

The Full Picture SPHE Lesson

Webwise has developed a campaign titled *The Full Picture* comprising a short video exploring how young people use social media. The film highlights the influences and pressures young people face online and encourages them to see the full picture.

More information, advice and supports which can be used by schools, educators, teens and parents is available here: <https://www.webwise.ie/thefullpicture/>

The Full Picture Lesson has been designed to assist and support teachers of SPHE when teaching their students about the influences and pressures young people may face while using social media, the impact on their self-esteem online and how to manage their online wellbeing. The aim is to encourage students to be mindful of the impact, both positive and negative, social media can have on how we feel and empower them with the resources and strategies to manage their own online wellbeing.

Key Learning for Students:

Students will explore the influences and pressures young people face using social media. They will empathise with others who experience these pressures online. Students will reflect on what influences them and develop strategies that will help them manage their online wellbeing and look after their self-esteem online.

Learning Outcomes:

SPHE Short Course

Strand 1: Who am I? *How I see myself*

1.1 Appreciate the importance of building their own self-esteem and that of others

Strand 2: Minding myself and others. *Being healthy*

2.2 critique the impact of the media, advertising and other influences on one's decisions about health and wellbeing

Resources Needed:

- Power point presentation with The Full Picture video (available at www.webwise.ie/thefullpicture/#)
- Activity Sheets 1.1, 1.2, 1.3

Methodologies:

Think-pair-share, discussion, video analysis, group work, reflection/application

Teacher Presentation and Activity Script

Slide 1: Title Slide

Slide 2: Being Online

Introduce the lesson and explain to students that during this lesson they will explore the topics of self-image (how we see ourselves) and self-esteem (our sense of self-worth or confidence in our own value) online and the role that social media can play in this.

Ask students to list the social media platforms/apps they are familiar with.

Use a real time feedback platform such as Mentimeter (www.mentimeter.com) or Kahoot (www.kahoot.it) to get whole-class feedback on this. You also could use this to poll students on which social media app they use most often.

Ask students to discuss what they use social media platforms/apps for? For example, to stay in touch with friends and family, learn more about hobbies/interest, share interests and connect with people of a common interest/hobby.

***Teacher Note:** It is important to reinforce the benefits of the internet and that the internet is a brilliant tool that provides opportunities for connection, creativity, learning, entertainment, etc. During Covid-19 we turned more than ever to the internet to help us keep in touch, learn, work, play and understand the world around us. For the vast majority the internet provides a positive and very useful experience. What happens online is often just an extension of what is happening offline and therefore a holistic view of wellbeing including online wellbeing is necessary to recognise.

Slide 3: *Social media provides more opportunities for connection than it does comparison.*

Read the above statement and ask your students to discuss. Employ think-pair-share to elicit responses with a show of hands, who agrees? Who disagrees?

Then ask students to explain their reasons why.

Slide 4: The Full Picture Video

Play The Full Picture video (<https://www.webwise.ie/thefullpicture/#>) for students.
Running time is 1:59.

Slide 5: Group Discussion Activity

The Full Picture ends with the lines:

See the full picture.

Not everything we see online tells the whole story.

What is your understanding of these lines after watching the video?

Distribute Activity Sheet 1.1 and divide students into small groups.

Ask students to complete the activity sheet in their groups. Once finished take whole-class feedback.

Slide 6: Reflection: Social Media and Me

Distribute Activity Sheet 1.2 and invite students to reflect on their own practices and habits on social media and complete the student reflection piece individually. Reassure students that this is a self-reflective activity for students to complete and that no one (including you) will see what they write.

Information Slides:

Slide 7: Social Media - Filtering the Good from the Bad

Social media is a great place to connect and share with others.

List the positives and potential downsides of being on social media.

Ask students to list the positives and potential downsides of being on social media. Use think-pair-share to elicit responses from students.

Examples of positives include sharing our lives and being able to see and keep up with friends and family, communicating with friends and family, connecting with other people and potential to make new friends, a platform to raise awareness of important issues, learn more about interests and hobbies. Social media can also be a creative and fun space.

Examples of the potential downside of social media could include it can add pressure by portraying an idealised version of normal life. Our news feeds often contain images of people looking great, wearing nice clothes, and doing exciting things. Living their best lives!

Remind students that potential downsides such as the pressure to be the picture perfect version we see of people's lives online are just snapshots in time which may have often been carefully shot, selected, edited and filtered before they were posted. While most of us may do this to some extent, it can still be easy to fall into a trap of comparing our lives to the lives of others, or comparing the number of likes, comments and followers they have. This can have a negative impact on our mood and self-esteem and it is important that we can recognise and manage this.

