita Baldi and Carla Salvatore.

Thanks to the team from The Netherlands: Trijntje Völlink and Roy Willems.

NOTES

The comics you will find in this book have been redrawn, starting from the drawings made by the students, by a young professional cartoonist, *Roberto d'Agnano* (from Italy) working for the agency *The Best Solutions Group SRL*.

On the Blurred Lives website you can find the original comics as they were designed by the young people involved in the project.



Cyberbullying: what does it mean?

**Most of the information you'll find in
this section has been provided by
students from
Belfast, Northern Ireland**

What is cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is bullying done online (for example, through the use of social networks). "Cyberbullying" means any form of aggression, harassment, blackmail, insult, defamation (i.e. the action of damaging the good reputation of someone), identity theft, alteration, unlawful use of personal data, carried out on the internet. Unlike face-to-face bullying, it is not necessary for attacks to be repeated several times; even a unique online attack can lead to potentially negative consequences, sometimes very serious.

Data collected within the Blurred Lives project (from a sample of more than 2500 students) indicate that:

- ❖ The 69.5% of young people spend from 3 to 5 hours on the Internet on a usual day;
- ❖ The 24.5% of young people claim to have personally had nasty experiences online;
- ❖ The 32.9% of young people report to have seen or heard of some nasty or unpleasant experiences happening to someone they know well on the Internet.

If you've ever been a victim of cyberbullying, remember: you are not alone!

Cyberbullying can come in many forms. Below are the most common ones:

Flaming means the action of sending a hostile, angry, vulgar and offensive message to one or more people online, privately or publicly. There is talk of *flame war* when a first hostile message is followed by many others, in a sort of virtual fight.

Harassment indicates the repeated sending of hostile messages to one or more people. It differs from flaming because of its repetitive nature.

Cyberstalking is a form of online harassment that includes threats or intimidation.

Denigration consists in sending or publishing harmful, false or cruel materials (e.g. statements, pictures) about one or more people.

Impersonation (making a false profile) means the act of pretending to be someone else in sending or posting material that puts the person in a bad light, or puts him/her in danger.

Outing (dissemination of private information) consists of sending or publishing sensitive, private or embarrassing material concerning a person (e.g. forwarding messages or private images to others).

Who is involved in cyberbullying episodes?

- ☹️ The **cyberbully**: who carries out one of the aggressive online behaviours described above (e.g. harassment, denigration). S/he is often also a victim of online or offline bullying.
- ☹️ The **cybervictim**: who suffers the online aggression. S/he is often also a victim of offline bullying.
- ❖ The **public**. The witnesses of cyberbullying episodes (for example, people reading hostile public posts). Depending on their behaviour, they can qualify as:
 - ☹️ **Bully's helpers**: witnesses taking an active part in the online aggression, for example by teasing or insulting the victim, or by “liking” the bully’s messages or forwarding the message to someone else.
 - 😊 **Defenders of the victim**: witnesses who come to the victim's defence, for example by telling the bullies to stop or reporting the episode.
 - ☹️ **Passive witnesses**: witnesses not taking part, but who with their silence allow the episodes of cyberbullying to continue.



The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing

Albert Einstein



Why do people bully?

There are lots of reasons why some people start bullying or cyberbullying others, including:

- Maybe they haven't learnt to respect difference e.g. race, religion, gender, disability;
- Maybe they haven't learnt how to resolve conflicts peacefully;
- Maybe they have been bullied themselves and they are seeking revenge;
- Maybe they come from homes where they witness violence and aggression and so it seems normal to behave like that.

What are the effects of cyberbullying?

Being a victim of cyberbullying can have serious negative consequences for:

- ❖ Psychological well-being: victims of cyberbullying can feel sad or even depressed.
- ❖ Social well-being: victims of cyberbullying can feel lonely and lose confidence and interest in online and offline relations.
- ❖ Physical health: victims of cyberbullying may have trouble sleeping, headaches or eating problems.
- ❖ School performance: victims of cyberbullying are at risk of disengaging from school life or even dropping out.

Just



stop it!



Comic title

All or Nothing

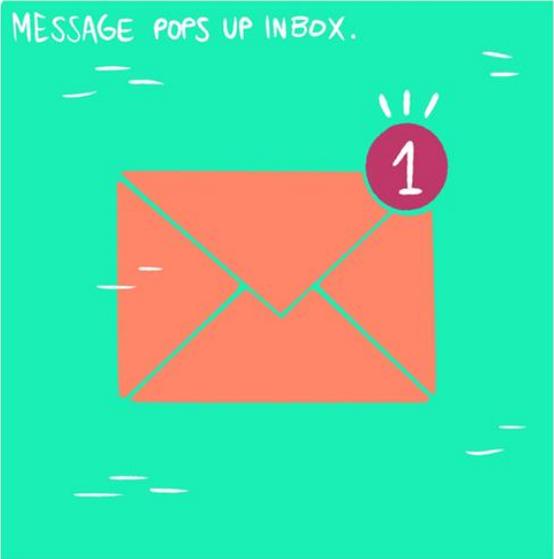
Created by

**Group “Stay Safe and Strong”,
St. Thomas More Language
College (Chelsea, England)**

Stay safe and strong.



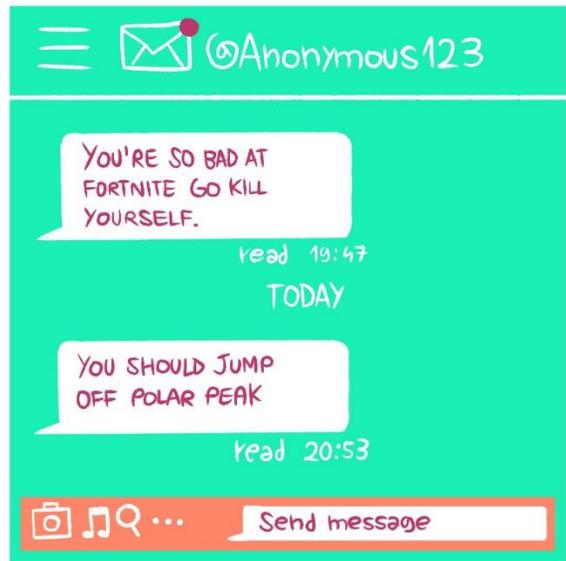
HUNTER SAT AT THE COMPUTER



YOU ARE SO BAD AT FORTNITE, GO AND KILL YOURSELF



THE NEXT DAY POPS UP A FORTNITE MESSAGE.



