

EDUCATORS PACK_

EXPLORING

IDENTITY

ONLINE

In partnership with:

ask*fm*



FROM THE DIANA AWARD

INTRO

The online world comes with endless opportunities, but it can also place a huge amount of pressure on young people at a time when they are exploring and developing their identity.

The Diana Award, in partnership with ASKfm and psychologist Dr Linda Papadopoulos, has explored how the online world is shaping young people's sense of self. Young people have described the pressures they face living their lives online: to fit in with others, look and behave a certain way, and be constantly connected in order to gain social currency in the form of likes, retweets, favourites and comments.

'As a result, 63% of young people age 13-17 say they think people behave differently online to the way they do offline. Half of young people say they feel pressured to reply to people's messages quickly, and a quarter say they feel they have to 'like' things online that they don't actually like.'

To help young people tackle this pressure to fit in online, The Diana Award has created this series of lessons designed to encourage students to reflect on their online and offline identities.

There are four lesson plans to choose from. The first can be delivered as a stand-alone session, as it gives an overview of the topic and explores how social media can have an impact on our sense of self. The following three lesson plans can be delivered as optional add-on sessions, delving further into issues such as conforming to societal expectations online, the difference between how we present ourselves online vs offline, and gender inequalities and expectations in an online environment.

I feel like people have to follow trends or fit in with groups on social media – they have to fit in with a category or group, with likes and dislikes.

- Focus group participant

PREPARATION_

As some of the issues discussed can be sensitive, it is important to set up a safe space agreement before starting the lesson.

Explain the following ground rules, ask if students have anything else to add and ask if everyone is happy to agree to follow these:

- Everyone should be open and honest
- Feel free to share personal stories but don't mention names
- The conversation stays in the room
- We will respect each other's opinions
- You have the right to pass if you don't want to answer a question

Finally, signpost where students can find support if they want any more information on the topics discussed. There is a list of suggested resources at the end of this pack.

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CROWDSOURCING IDENTITY_

LESSON TWO:

CONFORMITY & SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS

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ONLINE & OFFLINE IDENTITIES_

LESSON FOUR:

**GENDER DIFFERENCES &
EXPECTATIONS ONLINE_**

LESSON ONE

CROWDSOURCING IDENTITY_

You feel pressured to look a certain way and to act a certain way. You feel pressured to look skinny and wear certain clothes. It shouldn't have to be like that.

- Student, 15

PREPARATION

- You will need a whiteboard and pens.
- Optional: A3 paper for students' brainstorms
- Load The Diana Award video www.tinyurl.com/identity-dr-linda

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Gain an understanding of the way that social media and the online world can have an impact on the way we develop our identities
- Be able to describe the way our online identity can pressure young people to look, feel or behave a certain way as a result of our social media identities
- Develop strategies to cope with online pressure and ensure social media doesn't have a negative impact on the way we feel about ourselves

STARTER ACTIVITY_

INTRODUCTION DISCUSSION

Group discussion about what 'identity' means

Collect ideas about all the things which contribute to how we develop our identity: relationships with family and friends, likes and dislikes, opinions, achievements, etc.

Discuss how people typically form their identities outside of the online world. For instance, they try different things out and gain feedback from the people closest to them.

Explain that in the online world, we are now holding our identities up to hundreds or even thousands of other people on social media to gain feedback. In this lesson we're going to explore the impact this can have.

MAIN ACTIVITY_ SLIDING SCALE

ASK

Ask the group to list on the board all the different types of things people post online, followed by listing the reasons why people tend to post online

Ask students to stand at one end of the room or the other depending on whether they agree or disagree with the following statements:

- I feel more able to be myself online
- There is a lot of judgement online
- I am able to say whatever I want and look however I want online
- People behave online in the same way that they do offline
- It is more important to me to be popular online than offline

DISCUSS

How the desire to be liked by others online can affect the way you behave online in order to get more likes and followers.

What are the rules or expectations we face online? How many follow these rules and why do they follow them?

SECONDARY ACTIVITY_ COPING MECHANISMS

Write three words on the board: **looks, behaviour, opinions.**

Students work in small groups to brainstorm what types of pressure exist online for young people around these three things.