There are lots of positives to being online as we have mentioned it is about learning how to manage our online wellbeing and filter the good from the bad on social media which we will look at in the next few slides.

Slide 8: Myth V Reality - See the Full Picture

Explain to students that social media is a great way to explore content we are interested in and to discover new people, but it can create pressures to live up to certain 'standards'. This can be unrealistic for lots of reasons – images may have been carefully selected and edited; celebrities have vast resources at their disposal; sports stars have 6 packs because their job requires an exercise regime that most people would not have the time for. **The danger is that viewing content without a critical eye, can lead to self-esteem issues, and pressure to conform in ways that may not be a good fit for you as a person.**

When discussing pressure to look a certain way it is important to remember the following points:

- **Pressure to look a particular way is not a new phenomenon**, for decades some sections of advertising and the media industry have been criticised for promoting unrealistic image and lifestyle standards in the form of photoshopped celebrities, size zero models or lavish lifestyles.

- **In the era of social media, these pressures are often amplified.** We know that people generally post the 'best' of themselves online and with easily accessible image editing tools and filters, what we are looking at can even be a digitally enhanced version of the 'best'. Faces are slimmed, teeth become whiter, and blemishes are erased. Often it can be difficult to spot a picture that has been enhanced. It's not all bad, it's that the reality is more complicated.

- Remember that often what we see on social media is a one-sided version of a person's life online, and if you know someone well you will know that they are only showing the best bit – but if you don't know a person, you don't have any other information or context to go on.

Ask students to consider if they have ever felt pressure to look a certain way on social media?

Remind students that social media is a great tool for sharing and connecting with friends and family – the social aspect is fundamental to how it works! Getting likes and comments on moments that we choose to share about our lives is great – a self esteem boost, an endorsement! But not getting the 'likes' you expected can have the opposite effect. It's natural to look for the approval of people around us, but it's important not to fall into the trap of becoming too worried or anxious about it.

Slide 9: The Rise of the Influencer

We follow influencers because we are interested in their content, we want to be entertained, we want to learn from them or even are inspired by them. But it can lead to pressure about what clothes to wear, how to look, and what music, food or brands to buy. So, it's important to consider The Full Picture, and think critically about what you are seeing.

- Has that person been paid to promote an item?
- How has it been edited?
- Has what they are posting been designed to fit their online 'brand'?
- Is it a realistic reflection of who they are?

Slide 10: Social media feeds and Algorithms

- Algorithms are complex mathematical formulas working in the background of the websites/apps we use which help determine what content is presented to us online e.g. in your newsfeed or search results.
- What we see on our online news feeds is determined by the algorithm of the particular platform we are using.
- Social media platforms highlight content that they believe we will like, because it is popular or because you are being advertised to.
- It's important to remember our news feeds are not a full reflection of reality, they are just a part of *The Full Picture*.

Filtering through content that appears on our online newsfeeds is complicated further, because **what we see is determined by the algorithm of the particular platform we are using**. What we encounter when we go online doesn't appear by coincidence – **social media or online platforms highlight content that they believe we will like, because it is popular or because you are being advertised to**. Just like with images we see, or the people we follow, it is important to be mindful that what we see on **our newsfeeds is not a full reflection of reality, it is just a part of *The Full Picture***.

Slide 11: You are what you like?

Ask students if they have noticed that when they go online or login to social media they are presented with content, news, articles or ads that somehow know the things that they are interested in? Ask students why they think this is?

You can test this with your student by asking them to google something e.g. a country - Egypt and projecting the search results onto the whiteboard for the students to see. Then ask students to google the same thing e.g., Egypt and look at their own search results, noting if there is anything different than what appears on the whiteboard. Did their search results differ at all from what appears on the whiteboard. If so, ask why they think this is?

Explain to students that this is because there are **algorithms (complex mathematical formulas) working in the background which determine what content is presented in your newsfeed or search results**. Platforms such as Google, Facebook, Instagram, and Tik Tok all have their own closely guarded algorithms which personalise the content they show to us – different users who use the exact same search terms or scroll through the same social media platform are likely to see different content. **The results that we are presented with are likely to reflect the likes and interests that our browsing history and personal data suggests we would like to see more of – after all, online platforms want you to use their site and to stay for as long as possible.**

Slide 12: The influence of online algorithms

Ask students to consider what are the potential benefits and downsides of our news, search and social media feeds being filtered or tailored to who the internet thinks we are like this? Use the think-pair-share strategy to get student feedback on this.

Explain to students that potential benefits include: with having so much content available on the internet, these algorithms are used to reduce the volume of information and to filter what is displayed to users. For example, searching for exercise tips or liking a cute cat video will make it more likely that you will see content related to these topics in the future, or if you browse for a pair of trainers you may see advertisements for those shoes on other websites you visit. All this information is building up a picture of who you are online.