HUNTER TELLS A TRUSTED ADULT ABOUT WHAT'S GOING ON IN FORTNITE.





Comic title

Snap Attack

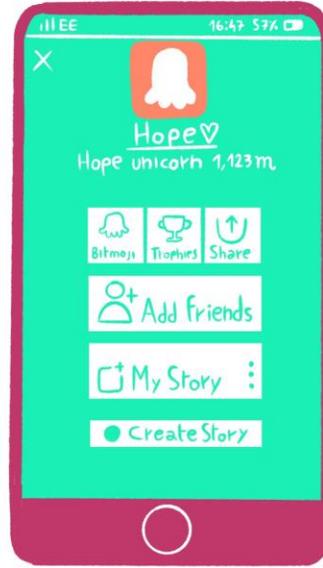
Created by

**Group “Stay Safe and Strong”,
St. Thomas More Language
College (Chelsea, England)**

SNAP attack



DAND'19



HOPE
OPENS
HER
SNAPCHAT
ACCOUNT

Hope_unicorn



HOPE POST A PICTURE OF HERSELF ON SNAPCHAT.

Jake



send nudes

KL x

Tyreece



You are dark, send nudes

OK ❤️

JAKE AND TYREECE RESPOND TO HER SELFIE AND ASK FOR NUDES.

HOPE SEND NUDES.



JACK AND TYREECE EXPOSE THE NUDES.

HOPE'S FRIENDS FIND OUT.



HOPE'S FRIENDS BULLY HER. SHE'S UPSET.

HOPE TELLS HER MUM.



HOPE AND HER MUM COME INTO SCHOOL AND ALERT TEACHERS



TEACHERS BRING THE WHOLE SCHOOL INTO AN ASSEMBLY TO OFFER ADVICE AND EDUCATE THEM



Stay safe and strong.



Comic title

Blue Hearts

Created by

**Group “Blue Hearts”, Trinity
Church of England School
(Belvedere, England)**

Blue Hearts



I'M SO EXCITED TO MOVE HOUSE AND MAKE NEW FRIENDS.

HOPE HAS JUST MOVED TO A NEW HOUSE AND SHE IS EXCITED ABOUT MAKING NEW FRIENDS. HER NEW HOUSE IS A LOT BIGGER BUT IS FAR AWAY AND SHE IS LEAVING ALL HER FRIENDS BEHIND. BUT SHE IS STILL EXCITED.

NEW SCHOOL

THE GIRL MOVED HOUSE SO THEY PUT HER IN A NEW SCHOOL AND SHE FINDS A COUPLE OF FRIENDS. SHE MAKES NEW FRIENDS AND SPEAKS WITH THE HEAD MASTER. SHE HAS HER LESSONS AND AN ASSEMBLY AND THEN IT'S TIME TO COME HOME. SHE TALKS TO FRIENDS AND THEY TALK ABOUT FORTNITE.



SHE IS BEING CALLED NAMES WITHIN GAMES VOICE CHAT SAYING THAT SHE IS RUBBISH AT THE GAME. SHE BLOCKS HER BUT HER "FAKE FRIEND" CARRIES ON CALLING HER NAMES WITH MESSAGE CHAT. AFTERWARDS, SHE SWITCHES OFF THE GAME.



IT'S HER SECOND DAY AT SCHOOL AND A BOY AND A GIRL APPROACH HER. THEY START CALLING HER NAMES AND MAKE HER CRY. THEY CONTINUE WITH THIS DESPITE HER BEING UPSET.





SHE IS REALLY SAD WHILST SHE GOES TO THE ASSEMBLY AND SHE IS SO SAD SHE DOESN'T WANT TO WATCH IT. HOWEVER, THEN SHE HEARS "CYBERBULLYING" AND STARTS TO PAY ATTENTION. THIS MAKES HER THINK AGAIN ABOUT SUICIDE BUT SHE IS STILL SAD AND CRYING BECAUSE SHE DOESN'T THINK ANYTHING CAN HELP ANYMORE. SHE STOPS LISTENING AND CRIES FOR THE REST OF THE TIME.

HOPE IS IN THE TOILET AND SHE IS CONTEMPLATING SUICIDE. SHE IS SITTING ON THE TOILET FOR THE WHOLE LUNCH, THINKING ABOUT HER LIFE AND WHAT IT HOLDS NEXT.



HOPE HAS GONE TO THE EXTERNAL GROUP ASSEMBLY. SHE IS STILL THINKING ABOUT THE PHONE CALL SHE HAD ON THE TOILET. THE PLAY THAT IS GOING ON IS ABOUT CYBERBULLYING.



SHE FEELS REALLY SAD AGAIN AND HAS NO HOPE. SHE PULLS OUT THE COMIC BOOK AND READS IT. SHE FINDS THINGS IN THE COMIC THAT SHE CAN RELATE TO. THEN SHE READS ABOUT SOMEONE'S EXPERIENCE OF BEING CYBERBULLYIED AND REALLY LIKES THE WAY THE PERSON GETS OVER IT.

SHE WALKS OUT OF THE ASSEMBLY AND REALIZES THAT SHE IS NOT ALONE. SHE FORGETS ABOUT COMMITTING SUICIDE AND STARTS TO FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE PARTS OF HER LIFE BUT THEN SHE NOTICES PEOPLE MURMUR ABOUT HER.



END.