E.g. to look pretty, to post when you've done something fun or to always be connected, to post as if you're angry/upset about something you don't actually care about

ASK

Ask groups to present their thoughts

- Do you think that there is a need to fit in with others online?
- Have you ever felt the need to look or behave a certain way to get more likes? Do you think that if you step outside of these expectations online you can face negativity or backlash?

FOCUS AREA_ KEY QUESTIONS

ASK

- Do you think that there is a need to fit in with others online?
- Have you ever felt the need to look or behave a certain way to get more likes? Do you think that if you step outside of these expectations online you can face negativity or backlash?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY_

Play the Dr Linda video, pausing halfway through before the advice section [at minute 02:20]

Discuss what students think about the video, focusing on their thoughts around some of the young people's quotes (e.g. 'It's almost as if you can't be who you are. In an ideal world I'd be a person who would like anything without someone having an opinion on it. But you can't.')

COPING MECHANISMS_

Group to design at least 5 coping mechanisms for how to explore who you are offline and resist the pressure that comes with the online world.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

- Make a list of things you like about yourself: positive qualities, strengths, hobbies, favourite features – remind yourself of these when you're feeling pressured to look or act a certain way online
- Take a break from the online world if it starts to make you feel bad
- Talk to someone you trust offline, such as a friend, family member or teacher, about how you're feeling
- Spend time doing things you enjoy offline
- Remember that you make the rules online! Unfollow or unfriend people who don't make you feel good, follow positive or inspirational people, and try to disengage from pressure to fit in online.

Play the rest of the video and ask students to add any additional strategies to their list.

LESSON TWO

CONFORMITY & SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS_

"I feel like a lot of people don't feel comfortable being themselves because they feel like they'll be judged by other people. So if they do it on social media they can always have the fall back of "aww I was just following the trend."

- Student, 16

PREPARATION

- Print copies of **Worksheet 1 & 2**
- Put one copy of each in an envelope with worksheet 2 folded up tightly so that the picture on it can't be seen
- School Camera/phone camera

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To understand the way many people conform and follow social expectations online
- To describe ways in which online conformity and social expectations can affect our personalities and behaviour
- To develop strategies to make sure our online experiences are positive

STARTER ACTIVITY_ INTRODUCTION DISCUSSION

Group discussion on what 'conformity & social expectations' means.

Collect ideas and key words surrounding 'conformity & social expectations' and use to describe the impact that this can have on young people's development and how it can change personalities online and offline.

Explain how this lesson will look into the 'rules' young people follow online, why we conform to social expectations and how they can impact young people.

MAIN ACTIVITY_ MYSELFIE

This activity aims to encourage young people to questions the rules they follow online and if this is a real representation of themselves.

Each student is provided with an envelope containing worksheet 1 & worksheet 2. Students are to open the envelope and read the instructions, without opening the folded worksheet 2

The aim of the game is to take a photo matching the selfie, sealed within the folded worksheet

Students are provided with a series of instructions to follow in order to match the hidden selfie. They can recreated the image using anything they can find within the classroom.

Once they have completed all the instructions and think they have matched the images, they may open the worksheet and compare their selfie to the one in the picture

At this point we can use this as a basis for a discussion. Often we feel the need to follow a lot of online 'rules' for about how we present ourselves online in order to get more likes and followers.

ASK

What are the rules or expectations we face online? How many follow these rules and why do they follow them?

FOCUS AREA_ KEY QUESTIONS

ASK

- What rules do you follow online?
- Do your photos represent your personality?
- Do these rules impact your offline personality?
- Would you follow these rules in your instructions if you would get more 'likes' or 'followers'?
- What would happen if you uploaded a photo that didn't follow these online rules?

PLENARY

Ask the students if they have any questions they would like to ask. Remind them of the safe space agreement and that it's OK to ask any question they would like to.

Review the four main points below and tell the students that in the next session, they will be thinking about how their offline & online personalities differ.

