CyberSense: A skill-based approach to tackling cyberbullying and online safety

Organising institution/partners:

Ariel Trust

Country:

UK

Hashtags (key words)

#cyberbullying #skills development #media education

Main topic/Theme

Developing young people's skills and resilience to enable them to stay safe online

Media Literacy Competencies/Aims/Expected outcome

'CyberSense' is made up of three skills-based modules, 'De-escalating Conflict', 'Asking for help' and 'Empowering by-standers'. Each is built around short films depicting cyberbullying and was developed through consultation with young people and reflects their real-life experiences. Each film ends on an open question designed to promote discussion and teachers are provided with a range of activities designed to build young people's language, communication and resilience skills. The most important of these are role play activities that provide opportunities to practice the skills required to de-escalate conflict, ask for help and intervene as a bystander.

As part of the programme young people will:-

• learn the language needed to talk about cyberbullying and online safety

• learn and practice key communication strategies needed to ask for help

• learn and practice key communication strategies intervening as a bystander

• learn how to build the support networks that are required to respond to cyberbullying

General Pedagogic Objectives

Based on evidence from the United States 'CyberSense' uses a skill-based approach to tackling cyberbullying and online safety. Students are empowered to respond to conflict in positive ways through the development of important skill sets; 'De-escalating Conflict', 'Asking for help' and 'Empowering bystanders'.

Under these headings are a range of activities designed to build young people's language and communication skills. The most important of these are role play activities that provide opportunities to practice the skills that young people need to ask for help or to intervene if they find themselves in the role of the bystander.

The evidence that underpins this methodology comes from 'Safe Dates' a theatre-based programme used in the USA, which shares many similarities of approach with 'CyberSense'. A large scale evaluation of 'Safe Date' was conducted by Foshee and Langwick (2004). Their report concluded that programmes focusing exclusively on attitudinal or educational components will likely not be effective in changing behaviour as such the skills building component of Safe Dates is a crucial component of the chain of events that can lead to positive outcomes.

Participants – age:

8-11

Participants – number:

Whole classes in a mainstream education setting, typically 25-30

Participants – entry competencies/skills:

None

Methods/Type of activities:

Whole class discussions, small group and pair activities, role plays, individual work

Description – step by step

Module Overview

Module 1 – Strategies to de-escalate conflict using questions and apologies

Lesson 1 - Cyber-Stories (Scene 1 'Send me a Selfie') & (Scene 2 –'Flame Wars')

Aim - Pupils should, "Develop the appropriate language and confidence to describe unwanted behaviours." This is a requirement set out by OFSTED in the 2013 PSHE report.

Lesson 2 - Storyboard exercise (Scene 1 'Send me a Selfie') & (Scene 2 –'Flame Wars')

Aim - Pupils should, "Develop good strategies to resist peer-pressure to make unhealthy or unsafe choices." This is a requirement set out by OFSTED in the 2013 PSHE report

Lesson 3 - Role – Play exercise (Scene 1 'Send me a Selfie') & (Scene 2 –'Flame Wars')

Aim – Pupils should, "Develop the appropriate language and confidence to describe unwanted behaviours... and good strategies to resist peer pressure to make unhealthy or unsafe choices." These are a requirements set out by OFSTED in the 2013 PSHE report.

Lesson 4 - Judge Kadeem Debate

Aim – Pupils should be, "...taught the appropriate language and [have] developed the confidence to describe unwanted behaviours." This is a requirement set out by OFSTED in the 2013 PSHE report.

Lesson 5 - Spot the Symbol

Aim – Pupils should be able to, "Understand the importance of applying security settings on social networking sites and know how to set them". These are requirements set out by OFSTED in the 2013 PSHE report.

Lesson 6 - Problems and Solutions

Aim – Pupils should, "Develop the communication skills and confidence they need to challenge their own and others' views and listen to each other". This is a requirement set out by OFSTED in the 2013 PSHE report.

Lesson 7 - Circle of Support

Aim – Pupils should have access to, "...high profile displays of help lines and groups that young people could go to for confidential support". This is a requirement set out by OFSTED in the 2013 PSHE report.

Lesson 8 - Big Cyber Quiz

Aim – Pupils should, "...be taught the appropriate language or develop the confidence to describe unwanted behaviours or know where to go to for help". This is a requirement set out by OFSTED in their 2013 PSHE report.

