This project was funded by the EU CERV-2021-DAPHNE, under the Grant Agreement, 101049295

PRESS / Preventing - RESponding – Supporting – young survivors of GBV: sexual harassment, sexual and cyber violence

Project: 101049295 — PRESS — CERV-2021-DAPHNE

Work package WP2 – CAPACITY BUILDING OF KEY PROFESSIONALS

Deliverable 2.7. – Guide of good practices and prevention activities focusing on consent for field professionals

February 2023

ΔIOTIMA

HELLENIC REPUBLIC
National and Kapodistrian
University of Athens
EST. 1837

GENDER
HOOD

Funded by
the European Union

Contents

Introduction 4
1. Key concepts and information on sexual harassment, including cyber sexual harassment 6
1.1. Commonly used terms 6
1.2. Prevalence of sexual harassment 8
2. Consent and the prevention of Sexual Harassment: Good practices and activities 9
2.1. Modeling consent throughout the teaching process and the provision of comprehensive sex education 10
2.2. Supporting clients in identifying limits and negotiating consent: A good practice for Social Workers and Mental health professionals 13
2.3. Utilising a feminist approach in the provision of legal aid to survivors 16
2.4. The cyber aspects of sexual harassment: Communicating safe use techniques 17
3. Conclusion 21
4. References 22

Funded by the European Union

Credits

Project Coordination: Centre for Research on Women's Issues 'Diotima'

Project Partners:

- National and Kapodistrian University of Athens - Faculty of Communication and Media Studies
- Genderhood

Author: Virginia Xythali

Contributor: Christina Phoebe

Editors: Christina Phoebe, Anna Vouyioukas, Sofia Kontantopoulou

Acknowledgements: Special thanks to all the participants of the capacity building actions of the "PRESS" project for sharing their experiences in the prevention of sexual harassment.

Disclaimer

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the authors only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Commission. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

HELLENIC REPUBLIC
National and Kapodistrian
University of Athens
EST. 1837

Funded by
the European Union

Introduction

Welcome to the “Guide of good practices and prevention activities focusing on consent for field professionals”. This document was produced as part of “PRESS: Sexual and cyber violence| Preventing, responding, supporting young survivors”, a project funded by the EU in the context of CERV Project Grants (Project number 101049295).

According to the FRA report (2014a: 95-96), 83 to 102 million women (45% to 55% of women) in the EU-28 have experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15 and 13% to 21% in the EU-28 have experienced sexual harassment in the 12 months before the survey interview alone.

In Greece the rise of the Greek #metoo movement brought forth and disclosed instances of sexual harassment in work-spaces, educational spaces and in all aspects of public life. Moreover, recent research indicates that an astounding 85% of Greek women state they have faced sexual harassment at work (Papagianopoulou, Kasdagli, Mourtzaki, 2020).

Sexual harassment is a systemic issue, meaning that it is based on overarching dominating societal norms and practices which are normalized on every level of society. It is not a matter of any one individual alone, but rather it stems from patriarchal ideologies that reproduce power inequalities through gendered and sexualized lenses, which intersect with other aspects of our identities (age, race, religion, body types etc.). Its consequences include cause of distress for survivors while it can additionally result in serious disruptions of their ways of life, including being forced to quit their job, abandoning their studies, and/or changing their professional field. Its negative impact extends further than the people directly affected, to include bystanders, employers (when it occurs in the workspace), and the larger community.

The project’s ultimate goal is to promote prevention from Sexual Harassment, both in physical and digital spaces, in the EU and on the national level. The approach we take in this Guide primarily focuses on the concept of consent, as sexual abuse happens when consent is violated. Prevention activities that center around consent and consensual relationships can shift the dominant culture away from entitlement and privilege, towards empathy and kindness, respect for the dignity of self and others, activating the right to self-determination.

Purpose and audience

Launched in 2022, “PRESS” brings together a consortium of Greek stakeholders with Diotima Centre as Coordinator, the National Kapodistrian University of Athens - Faculty of Communication and Media Studies and Genderhood as partners, along with Greek Ombudsman and Hellenic Association of Social Workers as supporting agencies. The PRESS project aims at promoting early detection and prevention of sexual harassment/ violence, with a particular focus on gender-based cyber sexual violence, and at offering support services to women, young people, and LGBTIQ victims or potential victims of these types of gender-based violence.