Messages from English young people

The plots of comics in a nutshell

All or Nothing

In this comic, Hunter is severely insulted online for how he plays Fortnite, and someone even goes so far as to tell him to kill himself. At first, Hunter is very sad, he doesn't want to talk to anyone, but the insults continue. At that point Hunter decides to ask for help to an adult he trusts who gives him very useful advice on how to defend himself online.

Snap Attack

In this comic, Hope uploads a photo of herself on her Snapchat profile. Two peers write to her privately and ask her to send them some pictures of her naked. Hope, naively, sends them pictures in which she is undressed. The two boys share online the pictures, making them public. The photos also come to Hope's classmates, who insult her and make fun of her both online and offline. At that point, Hope reports the incident to her mother, who immediately decides to talk to the teachers. At the end, a school meeting on bullying and cyberbullying takes place.

Blue Hearts

In this comic, Hope moves and changes schools. She is very excited about it, and she can't wait to make new friends. After the first classes, at home, Hope starts playing Fortnite but, as she plays like a beginner, she receives several insults online. Even at school, things go differently from how she imagined, and in the classroom she is teased. Sad and depressed, Hope thinks about suicide: all the things happening to her, even the school assembly, make her think to cyberbullying. Eventually, Hope tries to think of the positive things in her life, realizes that she isn't alone and that there are several resources, like this comic, which can help her in dealing with what she's going through.

Let's reflect!

What types of cyberbullying have been represented in the English comics?

Alone, in pairs or with a group of friends, try to identify which types of cyberbullying are represented in the comics drawn by English students.

What emotions do cybervictims feel?

Alone, in pairs or with a group of friends, try to identify which emotions are felt by the cybervictims represented in the comics drawn by the English students.

Some ways to deal with cyberbullying: suggestions from English young people

Ignore the cyberbully. In the comic “All or nothing”, Hunter, after being insulted for how he plays Fortnite, simply does nothing and decides not to talk to anyone about it. This strategy can be effective in cases where the online negative behaviour is private and occasional. However, this is not the case for our protagonist Hunter, who instead continues to receive insults.

Look at the glass half full. In the comic “Blue Hearts”, Hope tries to defend herself from sadness by thinking of the positive aspects in her life. This "cognitive" strategy (that is, a strategy linked to our mind and thinking) can be very useful. In fact, it pushes us to acknowledge that our everyday life is not just made up of problems, but of many other beautiful things we care about.

Use the resources offered by your school. In the comic “Blue Hearts”, Hope finds comfort in a school assembly about the issue of cyberbullying: she understands that she is not the only victim of online aggressions. Schools often offer programs or meetings against bullying and cyberbullying. Ask your teachers to tell you about the initiatives or programs in your school.

Talk to someone about it! In the comics “All or Nothing” and “Snap Attack”, the characters at some point decide to tell an adult their problem. Asking for help (from a friend, a trusted adult, a parent or a teacher) is a very effective strategy against cyberbullying. In fact, when we are victims of cyberbullying, we are often so sad or angry that it is difficult to think clearly. Other times, the problem is so serious that we simply can't do it alone.



Block the cyberbully. In the comic “All or nothing”, Hunter, at the suggestion of an adult, blocks the contact who sent him offensive messages and in this way prevents him from sending other bad messages. This strategy is easy and useful as well. If you don't know how to block a contact, ask a friend or an adult you trust, or search on Google for how to do it: you'll surely find suggestions.



Close an account and create a new one. In the comic “All or nothing”, Hunter, at the suggestion of an adult, closes his account and creates a new one. As for "block the cyberbully", this strategy can be effective in preventing the cyberbully from sending other insults.



Comic title

Stop Cyberbullying Let's make an Instastory!

**Created by
Group "Nokia", Konrad-
Wachsmann school
(Berlin, Germany)**

WHEN THE TEACHER INTRODUCED A NEW TASK...



BUT AFTER DISCUSSING THE ISSUE...



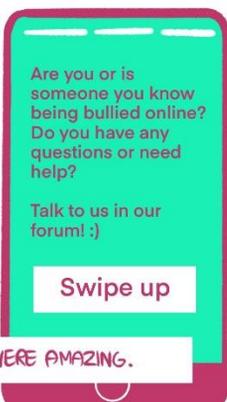
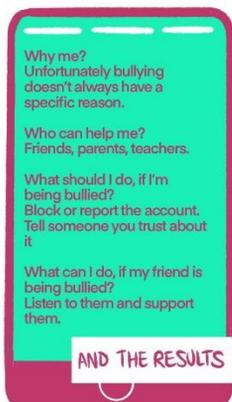
...THE STUDENTS FOUND A SOLUTION.



THEY GOT CREATIVE...



IN FACT, IF SOMEONE WAS IN NEED OF HELP...



AND THE RESULTS WERE AMAZING.



...THEY DIDN'T FEEL SO ALONE ANYMORE.

Because help was now just a click away.



Comic title

**Everyone can do
something - Stop
cyberbullying!**

**Created by
Group “Dragon Cookies”,
Gustave-Eiffel school
(Berlin, Germany)**

ELLA TOOK A PICTURE, DECIDED IT LOOKED GOOD AND POSTED IT ON INSTAGRAM



A FEW HOURS LATER, SHE FOUND HATEFUL COMMENTS BEING POSTED UNDER THE IMAGE.



SHE DID NOT HESITATE AND DELETED ALL THE HATEFUL COMMENTS UNDER THE POST. WITH A SAD FACE SHE WENT TO BED AND TRIED TO FORGET ABOUT IT. BUT WHEN SHE WENT TO SCHOOL THE NEXT DAY, EVERYONE WAS LAUGHING AT HER AND SOME EVEN INSULTED HER.



SAD AND VERY CONFUSED SHE WENT HOME. WHEN SHE ARRIVED IN HER ROOM, SHE LOOKED AT THE POST AGAIN AND NOTICED EVEN MORE HATE COMMENTS BEING POSTED.