- Online conformity and social expectations can cause young people to present themselves in a particular way online. Their social media may not be a true representation of their personality.
- Conformity and social expectation can also lead to young people feeling isolated and alone when they do not fit in or follow the 'rules' in an online space.
- Just because something is expected online does not mean that it is right. Often online environments have expectations that are wrong i.e. in online games it is expected that you will act in a particular way such as shouting and bad language.
- Just because others take part in an activity or behaviour does not mean that it is the right way to act or behave. Young people should be able to share their true personalities online without prejudice.

LESSON THREE

ONLINE & OFFLINE IDENTITIES_

In real life I might be boring honestly, but when I'm on screen all the people that I chat with says I'm sassy and very funny and stuff. I feel more confident like, they're not seeing me... some people feel more comfortable behind their screens.

- Student, 16

PREPARATION

- You will need a whiteboard and pen
- Print off copies of [Worksheet 3] double-sided
- Post-it notes

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify the different ways in which we represent ourselves online and offline and why these might be different
- Understand how to celebrate and develop the best parts of our online or offline identities
- Develop strategies to make sure our online experiences are positive

STARTER ACTIVITY_

INTRODUCTION DISCUSSION

Explain that often we feel the need to present a certain online persona which might be different to how we actually are offline. These personas might follow specific trends, rules and guidelines to ensure they are appealing to our peers.

Collect key words and ideas surrounding online/offline personalities and use them to describe the ways in which our online/offline personalities differ.

Explain that this activity is designed to help young people think about which personality represents them best and which they should celebrate.

MAIN ACTIVITY_ POST-IT PERSONALITIES

Using worksheet 3, students are to think about the key areas of their offline personality. Encourage students to think about things that make them stand out and how they enjoy different hobbies, music, sports, etc.

Place Post-It's on the offline personality

- What hobbies do you have?
- What have you achieved?
- How do you like to dress/music/games/sports
- Do you follow trends?

Once everyone has completed their offline personalities, all young people are to turn over worksheet and place post-it's on the online personality.

- What information do you share?
- Do you share all of the things you wrote on your offline personality?
- Do you show who you really are?

Once both sides are completed, the facilitator is to hand out blue-tac to each student, then ask all to stick up the personality they think best represents themselves.

Here it is expected most students will stick up their offline personality. It can be used as a basis to talk about the importance of celebrating difference and encouraging young people share differences online.

SECONDARY ACTIVITY_ COPING MECHANISMS

Groups come up with at least 5 coping mechanisms for how to explore how to best represent yourself online and celebrate differences.

If delivering this lesson as an add-on to Lesson 1, remind students of the coping mechanisms they came up with in the last class and add these to their list.

How will these coping mechanisms change their time online?

FOCUS AREA_ KEY QUESTIONS

ASK

- What is your online personality?
- What is your offline personality?
- Do you feel you can be yourself online?
- Is the online personality real or is it fake?
- Which of the two portrays you best?
- Do you feel it's more important to be popular online or offline?

PLENARY

Ask the students if they have any questions they would like to ask. Remind them of the safe space agreement and that it's OK to ask any question they would like to.

Review the three main points below and tell the students that in the next session, they will be thinking about how we react online.

- Online personalities are not always a true reflection of a offline personality. With profiles on social media sites it is easy to pick and choose the information you want to show to others, often only showing the best parts.
- Because of social conformity and expectation, our offline personality is often far more interesting. We should look to share our differences and celebrate the little things that make us special.
- We should all be aware of how we can include people with different interests, hobbies, etc online and ensure no one feels excluded or isolated.

LESSON FOUR

GENDER DIFFERENCES & EXPECTATIONS ONLINE_

It's almost as if you can't be who you are. In an ideal world I'd be a person who would like anything without someone having an opinion on it. But you can't.

- Student, 15

PREPARATION

- Print off copies of [worksheet 4]. Enough for one per pair
- Print off copies of [worksheet 5]

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify the different ways in which they represent themselves online and offline and why these might be different
- Understand how to celebrate and develop the best parts of their online or offline identities
- Develop strategies to make sure their online experiences are positive

STARTER ACTIVITY_ INTRODUCTION DISCUSSION

Explain that often we feel the need to present a certain online persona which might be different to how we actually are offline. These personas might follow specific trends, rules and guidelines to ensure they are appealing to our peers.

