

## Guidance Note:

# Inappropriate Behaviour on Digital Platforms



### About this document

This document is provided as a supplementary document to support the procedures for Child Safe Child Friendly Element 10 – Girl Guiding in Practise: Clause 8 Digital Platforms.

Girl Guiding in Australia is committed to being a Child Safe Child Friendly Community. This is equally applicable when working in the online/digital space. Inappropriate behaviour on digital platforms includes the following:

1. Online bullying and harassment
2. Sexual exploitation and grooming online
3. Discrimination and abuse
4. Sharing of illegal and inappropriate imagery
5. Cyberstalking
6. Impersonation and hacking
7. Disinformation and misinformation
8. The oversharing of personal information

More information on these inappropriate behaviours is included below. It is important for Adults in Guiding to take appropriate action if any of these behaviours are observed. Adults in Guiding should also be aware of their obligations to report any situation where they may consider a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm (refer Element 8. Responding to Abuse and Neglect).

Where any of these behaviours are observed, a Girl Guide Incident Report must be lodged.

The Girl Guide Complaint Form and/or the 'Tell Us What You Are Worried about' Form for Youth Members are available for reporting concerns /complaints.

### Inappropriate Behaviour on Digital Platforms – Additional Information

#### What is online bullying and harassment?

Online bullying can be offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting behaviour and abuse of power which humiliates or denigrates the other person, where it is repeated more than once. It can involve one or more person.

Online harassment can come in the form of unwanted conduct online which has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and or creating a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It can be related to personal characteristics of an individual, such as age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or belief or nationality. This can be known as 'trolling', when the user deliberately starts quarrels or upsets people by posting inflammatory or off-topic messages in an online community.

Online examples of this abuse include abusive messages, exclusion from groups, malicious or insulting comments and sharing offensive imagery.

#### What is sexual exploitation and grooming online?

Sexual exploitation and grooming online is the act of developing a relationship with a child with the intention of abusing them. Offenders use emotional and psychological tricks to build relationships. The abuse can take place online or offline.

Non-contact abuse is where a child is encouraged to share live or still images of themselves of a sexual nature. They can be forced to commit sex acts or to perform on web cams or built-in cameras in phones and other devices.

### **What is discrimination and abuse?**

It can be an offence to stir up hatred – known as inciting hatred - on the grounds of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, mental or physical ability, health status, educational background, or socioeconomic status, **except** where specific exclusions are necessary and permitted by law.

The content of a website can also be illegal when it threatens or harasses a person or a group of people. Illegal material could be in words, pictures, videos, and even music and can include:

- Messages calling for racial or religious violence.
- Web pages with pictures, videos or descriptions that glorify violence against anyone due to a protected characteristic, for example their race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or because they are transgender.
- Chat forums where people ask other people to commit hate crimes.

### **What is the sharing of illegal or inappropriate material?**

The sharing of illegal and inappropriate imagery online (including sexting) can fall into two categories: illegal and inappropriate.

‘Illegal’ is child sexual abuse imagery and imagery that incites violence, hate or terrorism.

‘Inappropriate’ in this context could mean the sharing of pornography, violent content, racist content and homophobic, biphobic or transphobic content.

It is a criminal offence to share inappropriate imagery of anyone under the age of 18 and will usually result in a conviction.

### **What is Cyber Stalking?**

Cyberstalking is the repeated use of electronic communications to harass or frighten someone, for example by sending threatening communications.

### **What is Impersonation and Hacking?**

Impersonation and hacking online is where a user pretends to be somebody else, and they may hack into their profile and share information, imagery or posts for example, on behalf of that person.

### **What is Misinformation and Disinformation?**

Misinformation and disinformation are the acts of spreading knowledge that is incorrect.

Disinformation is the deliberate intent to spread information which is known to be incorrect. Misinformation is where an individual may not be aware of the fact that they are sharing inaccurate information, for example they share information or content that they believe to be true.

### **What is personal information?**

Personal information includes information that makes an individual personally identifiable as defined by the [GGA Privacy Policy](#).