THEN SHE DELETED THE PICTURE COMPLETELY.



AFTER A FEW MINUTES SHE CALLED HER FRIEND DANIELE, WHO ADVISED HER TO JUST REPORT THE BULLIES.



SHE REPORTED THE ACCOUNTS.

paul_loco080_:
you are so ugly

It_urbanec:
Little sht

rusor_LUK9S:
daughter of a whore

IN SCHOOL THE NEXT DAY, ELLA NOTICES THAT ALMOST EVERYONE HAS A SCREENSHOT OF THE INSTA-POST. THE STUDENTS CONTINUE TO SHARE THE PICTURE VIA WHATTSAPP.



ELLA CALLS DANIELLE ONCE MORE ASKING FOR ADVICE. THIS TIME DANIELLE RECOMMENDS INVOLVING HER PARENTS AND THE POLICE.



ELLA GOES TO THE POLICE STATION WITH HER MOM AND REPORTS THE INCIDENT.



IN ORDER TO HELP ELLA PROCESS HER EXPERIENCE, HER MUM IS TAKING HER TO SEE A THERAPIST.



END.

Messages from German young people

The plots of comics in a nutshell

Stop Cyberbullying - Let's make an Instastory!

In this story, a teacher proposes to his students to create a comic about cyberbullying. The pupils do not actually like this idea: today, there are not many young people reading comics! So, the students decide to create an Instastory, with smart tips to face cyberbullying. After a while, one of the girls in the class, a victim of bullying, sees online the contents created by her classmates, and uses these tips to deal with her problems.

Everyone can do something - Stop cyberbullying!

After posting a picture of her on Instagram, Ella receives hateful messages and even at school people laugh at her and insult her. Ella deletes the picture from Instagram and reports the bullies. But the distribution of the picture is unstoppable: it has been shared by screenshots via WhatsApp. At the suggestion of her friend Danielle, Ella asks her parents for help, and they decide to report what happened to the police. This experience was very painful for Ella, who with her mother asks a therapist for help.

Let's reflect!

What types of cyberbullying have been represented in the German comics?

Alone, in pairs or with a group of friends, try to identify which types of cyberbullying are represented in the comics drawn by German students.

What emotions do cybervictims feel?

Alone, in pairs or with a group of friends, try to identify which emotions are felt by the cybervictims represented in the comics drawn by the German students.

Some ways to deal with cyberbullying: suggestions from German young people

Block / report the cyberbully. In the comic “Stop Cyberbullying”, one of the tips offered in the Instastory is blocking and/or reporting the contact. These strategies are easy and useful, and prevent the cyberbully from harming anyone else. If you don't know how to block or report a contact, ask a friend or an adult you trust, or try searching on Google how to do it: you'll surely find suggestions.



Talk to someone about it! In the comic “Stop Cyberbullying”, one of the tips offered in the Instastory is getting help from friends, parents and teachers. In the comic “Everyone can do something”, Ella talks about what's happening to her friend Danielle, and then to her parents. Asking for help (from a friend, a trusted adult, a parent or a teacher) is a very effective strategy against cyberbullying. In fact, when we are victims of cyberbullying, we are often so sad or angry that it is difficult to think clearly. Other times, the problem is so serious that we simply can't do it alone.



Use the resources offered by the Internet. In the comic “Stop Cyberbullying”, one of the tips offered in the Instastory is taking a look at online forums about cyberbullying. Indeed, online you can find many resources to learn more about this phenomenon, know how to combat it and even share or compare your experiences. But be careful: websites are not all alike, and some are better than others. Ask an adult you trust to recommend reliable websites or forums about cyberbullying.



Don't stand by and watch: offer your help! In the comic “Stop Cyberbullying”, one of the tips offered in the Instastory is listening and supporting friends who have been cyberbullied. That's exactly what Danielle does for Ella, in the comic “Everyone can do something”. We should not remain indifferent to bullying and cyberbullying: we must act, even when we are not the victims. Sometimes, having a friend to tell our problems to can really make a difference!



Ask for help ... from an expert. In the comic “Everyone can do something”, Ella eventually turns to a therapist for processing her cyberbullying experience. After a bad experience, sometimes it happens that the help given by friends or parents is simply not enough to "get better". In these cases, it is perfectly normal (and smart, too!) to ask an expert for help.





Comic title

**We're like books.
Who goes beyond
the cover?**

**Created by
Group "Friends", Fomal
school (Bologna, Italy)**



ANONYMOUS

HI... I SEE YOU AT SCHOOL EVERYDAY.

REALLY?

YES.

WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

I'LL TELL YOU LATER ♥
TELL ME SOMETHING ABOUT YOU!

WHAT CAN I TELL YOU...
I LOVE MY MOTHER,
I LOVE CATS, I ENJOY
BEING ALONE.





LOOK, KEVIN, THEY DID A FB PAGE ABOUT YOU. I'M SORRY.



OH NO... THAT'S WHY EVERYBODY'S LAUGHING AT ME. WHAT CAN I DO?

CLAIRE, I'M AFRAID, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.



KEVIN, YOU HAVE TO SPEAK WITH THE TEACHER

DON'T WORRY, I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT!



THEY MADE A FB GROUP AGAINST KEVIN.

THANKS CLAIRE, YOU WERE VERY BRAVE! NOW I'LL HAVE A MEETING WITH THE PARENTS.



CLAIRE PERSUADES KEVIN TO TALK WITH MICHAEL.

NO! KEVIN STOP!

EXPULSED MICHAEL

DANO '19



Comic title

Bullying according to us

Created by
Group “Shumai”, IIS
Belluzzi-Fioravanti school
(Bologna, Italy)



AHAH!
WHAT A
DOUCHEBAG!!
IT'S TOO
FUNNY!



WHAT'S
GOING
ON??

WOW,
NICE PICTURE
FOR A JUNKIE!





GUYS, TELL ME WHO DID IT!!!