A series of capacity building activities addressed to professionals of mental health, social workers, educators, lawyers, multidisciplinary teams of professionals were delivered as part of the project. Following the completion of the training, Diotima Centre and Genderhood prepared this Guide of good practices, based on their experiences during the implementation of the "PRESS" project, as well as the experiences of professionals who participated in the capacity building workshops that took place in 2022-2023.

The Guide is intended to serve as a non-formal learning tool, offering reference material to professionals, providing information regarding sexual harassment, but also specific tools to those who want to focus on building sexual harassment prevention activities.

The content of this guide has been organized by the types of professionals of those who might use it. We also want to encourage professionals who use this Guide to include personal reflections when applying the best practices to their work, and to adapt the proposed activities according to the needs of their audience/clients/beneficiaries.

The main objectives of the Guide are to:

- ✓ Offer a consent-centric perspective to sexual harassment. The approach puts the experience of survivors at the core of the discussion and addresses the need for comprehensive approaches that expand the scope of support to include preventative measures.
- ✓ Help different groups of professionals to recognise their potential to be involved in supporting persons with experiences of sexual harassment and showcase tools that could assist them to design and deliver prevention interventions.

1. Key concepts and information on sexual harassment, including cyber sexual harassment

This section of the Guide aims to provide readers with an understanding of the key concepts that will be discussed in the context of the good practices or those related to sexual harassment in general. Moreover, they provide information on the prevalence of sexual harassment in Greece and the EU, that can be used in information sharing sessions.

1.1. Commonly used terms

Consent: An agreement about how two or more people are going to interact (including sexual interactions) or share space together. These agreements are clear, informed, voluntary, sober, act and person-specific, ongoing, mutual, active, and come directly from the individuals engaging in the activities. Unequal power dynamics, such as an employer or educator engaging in sexual activity with an employee or student, are usually non-consensual.

Gender-based Violence: An umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will; it is based on socially ascribed and/or perceived gender differences.

Sexual Harassment: Any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which occurs, with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Sexual Harassment in the workplace: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when: 1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, 2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting an individual, or 3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment." (EEOC, 1980).

Sexual coercion: Unwanted sexual attention is combined with various pressures (often job-related), such as bribes, and/or threats to force acquiescence (e.g., offering or implying a promotion in exchange for sexual favours, threatening termination unless sexual demands are met, asking for sexual favours in order to better one's academic performance).

Discrimination: Any action that unlawfully or unjustly results in unequal treatment of persons or groups based on race, colour, gender, national origin, religion, age, disability or other factors protected under International/European Conventions or Treaties, state or local laws, such as marital status or gender identity.

Cat-calling: When someone shouts harassing and sexually suggestive, threatening or derisive comments at another person publicly.

Non-consensual pornography (also called 'revenge porn'[1]): Involves the online distribution of sexually graphic photographs or videos without the consent of the individual in the images. Images can also be obtained by hacking into the victim's computer, social media accounts or phone, and can aim to inflict real damage on the target's embodied life, outside the digital/online space. Non-consensual pornography can be the extension of intimate partner violence to online spaces.

Cyber harassment: Harassment by means of email, text (or online) messages or the internet. It can encompass: unwanted sexually explicit emails, text (or online) messages; inappropriate or offensive advances on social networking websites or internet chat rooms; threats of physical and/or sexual violence by email, text (or online) messages; hate speech, meaning language that denigrates, insults, threatens or targets an individual based on her identity (gender) and other traits (such as sexual orientation or disability).

Cyber stalking: 1) emails, text messages (SMS) or instant messages that are offensive or threatening; 2) offensive comments posted on the internet, 3) intimate photos or videos shared on the internet or by mobile phone.

Rape culture: A culture in which dominant ideologies, media images, social practices and institutions promote or condone, explicitly or implicitly, the normalisation of sexual violence and victim-blaming. Incidents are ignored, trivialised, normalised and/or made the basis of jokes.

---

[1] The term 'revenge porn' has received critique in recent years, with additional alternatives including 'image-based sexual abuse', 'cyber exploitation' or 'non-consensual intimate imagery'.