Collect key words and ideas surrounding online/offline personalities and use them to describe the ways in which our online/offline personalities differ.

Explain that this activity is designed to help young people think about which personality represents them best and which they should celebrate.

MAIN ACTIVITY_ POST-IT PERSONALITIES

Using worksheet 3, students are to think about the key areas of their offline personality. Encourage students to think about things that make them stand out and how they enjoy different hobbies, music, sports, etc.

Place Post-It's on the offline personality

- What hobbies do you have?
- What have you achieved?
- How do you like to dress/music/games/sports
- Do you follow trends?

Once everyone has completed their offline personalities, all young people are to turn over worksheet and place post-it's on the online personality.

- What information do you share?
- Do you share all of the things you wrote on your offline personality?
- Do you show who you really are?

Once both sides are completed, the facilitator is to hand out blue-tac to each student, then ask all to stick up the personality they think best represents themselves.

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How will these coping mechanisms change their time online?

FOCUS AREA_ KEY QUESTIONS

ASK

- What is your online personality?
- What is your offline personality?
- Do you feel you can be yourself online?
- Is the online personality real or is it fake?
- Which of the two portrays you best?
- Do you feel it's more important to be popular online or offline?

PLENARY

Ask the students if they have any questions they would like to ask. Remind them of the safe space agreement and that it's OK to ask any question they would like to.

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- Because of social conformity and expectation, our offline personality is often far more interesting. We should look to share our differences and celebrate the little things that make us special.
- We should all be aware of how we can include people with different interests, hobbies, etc online and ensure no one feels excluded or isolated.

WORKSHEET ONE

DO NOT LOOK!

(UNLESS YOU HAVE FOLLOWED ALL THE INSTRUCTIONS AND CREATED YOUR OWN SELFIE.)

Inside here you will find a selfie. The aim of the game is to copy the selfie as close as possible.

Without looking at the picture, follow the instructions found in the envelope to create your selfie. Use anything you can find in the room.

Once you think you have completed all the instructions, you can compare your selfie to the one inside.

MY SELFIE

Inside here you will find a selfie - but don't look at it yet!

The aim of the game is to match your selfie with the one inside (STILL DON'T LOOK!).

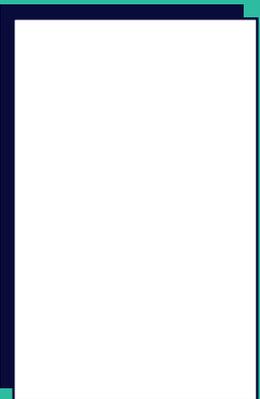
Follow the instructions found in the envelope to create your selfie. Use anything you can find in your room to help you create the selfie.

Once you think you have completed all the instructions, take your selfie!

Compare your selfie to the one inside.

DO NOT LOOK!

(UNLESS YOU HAVE FOLLOWED ALL THE INSTRUCTIONS AND CREATED YOUR OWN SELFIE.)

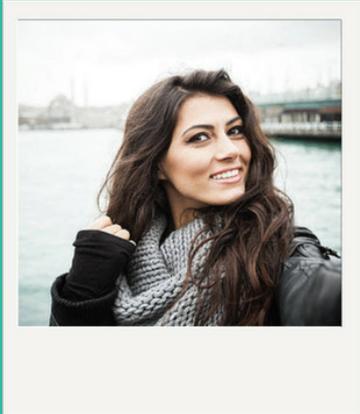


HOW WELL HAVE YOU MATCHED?

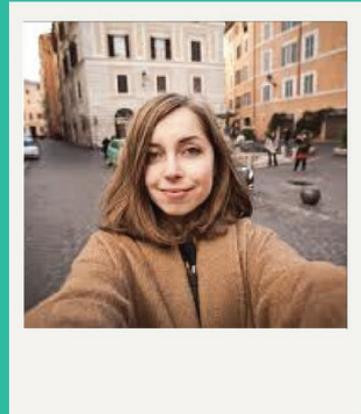
Often online there is a lot of 'rules' young people feel they need to follow in order to take a photo that will get 'likes' and take photos that others think are good.