SLAM

WELL, HE DESERVED IT! AHAAH

WHERE'S CHRISTIAN? HAVE YOU SEEN HIM TODAY?

AHAHAH!

I THINK HE DIDN'T COME TO SCHOOL AFTER WHAT'S HAPPENED.

HI CHRIS, I SAW WHAT HAPPENED, I'M SORRY. CAN I HELP YOU SOMEHOW?

THANKS REALLY, BUT I DON'T NEED HELP.

DON'T BE STUPID! YOU HAVE TO FIGHT BACK BUT IN A POSITIVE WAY. I'LL HELP YOU EVEN IF YOU DON'T WANT ME TO.

BUT I FEEL SO ASHAMED AND HURT!

TRY TALKING ABOUT IT WITH YOUR PARENTS.

DANO '19



CHRISTIAN'S PARENTS DECIDED TO CONTACT THE PRINCIPAL AND THE POLICE.



THE TEACHER TALKS TO THE CLASS, EXPLAINING HOW THE FACT IS SERIOUS.



THE POLICE FINDS OUT THAT THE ONE WHO POSTED THE VIDEO IS GIOVANNI, CLASSMATE AND OLD FRIEND OF CHRISTIAN'S.





Comic title

No to bullies

Created by

**Group “The mouths of
truth”, Aldrovandi**

**Rubbiani vocational school
(Bologna, Italy)**



WE NEED TO TALK TO THE TEACHER.



THE TEACHER SPEAKS TO THE CLASS ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED.



I UNDERSTAND IT WAS WRONG. I'M SORRY WE'VE HURT YOU.

Messages from Italian young people

The plots of comics in a nutshell

We're like books. Who goes beyond the cover?

In this comic, Kevin chats with an anonymous user to whom he reveals personal information. The next day, at school, he is teased by everyone, and he discovers from his friend Claire that someone has created a Facebook page about him. Claire convinces Kevin to talk to the teacher, who has a meeting with his parents at school. Kevin and Claire discover that the culprit (the cyberbully) is Michael; they go to talk to him, but the discussion degenerates into a brawl. In the final scene, Michael receives the expulsion letter from the school.

Bullying according to us

In this comic, an anonymous user uploads on social networks an embarrassing image of Christian, who is teased both online and at school. Aldo, one of Christian's friend, offers him some help. Initially Christian says he doesn't need it, but then, encouraged by his friend, he decides to talk about the cyberbullying episode with his parents. They talk to the school principal and contact the Police. The Police identify the cyberbully, named Giovanni, who admits his mistake and apologizes.

No to bullies

In this comic, in the school toilets, some female students shove a girl, record her while she is crying and upload the video on social networks. Meanwhile, other girls watch, indifferent or amused, and only one girl tries to stop them. On social networks, the video is commented on by other young people, who insult and make fun of the victim. The girl who tried to defend the victim convinces her to talk with the teacher, who discusses the episode with the whole class. The bullies understand that what they did was wrong and apologize.

Let's reflect!

What types of cyberbullying have been represented in the Italian comics?

Alone, in pairs or with a group of friends, try to identify which types of cyberbullying are represented in the comics drawn by Italian students.

What emotions do cybervictims feel?

Alone, in pairs or with a group of friends, try to identify which emotions are felt by the cybervictims represented in the comics drawn by the Italian students.

Some ways to deal with cyberbullying: suggestions from Italian young people

Respond directly to nasty comments. In the comic “We’re like books. Who goes beyond the cover?”, Kevin goes to talk to the bully after discovering his identity. This strategy, however, fuels the conflict and can lead to serious consequences, such as a fight. In this case, only the bully is expelled from the school. But are we sure that Kevin wouldn't have been expelled too?



Ignore the cyberbullying. In the comic “Bullying according to us”, Christian at first merely ignores the nasty comments received. This strategy can be effective in cases where the online bullying behaviour is private and occasional. However, this is not the case for our protagonist Christian, who instead continues to receive insults.

Talk about it with someone. In all three the Italian comics, the protagonists, recommended by a friend, decide to tell an adult their problem. Asking for help (from a friend, a trusted adult, a parent or a teacher) is a very effective strategy against cyberbullying. In fact, when we are victims of cyberbullying, we are often so sad or angry that it is difficult to think clearly. Other times, the problem is so serious that we simply can't do it alone.



Don't stand by and watch! In all three Italian comics, the role of friends is fundamental. In the comic “Bullying according to us”, Aldo almost forces his friend Christian to get help and talk to his parents. Even in the “No to bullies” comic, the victim's friend at first defends her, then pushes her to turn to a teacher. In the comic “We’re like books. Who goes beyond the cover?”, Claire sees her friend Kevin in difficulty and, taking the situation in hand, reports what happened to a teacher. These three examples teach us that we should not remain indifferent to bullying and cyberbullying: we must act, even when we are not the victims.





Comic title

The Anonymous Moles

Created by

Helicon VMBO school

(Eindhoven, The Netherlands)

The Anonymous MOLES



IT WAS A COMPLETELY NORMAL DAY ON MAJOR MOLE LANE.



WHEN HARRY WAS GAMING AS USUAL.



BUT SUDDENLY THE WEATHER CHANGED.



THERE WAS AN ELECTRICITY CUT AND ONLY HIS OLD TABLET IN THE ATTIC HAD ANY POWER.



HE WENT ON TO THE ANONYMOUS MOLE WECHAT, AND HE READ HAPPY MESSAGES FROM NOAH. THIS DID SOMETHING TO HIM. IT REMINDED HIM OF HIS FORMER SELF AND CAUSED A KIND OF **SHORT CIRCUIT**

IN HIS HEAD. WHAT SHOULD HE DO? HE DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO RESPOND. SLOWLY BUT SURELY HE STARTED TYPING A HATE MESSAGE. LIFELESS, HE PRESSED THE SEND BUTTON, AND SENT HIS FIRST MESSAGE TO HIS FIRST VICTIM.