1.2. Prevalence of sexual Harassment

According to the FRA report (2014a: 95-96), 45% of women in the EU have experienced some form of sexual harassment at least once in their lifetime. Among women who have experienced sexual harassment at least once since the age of 15, 32% indicated somebody from the employment context – such as a colleague, a boss or a customer – as a perpetrator. Also, 29% of the women in the EU have experienced unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing since they were 15 years old; 24% of the women have been subjected to sexually suggestive comments or jokes that offended them since the age of 15; 11% of the women have received unwanted, offensive sexually explicit emails or SMS messages, or offensive, inappropriate advances on social networking sites (referring to experiences since the age of 15).

In the national context in Greece, a nation-wide research conducted by ActionAid in 2020 (Papagianopoulou, Kasdagli, Mourtzaki, 2020) with 1.001 women across the country and 376 employees in the catering /food service and tourism sector, concluded that 85% of women in Greece have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace. 1 in 10 women has been a victim of an attempted sexual assault, while 1 in 5 has been a victim of sexual extorsion.

Research conducted by the Social Action and Innovation Centre (KMOP) in 2020 (Alexopoulou & Doufexi- Kaplani, 2020), indicated that 52,38% of the employees who responded has experienced sexual harassment at some point in their professional life and 40% did not know the relevant procedures for victim protection. It is important to also note that 42,86% of the employees reported having witnessed some form of sexual harassment against another colleague in their workplace and that almost half of the employers (48,15%) underlined that there no preventive measures in their company.

According to EPRS (2021), it was estimated that in 2020, 1 in 2 young women experienced gender-based cyber violence, whereas according to the European Commission (European Parliament, 2022), women are systematically targeted online by violent rightwing extremist and terrorist groups intending to spread hatred against them. A survey from Plan International (2020) 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.

2. Consent and the prevention of Sexual Harassment: Good practices and activities

A good/best practice is commonly defined as a technique or a series of methods that, through experience and research, has proven reliably to lead to the desired result. In this Guide we have collected practices and approaches that, through feminist lenses, consistently facilitate the prevention of sexual harassment or the support of individuals who have already experienced it.

The selected good practices are centered around consent and the ways in which it can be incorporated in both prevention and support activities. They also promote consent culture instead of the prevalent rape culture that permeates our societies, normalising sexual harassment and abuse. They aim to highlight how consent (and its absence) affects all of us, extending much further than just sexual encounters, to all types of social encounters. The activities propose ways we can use our power to bring consent into all of our relationships, interactions, and cultures.

Consent culture is the term used to describe societies or environments in which creating explicit agreements, looking for common ground and respecting boundaries is the norm, for both sexual contact as well as all other everyday activities. In consent culture, people feel they have control of their bodily autonomy and their boundaries and they can negotiate their safely.

For the purposes of this guide, we have identified **three professional groups who often come in contact with survivors of sexual harassment or who can design and implement prevention activities:**

- **(i)** **Educators,** who play an indispensable role in the lives of young persons and are in the privileged position to both contribute to their students learning of social norms and attitudes as well as receive disclosures of instances of sexual harassment;
- **(ii)** **Social workers and mental health professionals,** who play a pivotal role in the support of survivors but can also work with their clients to increase their capabilities to negotiate consent;
- **(iii)** **Lawyers,** who for many individuals, are essential to the recovery process following experiences of sexual harassment and abuse, due to their position in court cases and legal processes regarding the right to dignity, autonomy, self-determination and self-defence of survivors of sexual abuse.

Finally, considering the importance of modern technologies in our everyday lives as well as their pervasiveness, we included materials related to the promotion of **safe and consensual online communications** that can be used by a range of professionals, as well as carers of young people.

ΔIOTIMA
HELLENIC REPUBLIC
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
EST. 1837
GENDER HOOD
Funded by the European Union

2.1. Modeling consent throughout the teaching process and the provision of comprehensive sex education

A lack of consent culture often comes from assuming we all agree and hold the same values, positions and agency to shape the environments we live in. In schools, rules are distributed in a top-bottom manner, as opposed to as a process of discussion and co-creation with dialogue. That way, many school rules and regulations are indeed, not consensual. For example, not allowing students to use the bathroom, or drink water. This can have physical, psychological and emotional abusive results on the development of the students and their sense of safety and self-worth.