Module 2 – Talking about your feelings as a constructive response to cyber-bullying.

Lesson 9 - Cyber-Stories (Scene 3 'Girls don't play football') & (Scene 4 – 'What harm can it do?')

Aim – Pupils should, "Develop the appropriate language and confidence to describe unwanted behaviours.""The casual use of homophobic language should be addressed." These are requirements set out by OFSTED in the 2013 PSHE report.

Lesson 10 - Storyboard exercise - Scene 3 'Girls don't play football' & Scene 4 – 'What harm can it do?'

Aim – Pupils should, "Develop good strategies to resist peer pressure to make unhealthy or unsafe choices". This is a requirement set out by OFSTED in the 2013 PSHE report

Lesson 11 - Role Play Exercise: Scene 3 'Girls don't play football'& Scene 4 'What harm can it do?'

Aim – Pupils should, "Develop the appropriate language and confidence to describe unwanted behaviours. ...and good strategies to resist peer pressure to make unhealthy or unsafe choices". These are requirements set out by OFSTED in the 2013 PSHE report.

Module 3 – Skills to empower the bystander

Lesson 12 - Cyber-Stories (Scene 5 'you're making us lose') & (Scene 4 – 'I wouldn't like it')

Aim – Pupils should, "Develop the appropriate language and confidence to describe unwanted behaviours". This is a requirement set out by OFSTED in the 2013 PSHE report.

Lesson 13 - Storyboard exercise (Scene 5 'You're making us lose') & (Scene 4 – 'I wouldn't like it')

Aim – As a requirement of the OFSTED 2013 PSHE report, pupils should, "Develop good strategies to resist peer-pressure to make unhealthy or unsafe choices."

Lesson 14 - Role Play Exercise (Scene 5 'you're making us lose') & (Scene 4 'I wouldn't like it')

Aim - Pupils should analyse the role of the bystander in order to, "Develop the appropriate language and confidence to describe unwanted behaviours. ...and [develop] good strategies to resist peer pressure to make unhealthy or unsafe choices". These are requirements set out in the 2013 OFSTED PSHE report.

Resources:

Delivered by teacher over 14 Lessons of 50 minutes duration

Venue: Classroom with Internet access and interactive white board

Resources:

CyberSense website which includes:

• Lesson Plans

• 14 interactive lessons

• Handouts

• Teachers Guide

• Whole Schools resources e.g. posters, leaflets for parents

Evaluation

Pupils from one school, Devonshire Park, Wirral, Merseyside, have given the following feedback:-

"I thought it was educational and I learnt from it to stay safe online"

"CyberSense was helpful to remind me how to react when people go online"

"It was fun and I learnt a lot, I think it was useful because it helps us with life"

"Really fun and useful because I know how to be safe online now AWESOME"

"It learnt me if someone asks you to do something bad online just stand up for yourself and say no" "It was fun and I learnt to be safe online and we learnt about Cyberbullying"

"I thought the website was useful and the videos made me understand about Cyberbullying"

Partner Testimonial –West Berkshire Primary Schools and Ariel Trust

West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing in Schools Programme and Ariel Trust have worked together to deliver CyberSense training and access to the online resources for 19 primary schools including two special schools (25% of West Berkshire primary settings)

The one day training received positive feedback from the range of education professionals including Headteachers, Senior Leaders, Class Teachers and Family Support Workers.

School colleagues appreciated the flexibility of access to the online resources with some schools delivering the resource straight after the training and some schools delaying delivery for Year 6 till after the SATS in May.

Ariel Trust offers a professional, realistic and flexible approach and has ensured that the participating schools are supported in delivering the Cybersense programme. After a good start, further funding would be appreciated so that all West Berkshire Primary schools could benefit from the training and access to the programme.

Nikki Davies Health and Wellbeing in Schools Coordinator Education Service, West Berkshire Council

Hints for the facilitator

The critical activities within the programme are the role play activities because these are the activities that allow participants to develop and practice skills. This skills-based approach is based on evidence from the that comes from 'Safe Dates' a theatre-based programme used in the USA, which shares many similarities of approach with 'CyberSense'. A large scale evaluation of 'Safe Date' was conducted by Foshee and Langwick (2004). Their report concluded that programmes focusing exclusively on attitudinal or educational components will likely not be effective in changing behaviour as such the skills building component of Safe Dates is a crucial component of the chain of events that can lead to positive outcomes.

Futher information

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