Do you follow any rules when taking your selfies? What if you follow these rules?

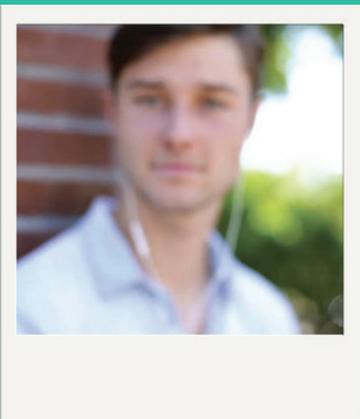
WORKSHEET TWO



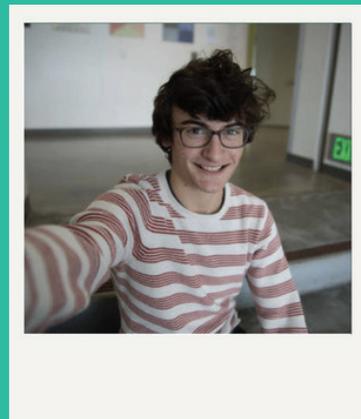
1. I am holding the phone in my left hand
2. My right hand is touching my hair
3. I am looking at the camera but facing left
4. I have long hair hanging over my shoulders
5. I am smiling showing my teeth



1. I am holding the phone with both hands
2. My right eye is slightly covered by my hair
3. I am looking at the camera with my head in the middle of the frame
4. I have long hair hanging down to my shoulders
5. I am smiling with my mouth closed



1. My hands and top of my head are out of the shot
2. My head is in the middle of the photo
3. I have short hair and wearing headphones
4. The photo is blurry
5. I have a straight face



1. I am holding my phone in my right hand
2. My left hand is out of the frame
3. I am looking at the camera
4. I am wearing glasses my hair is brushed to one side
5. I am smiling with a cheeky grin

WORKSHEET THREE

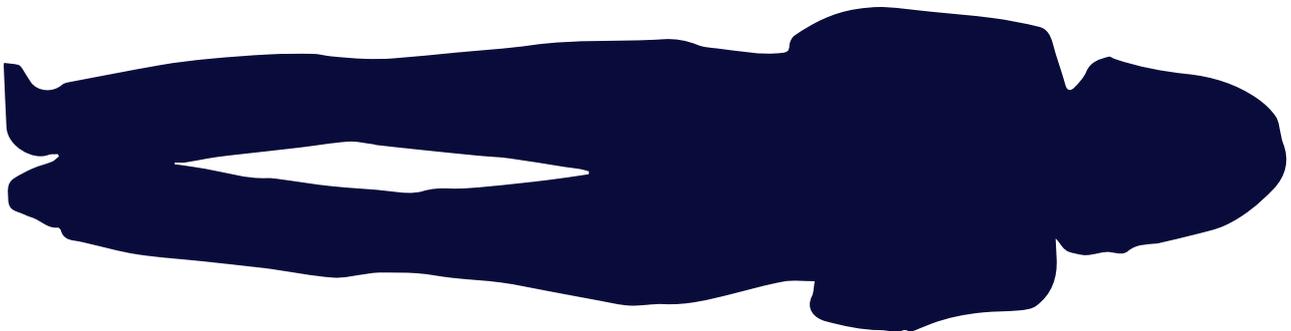
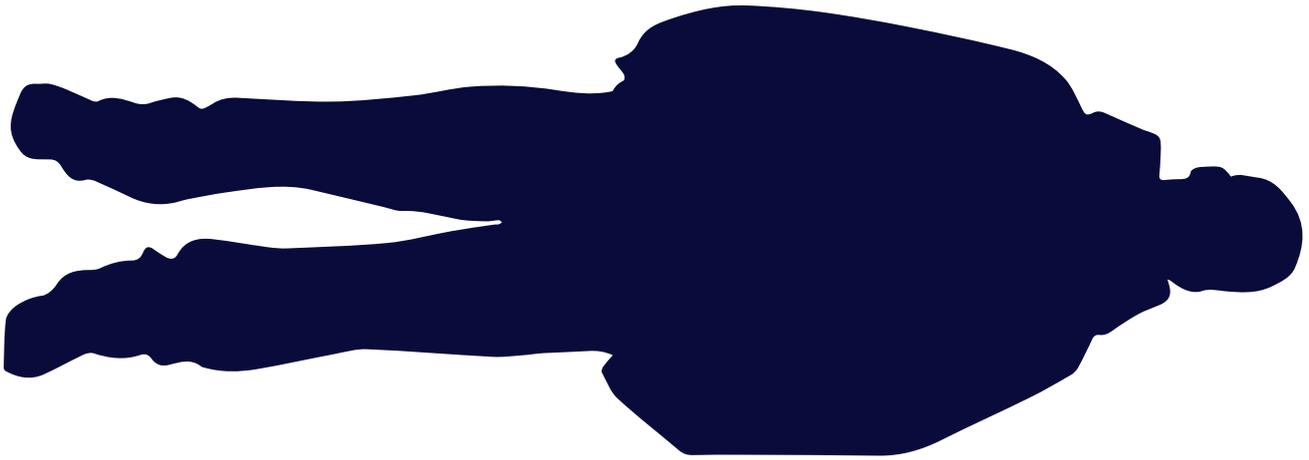