The contribution of educators as role models for their students is well documented. On top of promoting gender equal attitudes, and addressing the issues of power, control, communication, and emotional expression, **educators can also incorporate consent in their teaching model**. In doing so, they can spend time before, asking students to take part in an activity to explain the whole process. They can identify different ways to invite students to take part in it and also give them ways to opt out as well, while providing alternative learning outlets. This is especially necessary as a means of acknowledging and validating different learning styles, needs and personalities, and showing by example that there are social models where everyone can be included. They can offer them the possibility to share their thoughts or questions without interruptions or judgment. Keeping in mind that, at least some of the students may have experienced non-consensual behaviours, including sexual ones, they can include kindness and gentleness in their tone of voice and approach, when possible. While traditional teaching methods often place the educator at the top of a hierarchy within the classroom and give him/her considerable power and choices, this approach implies that educators share some of their power with their students in order to model more equal and consensual interpersonal relationships.

One way of establishing that students are valued participants in school life and communicating that they are to be included in all decisions that affect them is the **collaborative creation of classroom contracts**.

Proposed activity (1) Creating a Consent-based Collective Classroom Contract

Materials: A large piece of paper, coloured markers, tape.

Set up: Tape the large piece of paper on the wall. Ideally set up chairs in a circle.

Duration: 40 minutes - 1 hour

Aims: To make a space for students (or any group in the educational environment) to set boundaries and discuss what they envision their ideal ways of relating to one another within their shared space are. This models as a group based on open communication and giving and asking for consent.

Ideal Use: This activity will ideally begin at the beginning of the school year or semester; in a moment/period when the group is laying groundwork for a period of time, short or long term. Alternatively, it could also be used as a way of laying new foundations. It is to be used periodically at agreed times to negotiate and discuss to what extent it is being implemented by the group, needs adjustments, additions etc.

Facilitator's Role: To lead a group discussion where all members in the classroom will discuss collectively what they need and want as a group in order to be able to work and feel good together in their shared space / classroom. The facilitator writes on the large piece of paper all the agreements phrased with consent by the group co-forms them.

Introducing / Leading the activity:

In this activity the group is invited to make as well as to listen to proposals of their peers in order to gradually build a consent-based contract of agreements for sharing the space. Through open communication and by taking into consideration one another's ideas and listening to everyone's voice, we learn the importance of voicing our needs as the basis for open and honest communication.

After introducing the aims of activity, the facilitator asks what shared agreements each individual as well as the group as a whole feels they will need in order to share time and space together. Each proposal will be heard and considered. After each proposal, the group will be invited to respond, add, question, reframe or rephrase each proposal as needed and build common agreements upon each other's needs.

Of course, there are certain agreements which come with limitations, which needs to be stated openly and clearly. For example, if someone is in physical danger, the agreement of confidentiality will be lifted.

Notes to the facilitator: In the beginning, the group may be shy, especially if they have not done a similar activity before. In this case, you can begin by giving an example of one group agreement. For example, finding a way to ensure everyone who wishes to talk can talk in the group, expressed at times as *"Take Space, Make Space".*

To get the ball rolling you could ask questions and ask for proposals to questions like:

- What system would you use to make sure everyone who wishes to speak gets a turn to speak?
- Do they agree with the proposal/s made? Disagree?
- Would they rephrase it? Add/subtract something from it?

Another way to begin if there is hesitation can be in stating behaviors which have no place in the shared space, such as sexist, racist, homophobic/transphobic comments and actions. This shows the boundaries of any group which accepts and includes everyone's right to exist in the space with dignity and respect.

It is important to differentiate speaking freely from abusive and demeaning ways of speaking, including hate speech. Such behaviors have no place in consent-based contexts, which needs to be stated simply and clearly. At the same time, it is important to explain that such behaviors are a way of abusing privileges, reproducing inequalities, and a way of making others feel unsafe in common spaces, often based on people's gender, sexuality, age, race, class and other parts/aspects of our identities.

If the group needs further encouragement to continue the conversation, you can ask examples of behaviour and ask them how this behaviour would make them feel. Some examples:

How would you/we feel if:

- One person is talking the whole time and monopolizing the space?
- You are interrupted as you are speaking?

