**Media and Information Literacy Education**

**Unit 3: Make good use of social media and refuse cyberbullying**

Topic: Make good use of social media and refuse cyberbullying

Target:  Form 1 – Form 4 students

Objectives: After this lesson, students are able to:

1. use social media in a responsible and respectful manner and refuse cyberbullying;
2. empathise with others and consider others’ feelings when using social media.

Time： 35 minutes

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**Teaching Procedures**

1. **Pre-class Preparation**

1. Read Case 1: “US Open female athlete and F1 racer cyberbullied and bombarded with death threats”

2. Complete Pre-class Exercise: “Cyberbullying” pre-class quiz, which aims to stimulate students to think about what is "cyberbullying".

Pre-class Quiz Answer

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| (i) | (ii) | (iii) | (iv) | (v) | (vi) |
| ✓ | X | ✓ | X | X | ✓ |

1. **Classroom Teaching (See PPT for reference)**
2. Make good use of social media and refuse cyberbullying (5 minutes)

Use PPT to explain how to make good use of social media and avoid cyberbullying. Teachers may add other examples.

1. The impact of cyberbullying (10 minutes)

Use PPT and Case 1: “US Open female athlete and F1 driver cyberbullied and bombarded with death threats” to explain the impact of cyberbullying and answer the Reflective Question (students can answer freely). Teachers may add other examples.

3. Identify the authenticity of information (15 minutes)

Use PPT and Case 2, explain to students the importance of "empathy" and "a sense of responsibility" when disseminating information, and answer the Reflective Question (students can answer freely).

**III. Summarise and Learning Consolidation (5 minutes)**

Remind students that the Internet world is not a virtual world where laws do not apply. Any bullying activities, whether online or not, are regulated by relevant laws if a crime is involved. The teacher may use examples of relevant laws to further illustrate.

Encourage students to have positive values ​​and attitudes, use social media with empathy and a sense of responsibility and refuse cyberbullying.

**Student Notes**

**Pre-class Preparation: “Cyberbullying” Quiz**

Please put a √ next to the sentence you agree with, and put a X if you disagree

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| (i) | □ | Cyberbullying is immoral. |
| (ii) | □ | Cyberbullying causes physical harm to the victim. |
| (iii) | □ | Those who commit cyberbullying often lack empathy. |
| (iv) | □ | When suffering from cyberbully, it is necessary to find out who the bully is and teach him/her/them a lesson. |
| (v) | □ | “Internet vigilantism” can bring justice. |
| (vi) | □ | It is irresponsible for us to post comments about others online without checking the fact. |

**1. Make good use of social media and avoid cyberbullying**

There are different forms of cyberbullying, including doxxing, spamming, photo alteration, Internet vigilantism, etc. We must make good use of social media to avoid cyberbullying, including:

(1) Do not disseminate personal information imprudently, avoid leaving “digital footprint” behind for any possible “doxxing” activity;

(2) Do not download or open documents or files of unknown origin;

(3) Be discreet when commenting online to avoid offending others;

(4) Do not spread rumours;

(5) Do not participate in cyberbullying;

(6) Be careful when choosing friends and do not add strangers to your groups recklessly.

When you know that you are being bullied, always remember the following:

(1) Do not respond. Do not react impulsively or take revenge;

(2) Keep a record of the cyberbullying activities, including screenshots, contents or voice notes in posts to facilitate the follow-ups of law enforcement;

(3) Block the bully and reject any further messages from him/her/them;

(4) Change your username and blogs and stay away from forums that upset you;

(5) Notify the administrator of the forum or the social media platform concerned to

delete the related messages or pictures posted;

(6) Seek support and help from family, social workers or teachers;

(7) If necessary, contact the police for help.

**Case 1:** **US Open female athlete and F1 racer cyberbullied and bombarded with death threats**

Sloane Stephens, an American tennis player who once ranked world No.3 in women’s singles, posted a personal Instagram Story after losing a match to her German opponent in the third round of US Open in September 2021. "I am human, after last night’s match, I got 2k+ messages of abuse and anger from people upset by yesterday’s result. It’s so hard to read messages like these, but I’ll post a few so you guys can see what it’s like after a loss," she said in the Story.