NOAH READ IT IMMEDIATELY AND WAS FURIOUS.



TYPE TYPE



HE THUMPED HIS KEYBOARD AND SENT BACK ANGRY MESSAGES TO DEFEND HIMSELF.

IT GOT OUT OF HAND IMMEDIATELY



AND BECAME A MAJOR ISSUE

HARRY HAD FOUND A SECOND VICTIM.



EMMA WAS BUSY THAT DAY WHEN SHE RECEIVED THE HATE MESSAGE.



MOMENTS LATER...

HOW SAD! I DON'T KNOW WHO SENT THIS. THIS PERSON DOESN'T DESERVE MY ATTENTION.



WITHOUT RESPONDING, SHE BLOCKED THE SENDER. SHE ALSO TOLD HER PARENTS ABOUT IT.



HER PARENTS THOUGHT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THIS PERSON WOULD NOT CREATE ANY MORE VICTIMS AND SO FOUND OUT WHO IT WAS.



HARRY AND HIS MOTHER HAD A LITTLE CHAT.



HARRY STOPPED HIS FOOLISH BEHAVIOUR AND PEACE WAS RESTORED TO MAJOR MOLE LANE. AND EVERYBODY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER.



Comic title

Ask for Help if You're being Bullied

Created by

Helicon VMBO school

(Eindhoven, The Netherlands)



NEWSFLASH

After a two-day search the body of Sarah Smith is found in Shamrock lake. The police suspect suicide.

Further investigation is still needed. So far, it is assumed that this is a case of cyberbullying.



Messages from Dutch young people

The plots of comics in a nutshell

The Anonymous Moles

In this comic, Harry gets bored because he can't play video games as usual. He decides to spend time insulting other young people online. The first victim (Noah) reacts angrily, and this triggers a heated discussion between the two. Mara, the second victim of Harry's insults, ignores him and reports what happened to her parents, who contact Harry's mother. The cyberbully's mother argues with him explaining that his behaviour is not acceptable.

Ask for Help if You're being Bullied

In this comic, Sarah is teased and insulted on social networks and at school. The story has two alternative endings. In the first, Sarah does not talk to anyone and decides to commit suicide. In the second, Sarah reveals to her mother that she is a victim of cyberbullying; they go together to the police, who solve the problem by directly contacting the bullies.

Let's reflect!

What types of cyberbullying have been represented in the Dutch comics?

Alone, in pairs or with a group of friends, try to identify which types of cyberbullying are represented in the comics drawn by Dutch students.

What emotions do cybervictims feel?

Alone, in pairs or with a group of friends, try to identify which emotions are felt by the cybervictims represented in the comics drawn by the Dutch students.

Some ways to deal with cyberbullying: suggestions from Dutch young people

A blue icon of a hand with the index finger pointing downwards, indicating a negative or warning action.

Respond to bullying. In the comic “The Anonymous Moles”, Noah reacts angrily and directly responds to Harry’s nasty comments. Maybe this strategy is quite effective in reducing the emotional impact of the attacks received. But be careful: doing so feeds the online and offline conflict, as shown in the comic, and risks making things worse.

Ignore the cyberbully. In the comic “The Anonymous Moles”, Emma at first merely ignores the nasty comments received. However, it is her decision to ask her parents for help that resolves the situation, both for her and for other potential victims. Moreover, Emma shows a strength that unfortunately not all the victims of cyberbullying have. In the first ending of the comic “Ask for help if you’re being bullied”, for example, Sarah cannot bear the comments received, she does not talk with anyone about her problem, and eventually commits suicide.

A blue icon of a hand with the thumb pointing upwards, indicating a positive or approval action.

Talk to someone about it! In the comics “The Anonymous Moles” and “Ask for help if you’re being bullied”, Emma and Sarah at some point decide to tell an adult their problem. Asking for help (from a friend, a trusted adult, a parent or a teacher) is a very effective strategy against cyberbullying. In fact, when we are victims of cyberbullying, we are often so sad or angry that it is difficult to think clearly. Other times, the problem is so serious that we simply can't do it alone.

Self harm and suicide prevention information

In the English comic “Blue Hearts” and in the Dutch comic “Ask for help if you're being bullied”, the victims are so sad that they get to think about suicide.

In front of particularly stressful and negative life events, such as cyberbullying, a person may feel so hopeless to hurt himself/herself or to think that life is meaningless. What a thorny topics ... Let's talk about them!

Self-harm corresponds to self-inflicted injuries of body tissue (cutting, burning, scratching, or hitting body parts), without the intent to commit suicide.

Suicide is the act of intentionally causing one's own death.

If **you** have recently acted self-injurious behaviours, or if you are frequently thinking about suicide, remember: this is not your unique option. Don't keep this “secret”, there is nothing wrong in feeling bad. Talk to an adult or a friend you trust and ask him/her for help. There is always a solution, even for the most complex and painful problems.

If you know (or strongly suspect) that **one of your friends** has recently acted self-injurious behaviours, or that s/he is thinking about suicide, remember: you can make a difference by supporting him/her. Here are some tips for you:

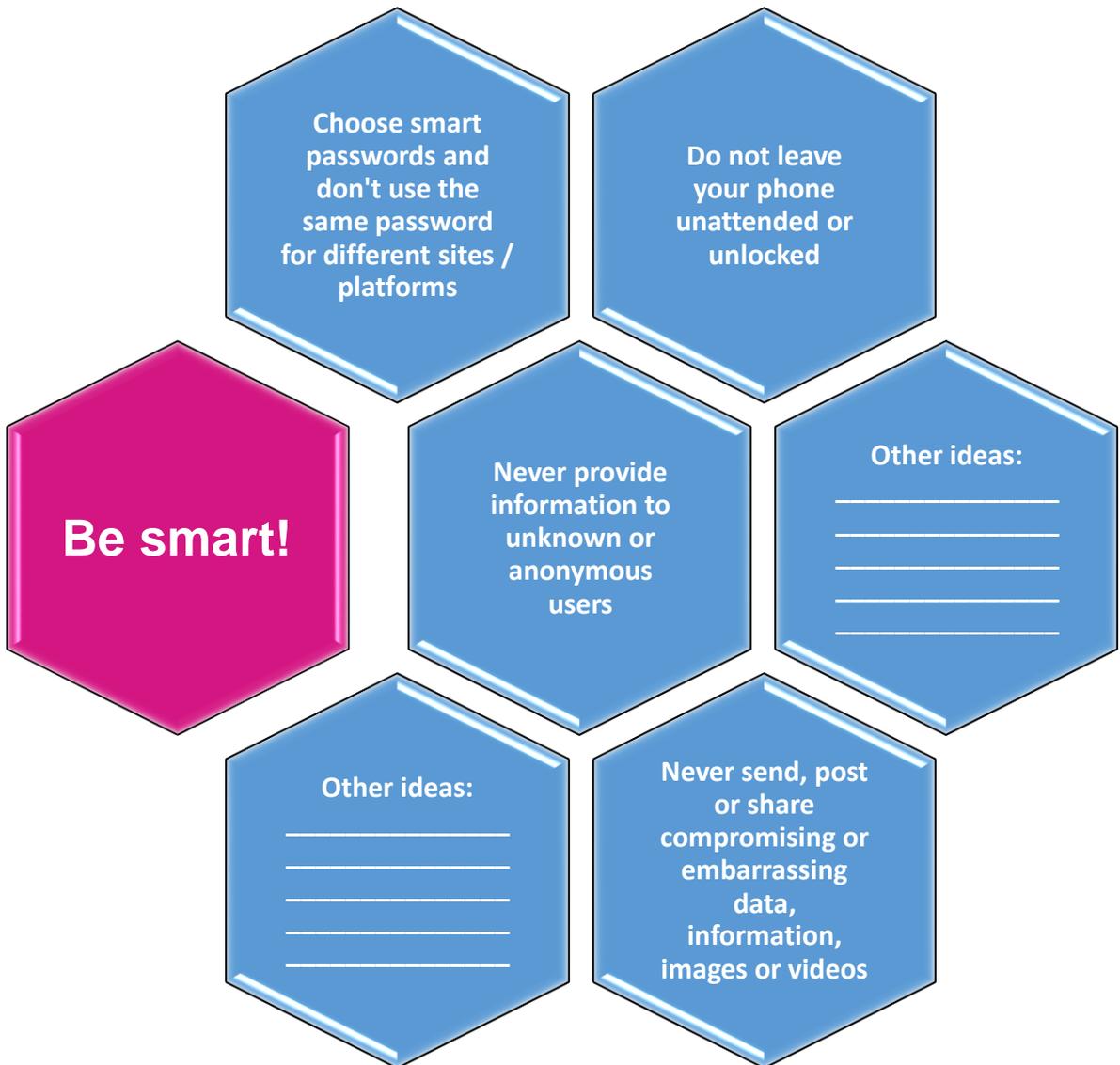
- Do not judge your friend, and do not minimize his/her problems with sentences such as “you're exaggerating” or “everything will be fine”.
- Listen to your friend and support him/her.
- Don't keep the secret, even if your friend asked you to. Self harm and suicide ideation are very serious issues and you can't handle the situation alone, no matter how smart you are. Seek help from an adult you trust (a parent, a teacher or a school counsellor), and do it as soon as possible.

Cyberbullying: #whattodo

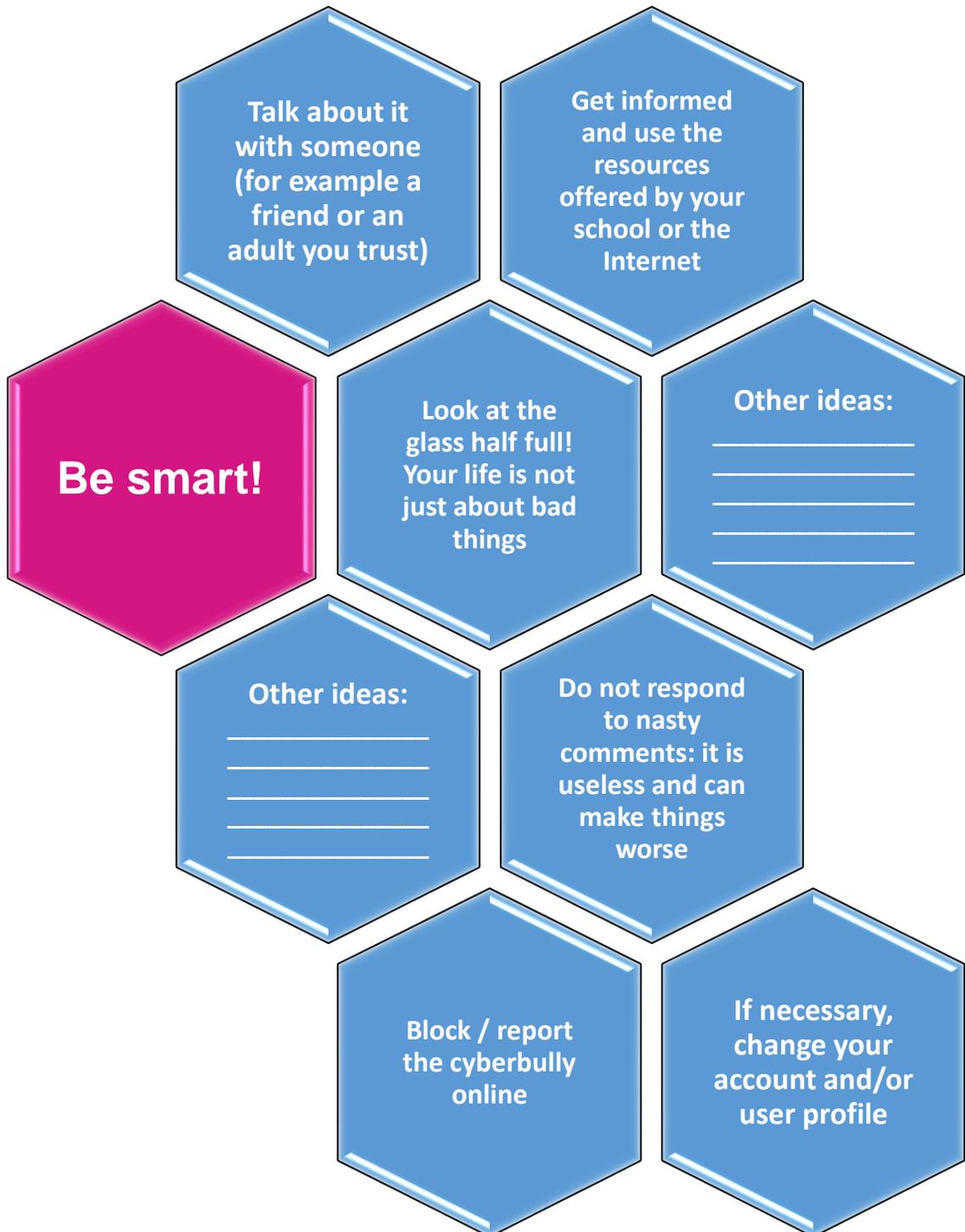
Tips FROM young people
from ALL OVER EUROPE