Summing up the activity / Next Steps: To wrap up the activity, the facilitator highlights that **the contract will be discussed periodically as a group,** for example, once a month, at the beginning and end of a unit of time; when need arises. This procedure needs to be discussed with the group during the summary of the activity, so there is a common understanding of how **this process will continue**. How often will the contract be discussed? For example, at the beginning of each semester, or the beginning of each month; when there are violations of the contract, etc. Make sure to follow the agreed frequency and make clear the process and arrangement in the space. Ask questions and invite further discussion if clarifications are necessary.

It is recommended that **the piece of paper with the common agreements is always visible to everyone** in the classroom / common space.

2.2. Supporting clients in identifying limits and negotiating consent: A good practice for Social Workers and Mental health professionals

Personal boundaries are the limits and rules we set for ourselves in the context of our relationships. **Being able to set yours and respect other peoples' boundaries is a life skill that needs to be learned/taught and practised**, and not a reflex that individuals are expected to do automatically. It allows them to say "no" to others when they want to, to learn hearing "no" as a potential response, but also to be comfortable opening themselves up to intimacy and close relationships.

While the way we are socialized results in difficulties in saying no, most people also struggle with being denied something they asked for. A good practice related to the work of mental health professionals and social workers is to provide their clients with opportunities to identify and negotiate limits, both from the side of those who set them and from the side of those who are expected to respect them. This is an **important key to Consent Culture.** When we move beyond seeing "no" as a personal attack and instead see it as an honoring of self, it becomes possible to create safe spaces for everyone to be true to their authentic wants and needs.

The process of boundary setting needs to be based on each individual's values and the things that are important to them. Professionals, based on their specific approaches and expertise, can guide their clients in understanding that their boundaries are personal and that it is possible that they may not align with those of the persons close to them. Taking the time to identify specific boundaries for specific situations and negotiating them beforehand, will minimize the possibility that clients will do something they are not comfortable with.

Mental health professionals and social workers can integrate discussions about specific situations (work, romantic relationships, parenting, etc.) in their practice and accompany their clients in identifying specific boundaries for each situation, as well as ways they can communicate them. They can also assist them in learning how to notice what non-consent feels like in their body.

Proposed activity (2) Saying Yes and No: An exercise in negotiating boundaries

Duration: 30-40 minutes

Aims: To provide a safe container for participants to practise the act of saying “yes” and “no” to suggested activities, while receiving positive feedback even when they refuse to participate. It also aims to give them space to practise asking for consent. Finally, it allows participants to discuss the feelings that are associated with not having to overtly explain their refusals and to have their boundaries respected. Through the activity, participants will experience the joy of learning ways to make others feel more comfortable to express themselves.

Facilitator’s Role: To provide guidance during the different steps of the exercise and lead group discussions after each step.

Introduction

After introducing the aim of activity, the facilitator asks the participants to split into pairs. Once everyone has been paired up, the facilitator explains the first step of the activity.

STEP 1

One of the two persons will ask the other for something, using a phrase starting with "Could I..."/"Will you....". For example, the question could be: *“Could I touch your hair?”*

The other person will answer NO, regardless of whether they would like to do what was suggested. The person answering should not give any explanation for their answer.

Pairs switch roles and repeat.

Once all pairs have completed this step, the facilitator initiates a group discussion, by asking everyone who wishes to share how they felt. The facilitator can also prompt participants by asking them how comfortable it felt to say no.

STEP 2

The facilitator asks participants to find a different person to pair up with.

The new pairs will repeat Step 1, with an added action: After hearing NO, the person asking the question will thank their partner for their answer.

The facilitator takes the time to explain that they can express their gratitude in any way they feel natural, as long as it is sincere. For example, they can say *"Thank you for telling me how you feel"* or *"Thank you for having such clear boundaries"* or *"Thank you for taking care of yourself"*.

After couples have switched roles, the facilitator will lead a discussion on whether adding "thank you" altered the experience.

It is encouraged to discuss what it feels like to thank someone after they have denied us what we desire, but also how it feels to be thanked after we have set a boundary.

STEP 3

The facilitator asks participants to find a different person to pair up with.

The new pairs will repeat Step 1, but the responding person will be instructed to answer YES, regardless of whether they would like to do what was suggested.

The person answering must not give any explanation for their answer.