OFFLINE PERSONALITY



ONLINE PERSONALITY

WORKSHEET FOUR



WORKSHEET FIVE

BOYS HAVE A THICKER SKIN	BOYS USUALLY WRITE MEAN COMMENTS	GIRLS ARE NICER TO EACH OTHER THAN BOYS	BOYS TYPICALLY HAVE MORE FRIENDS ONLINE
GIRLS DO NOT PLAY ONLINE GAMES	BOYS BULLY OTHERS MORE THAN GIRLS	GIRLS SPEND MORE TIME TAKING SELFIES	BOYS TAKE MORE SELFIES THAN GIRLS
BOYS USE SOCIAL MEDIA LESS THAN GIRLS	BOYS BRAG A LOT MORE ON SOCIAL MEDIA	GIRLS ARE MORE WORRIED ABOUT THEIR LOOKS THAN BOYS	BOYS AND GIRLS USE THE SAME SOCIAL MEDIA
BOYS REPORT PEOPLE MORE THAN GIRLS	GIRLS NEED MORE LIKES THAN GIRLS	BOYS AND GIRLS EXPERIENCE THE SAME AMOUNT OF CYBERBULLYING	GIRLS BLOCK MORE PEOPLE THAN BOYS

BOYS HAVE A THICKER SKIN	BOYS USUALLY WRITE MEAN COMMENTS	GIRLS ARE NICER TO EACH OTHER THAN BOYS	BOYS TYPICALLY HAVE MORE FRIENDS ONLINE
GIRLS DO NOT PLAY ONLINE GAMES	BOYS BULLY OTHERS MORE THAN GIRLS	GIRLS SPEND MORE TIME TAKING SELFIES	BOYS TAKE MORE SELFIES THAN GIRLS
BOYS USE SOCIAL MEDIA LESS THAN GIRLS	BOYS BRAG A LOT MORE ON SOCIAL MEDIA	GIRLS ARE MORE WORRIED ABOUT THEIR LOOKS THAN BOYS	BOYS AND GIRLS USE THE SAME SOCIAL MEDIA
BOYS REPORT PEOPLE MORE THAN GIRLS	GIRLS NEED MORE LIKES THAN GIRLS	BOYS AND GIRLS EXPERIENCE THE SAME AMOUNT OF CYBERBULLYING	GIRLS BLOCK MORE PEOPLE THAN BOYS

We're proud to be the only charity set up in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales and her belief that young people have the power to change the world. It's a big mission but there are two things within it that we focus our charity's efforts on – young people and change.

Throughout all of our programmes and initiatives 'change' for and by young people is central, including our anti-bullying work which encourages change in attitudes and behaviours.

We hope you found this resource useful and wish you all the best in your anti-bullying journey. If you would like to help us create more resources and train even more Anti-Bullying Ambassadors you can make a £5 donation by texting CHANGE 5 to 70470 or visit diana-award.org.uk/donate

Give us feedback on this resource:
<https://tinyurl.com/ab-feedback>



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