Let's prevent cyberbullying!

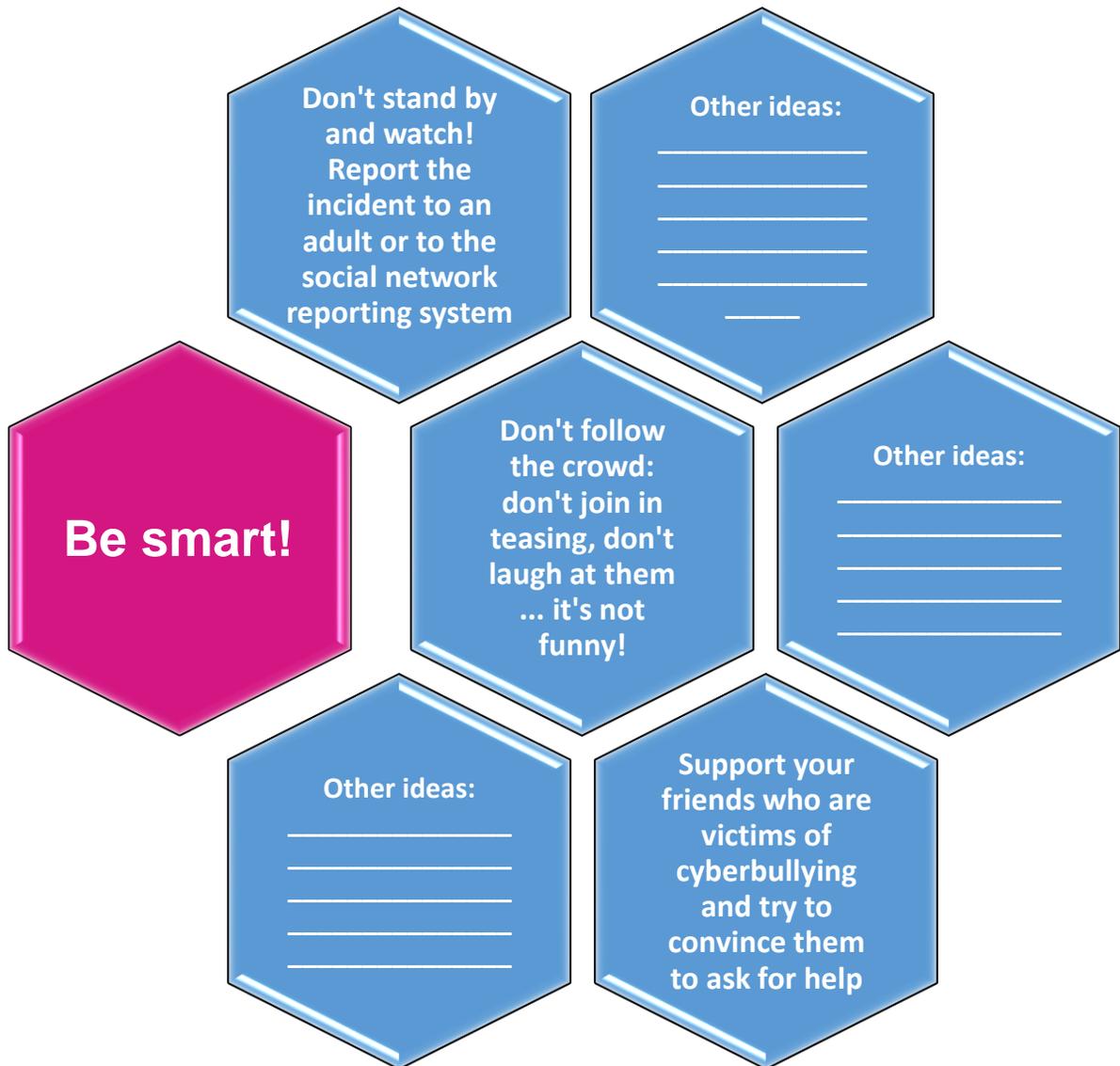
Anyone can be a victim of cyberbullying! However, it is possible in some cases to reduce the risk of being subjected to online aggression by using some useful strategies.



If you're a victim of cyberbullying



If you witness cyberbullying





Freie Universität Berlin



STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
A College of Queen's University Belfast



Open Universiteit
www.ou.nl

Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON



blurred lives PROJECT

A Cross-National, Co-Participatory Exploration Of Cyberbullying,
Young People And Socio-Economic Disadvantage.

The end

To access all project resources, go to

<https://www.ou.nl/web/blurred-lives/resources>