After hearing YES, the person asking the question will thank their partner for their answer.

The facilitator can, depending on the context, make it clear that no one has to proceed to do the activities their partner requested.

After pairs have switched roles, the facilitator will lead a discussion on how this change in the instructions affected participants. They can also be invited to reflect on the instances when, in real life, they are asked to agree to activities they don’t want to do.

STEP 4

The facilitator asks participants to find a different person to pair up with.

For this final step, participants will be given the same instructions, but they will be allowed to give the answer they want, i.e., they will answer YES or NO according to their desire to participate in the suggested activity.

Summing up the activity: To sum up, the facilitator highlights that the process of negotiating boundaries is collaborative and is one that takes practice. Consent is crucial not only during sexual acts and to avoid sexual harassment and abuse, but as a way to ensure that we participate in our lives equally and safely.

2.3. Utilising a feminist approach in the provision of legal aid to survivors

Feminist theory and practice has often identified the law and legal code as a fundamental parameter in women's historical subservience. Feminist philosophy of law recognizes that legal structures have been overtly influenced by the patriarchy and masculinist norms and establishes their effects on the material conditions of women and girls and those who may not conform to cisgender norms.

It is also recognized that the law and legal practices more broadly can contribute significantly to reform related to gender equality. Feminist approaches to law often aim to examine and adapt legal processes and practice to overcome deeply rooted biases and imposed gender inequality of the past.

For professionals offering legal support to survivors of gender-based violence in general and sexual harassment in particular, one way to challenge well established norms in their field is by incorporating more consensual and gentle techniques in their interactions with clients. This would include the following:

- **Dedicating time to introduce themselves and the services they offer**, allowing the client to ask questions and clarify any misconceptions. This process contributes to a **trusting relationship** between client and lawyer.

- Clearly **explaining confidentiality and its limits**. In cases of sexual harassment, this includes explaining that no identified information will be shared with third parties or the media (especially given the current peeked interest in #metoo cases).

- Scientific research and studies in neurology, psychiatry, psychology etc., have shown that traumatic events alter the way survivors recall their experience and might even affect their abilities to retain memories. This often results in them recounting their experience in fragmented, nonlinear ways that are perceived as “unreliable” by the courts. Lawyers working with survivors should strive to **give space and time so that they recount the incident** (sexual harassment, sexual violence) **without interruption**, even if they don’t do it in a linear chronological order. They can then work with the survivor to clarify the timeline and structure of the narrative in ways that would be court appropriate.

- **Avoiding questions that could result in secondary trauma for the survivor**. These can include questions related to the survivors' clothing, sexuality, past sexual encounters, personality and others. These questions perpetuate sexist stereotypes and norms, contribute to victim blaming and often result in further traumatization of survivors. If one such question is absolutely necessary for the legal preparation of the survivor, it is advised that it is rephrased in a non-judgmental way and that the lawyer clearly states the legal reason for exploring it.

- **Obtaining the survivors informed consent before taking any legal actions.** The feminist approach highlights the importance of survivors themselves leading all actions related to their case. This should include obtaining explicit and clear consent when reporting a case of sexual harassment to the relevant authority or stakeholder and sharing all potential legal and psychological outcomes.

2.4. The cyber aspects of sexual harassment: Communicating safe use techniques

Young peoples' lives have become increasingly intertwined with the Internet and new technologies. This consistent connection is increasingly helpful in a number of areas such as education, entertainment and relationships, but it also represents a risk that makes teens more susceptible to sexual exploitation.

Professionals working with young people, including teenagers, should be aware that *"just don't be on your phone all the time!"* is rarely helpful advice to offer. Professionals should make themselves aware of the definitions and examples of online sexual harassment, as well as the platforms that this might take place on.

A good practice is to be able to **offer guidance to young individuals on who to contact if they believe they are experiencing online sexual harassment of any form, as well as to provide them with ways they can protect themselves**.

Proposed activity (3) Teenagers practise "What If" Scenarios of cyber sexual harassment

Materials: Printed out copies of the scenarios, coloured markers, flipchart, plain sheets of paper, printed lists of support services that can provide help to teenagers with experiences of cyber sexual harassment.

Set up: Move the chairs of the participants in small groups. Place two copies of the scenario in the middle of the chairs, along with coloured markers and plain sheets of paper.