Among the malicious messages she received from netizens, aside from insulting words, many also involved death threats and sexual violence. Stephens, currently ranked No.66 in the world, added, "This type of hate is so exhausting and never ending.”

In the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix of the Formula One (F1) World Championship held in December 2021, Canadian racer Nicholas Latifi accidentally crashed into the barriers in the race. He also posted a statement on his website on 22 December, saying that he had received a large number of death threats within the ten days after the event. Those threats alleged that his crash indirectly caused the dominating Mercedes driver Hamilton to lose the championship. In the statement, he claimed, "The ensuing hate, abuse, and threats on social media were not really a surprise to me as it's just the stark reality of the world we live in …What shocked me was the extreme tone of the hate, abuse, and even the death threats I received."

Source: HK01 (8 September 2021) ; Archysport ( 8 September 2021);

ABC News (22 December 2021)

**Reflective Question**

If you were one of the athletes in this case, how would you feel when you received this kind of threatening message?

**2. The psychological effects of cyberbullying on the victim**

(1) Feeling sad and frustrated

(2) Experiencing social alienation

(3) Losing trust in people and become highly defensive

(4) Losing confidence, resulting in low self-esteem

(5) Suicidal tendency in severe cases

**Case 2: Read the following news and comments of netizens.**

There was a fatal traffic accident in North Point on 10 December 2018. 4 people were killed and 11 were injured when a school light bus ran out of control on a ramp and crashed onto a pavement. After the accident, someone uploaded an image of a middle-aged woman dressed in a beige coat, holding up a mobile phone to capture the scene in North Point. Next to her were several injured people lying beside the school light bus, with some lying by the tires and some suspected to be unconscious.

Source: Bastillepost.com (11 December 2018)

When the image was published, the middle-aged woman was severely condemned by netizens:

*“How could she do that? Taking photos in that situation?”*

*“Did she think that taking photos can save lives?”*

*“Tell the world about her behaviour and shame her into oblivion!”*

Subsequently, the woman was found to be a domestic helper of one of the victims. She was taking photos to record the scene and inform the victim’s family.

If you were the domestic helper, after reading the harsh comments on the Internet, how would you feel? (Answer the following questions and circle the score, with “1” being the mildest, “5” being the most severe).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Feeling frustrated |  | (No) 1 2 3 4 5 (Yes) |
| 1. Feeling wronged |  | (No) 1 2 3 4 5 (Yes) |
| 1. Thinking that there is no justice in the world |  | (No) 1 2 3 4 5 (Yes) |
| 1. Feeling ashamed |  | (No) 1 2 3 4 5 (Yes) |
| 1. Feeling frightened and afraid of being scolded |  | (No) 1 2 3 4 5 (Yes) |
| 1. Feeling very unlucky |  | (No) 1 2 3 4 5 (Yes) |

Total score: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(A score of higher than 24 points indicates that you have suffered from psychological damage.)

**Reflective Question**

After the photo of the incident was reported on newspapers, many people on the Internet made harsh criticisms against the person in the photo. Do you agree with these acts of "Internet vigilantism" to others and people acting as "Internet judges" merely based on one photo?

1. **“Empathy”** and **“a Sense of Responsibility”**

Before spreading messages on the Internet, we should think prudently if:

1. I understand the content of the post and they are true and not malicious.
2. I have considered other people’s feelings.
3. I am going to be responsible for these comments.

Spread information with “Empathy” and “a Sense of Responsibility”.

**Empathy**

We should be empathetic when spreading messages, consider carefully about how the message may affect others, and check if it is spiteful, disturbing, upsetting or insulting others. If a message contains any of these elements, stop posting it.

**A Sense of Responsibility**

Before spreading a message, it is our responsibility to verify its authenticity and ensure that it contains no fabricated information or malicious rumours. Do not spread the message if you are not sure.

The Internet world is not a virtual world where laws do not apply. Any bullying acts, whether online or not, are regulated by relevant laws if a crime is involved. Students are morally and legally responsible for what they say and do online.

**References**

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