Duration: 45 minutes – 1 hour

Aims: To provide a safe container for teenagers to explore instances of harassment and to identify ways to ask for help and support peers who are affected. Based on stories that have been adapted from the news, it encourages discussions based on real-life situations that have unfolded with other teens, while also providing guidance on how to protect oneself. The activity also aims to highlight that teenagers are not at fault when they are harassed online and that they are entitled to help, regardless of their initial responses.

Facilitator's Role: The facilitator will provide explanations needed for the teenagers to understand the context of the scenarios. They will also guide the discussion, by asking questions for the participants to consider when responding to the scenarios. The facilitator will also help teenagers identify consent conscious alternatives and will help them navigate through sexist beliefs that might limit their understanding of the situations presented.

Indicative Scenario:

Kathrin gets to know a boy through an online chat application. It starts off fun, he compliments her and admires her, and she starts to trust him. They talk more and more and he often flirts with Kathrin. A few weeks after their meeting, she shares a picture of herself with only her underwear on. He is ecstatic and complements her body. He also shares how attracted and turned on he is by the picture and sends her chocolates and earrings as a gift. Then, he starts demanding her to send him videos of her performing sexual acts. When she refuses, he starts telling her "If you really loved me, you would do it". She cries and tries to explain to him that she loves him, but she is shy. He tells her that "Everyone's doing it, it's normal".

ΔΙΟΤΙΜΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
EST. 1837
GENDER HOOD
Funded by the European Union

Leading the activity: After reading the scenario, the groups of teenagers will be asked to discuss the following questions in their small group, and then present their process to the large group. Four (4) potential answers are provided, to help initiate discussions. Participants should be encouraged to present additional answers, if they wish.

Question A. What do you think of Kathrin?

1. She shouldn't have shared the picture with him. It's her own fault, she could have known this would happen.

2. I feel sorry for her. She should be allowed to do what she wants with her pictures, and feel safe in her relationship. He shouldn't be pressuring or threatening her.

3. If she had stopped talking to him when he started pressuring her, this wouldn't have happened. This was her fault, for trusting him again.

4. What is happening to her is not ok, but she needs to break up with him before things get worse. If she is not strong, she will suffer the consequences.

Question B. What do you think of the boy?

1. He's obviously troubled. It's not fair to pressure Kathrin and manipulate her just to get what he wants.

2. He always compliments Kathrin and gives her gifts. He has a right to ask for something in return.

3. He must really like her. He is so attracted to her and it must be difficult to not be able to see her and touch her in person.

4. His ways might be somewhat problematic, but Kathrin is clearly overreacting. If she really didn't want to do the webcam thing, she wouldn't have sent the picture and she would clearly say no.

ΔΙΟΤΙΜΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
EST. 1837
GENDER HOOD
Funded by the European Union

After the small groups have presented their response to the question, the facilitator allows teenagers from the other small groups to also share their thoughts. Then, the facilitator should take some time to reiterate that the young girl in the scenario is not to blame. She is being coerced and exploited and she is not at fault for the situation. The facilitator can also highlight the serious emotional impact of such experiences in young people's lives. This case is also a great opportunity to introduce the concept of grooming[2] and some of its early signs.

Depending on the available time, the facilitator can also introduce one or more of these follow up questions:

- Would you have answered differently if the victim was a boy?
- Why do you think it is rare that people share their experiences of online sexual harassment?
- How do you block a person on Instagram, WhatsApp or other platforms that you use?
- How do you prevent strangers from contacting you?
- Are there any ways to prevent people from saving your pictures or videos after you share them?
- How would you support a friend who is being exploited or coerced online?

Summing up the activity: To sum up the activity, the facilitator can emphasise that a person who is sexually harassed online can feel scared, guilty and ashamed. The experience is potentially traumatizing and can even lead to self-harm and thought of suicide. For this, it is important for everyone to know that help and support is available. The facilitator is advised to share specific resources (helplines, web-services, NGOs etc.), where teenagers can receive appropriate support.

---

[2] Online grooming is when someone uses the internet to trick, force or pressure a young person into doing something sexual - like sending a naked video or image of themselves. The Lanzarote Convention is the first international legal instrument to define grooming, and the Convention refers to this act as "solicitation of children for sexual purposes'' (Article 23 – Solicitation of children for sexual purposes).

3.Conclusion

As aforementioned the Guide of good practices is a non-formal learning tool which can be used as reference material by key professionals actively involved either in the protection of gender-based violence survivors (i.e., by providing support services, psychosocial support, legal counselling/aid) or in the prevention of gender-based violence and/or sexual and cyber harassment in diverse settings and spaces (i.e. at work, at school/university, in public areas, etc.). For us, the Consortium of the PRESS project, consent is a fundamental and decisive issue closely interlinking with respect towards others' rights and self-determined dignity, (potentially) contesting dominant practices based on unequal power dynamics, hierarchy, privilege, gender inequalities, etc. Prevention of abusive behaviours and practices in this sense is therefore to a great extent dependent on the possibility and will to co-create a common ground, reaching an explicit agreement about boundaries, safety and autonomy. Moreover, consent is an integral part of both sexual contact, personal relationships and also everyday activities.

The proposed activities presented in the Guide are based on good / best practices which have been developed in the context of the capacity building trainings of the PRESS project, being also based on the experiences shared with us by the professionals who participated in the trainings, for which we are truly grateful. To a great extent the best practices presented draw on similar activities which have also been used by professionals in the European Union for long and have proved to work and bring forth positive results. We do hope they will be useful for professionals engaged in gender-based violence prevention and protection, given they can be adapted based on the needs and profiles of specific audiences/beneficiaries they are addressed to, or developed to include more real-life examples, identity aspects, etc.

4.References

Alexopoulou, A., Doufexi-Kaplani, M., E., (2020), National Report – Greece – Combat Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. Teamwork Project – Funded by the EU REC Programme. Athens: Social Action and Innovation Centre/ KMOP.

Bandura, A., & Walters, R. H. (1977). Social learning theory (Vol. 1). Prentice Hall: Englewood cliffs.

Bartlett, K. (2018). Feminist legal theory: Readings in law and gender. London: Routledge.

Bettinger, E. P., & Long, B. T. (2005). Do Faculty Serve as Role Models? The Impact of Instructor Gender on Female Students. American Economic Review, 95(2), 152–157.

Canadian Centre for Child Protection Inc, Keeping Teens Safe from Online Sexual Exploitation

Cybersafe, (2021), Cyber Violence against Women & Girls – Report on Cyber VAWG and CYBERSAFE Framework – Final report on WP2 UL FDV. Funded by the European Union's REC Programme (2014–2020).

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission/EEOC (1980), Document 34: EEOC Guidelines on Sexual Harassment, 45 Federal Register 74676 (10 November 1980), codified in 29 C.F.R. §1604.11.

European Parliament (2022) Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating violence against women and domestic violence. COM (2022)

European Parliament (2021) Combating gender-based violence: cyberviolence European Parliament resolution of 14 December 2021 with recommendations to the Commission on combating gender-based violence: cyberviolence (2020/2035(INL))

EPRS/ European Parliamentary Research Service (2021), Combating gender-based violence: Cyber violence European added value assessment. Authors: Niombo Lomba, Cecilia Navarra and Meenakshi Fernandes European Added Value Unit PE 662.621 – March 2021.

FRA – European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, (2014a), Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Main Results. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

FRA – European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, (2014b), EU LGBT survey European Union lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender survey. Main results. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

International Child Development Initiatives (2021), CYBERSAFE Guide for Workshop Facilitators Addressing the issue of online violence against girls in a classroom setting

Littleton, C. A. (1986). Equality and feminist legal theory. U. Pitt. L. Rev., 48, 1043.

Papagianopoulou,M., Kasdagli, St., Mourtzaki, M., (2020), Research entitled Not part of the job. Sexual harassment against women at work. Examining the catering and tourist sectors. Athens: ActionAid Hellas.

Plan International (2020), THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S GIRLS 2020 [Free to be online? Girls and young women's experiences of online harassment.]

Sanderse, W. (2013). The meaning of role modelling in moral and character education. Journal of Moral Education, 42(1), 28–42.

Splitz Support Service in Devon (2015), TALK Exploring Healthy Relationships

Δ/OTIMA
HELLENIC REPUBLIC
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
EST. 1837
GENDER HOOD
Funded by the European Union