While this is not necessarily a bad thing, **it is important to be aware that the content being pushed to your newsfeed is filtered and tailored by what a social media network or online platform believes that you are interested in, or would like you to become interested in.**

Potential drawbacks include the fact that we can very easily get caught in a feedback loop or filter bubble meaning that what we see are variations of the same thing and alternative views or opinions are filtered out. It is important to emphasise to students that **not seeing an alternative point of view can affect our ability to think critically about content, make us less open-minded, and can have a skewed influence on how the world is presented to us.**

Slide 13: Activity: Agony Aunt/Uncle

- Read the diary entries from the characters from the Full Picture.

- Offer advice & support to the young person on how to deal with influences/ pressures that might be affecting their self-esteem online and help them manage their online wellbeing better.

Explain to the class that in groups of 3 they will read a problem/dilemma of one of the Full Picture characters and then write down support and advice to the person in need.

Distribute one problem per group from Activity Sheet 1.3 which contains the problems that they will need to provide advice for.

Remind students that it takes courage to reach out for help and they need to be respectful in their replies of support.

Suggest advice or a coping skill to the young person in each scenario for how to deal with influences and pressures that might affect their self-esteem online and help them manage their online wellbeing better. See example suggestions below:

Selfie Boy: I train 7 days a week and it's still no use. I'm just not seeing the results!! I don't know what I'm doing wrong?! I shouldn't still have to suck my gut in and flex my bicep to try get the same look as the boys on Love Island at this stage. It's not fair. I am supposed to be going on a date and the only thing my date has to go on are these photos of me. I hope she isn't disappointed when she sees me in person. Still, I don't think I would have got the date

with her without cheating my pics a little. I suppose I'll find out what she thinks of the 'real' me anyway.

Sample advice: Advice could focus on self-esteem and body issues identified in this scenario. Reassure 'selfie boy' that looks are not everything and that this date is interested in getting to know more about him as a person and his personality. Remind him that it is okay to want to look good and post pictures of us looking our best on social media but not to put too much pressure on himself to try to portray a certain look online.

Nature Gal: Today was a great day! Met up with the girls for a walk and the chats. Jamie was the only one complaining. First, about the rain, then about me being on my phone all the time but I think she still enjoyed it! Besides it was worth it - that video of us all falling over was hilarious and I've never got so many likes and comments on a post before. Sure it has to be worth it for that alone!! It'll be a great one to have pop up as a memory on my page for years to come! I don't get why Jamie always has to complain about it?!

Sample advice: Ask 'nature gal' to consider why her friend Jamie might be upset with her about how much time she spends online. Does she need to consider how much time she spends taking selfies and capturing content when hanging out with her friends? Perhaps she could explain to Jamie that she wants to capture memories of their time spent together but also she could consider agreeing a time to take a few pictures/videos and then agree to put her phone away and enjoy being in the moment and hanging out with her friends.

#cheatday Girl: Today I posted a #cheatday boomerang of me about to eat a burger and chips. It got lots of great feedback and supportive messages from people. But then I noticed a comment "I don't think you should really be eating that!!!". Who would do that?! The thing is after I saw this I couldn't bring myself to eat the burger and chips and just chucked it in the bin instead. I feel so guilty and bad about myself now because I'm lying to my followers... I hate that I let the negative comments get to me so much. But what if they're right? Sometimes I feel so much pressure to maintain this fitness persona online I just can't afford to let my appearance slip.

Sample advice: Reassure #cheatday girl to not spend too much time focusing on negative comments on her profile, suggest reviewing who is making the comments and perhaps block the profile or report the comment. Remind her that it is okay to not be perfect all the time, her value is not in the comments section of her posts, to block and report negative or abusive comments online and focus on the positive comments and to be true to herself and her followers. Making time for rest and switching off from social media will also give her time to reflect on her time online and what she wants to get out of being on social media.

#newshoes Boy: I got my new trainers today!! I wanted to update my followers so I went to the park to shoot a video showing them off. I really want to be a vlogger and think live streams like this will help build my following. It was all going great until a group of the lads from sixth year came walking by and when I saw them I knew they would start. I grabbed my phone as quick as I could and started walking but it was too late - my live video caught them following me and slagging my new shoes. Now lots of people in school saw and are making fun of me online saying "I'm a loser with no style!".

Sample advice: Advise #newshoes boy to screenshot the bullying comments and report them to the social media platform and also talk to someone he trusts if he is experiencing cyberbullying, a friend, teacher or trusted adult.

Dancing Girl: I love dancing around my bedroom making videos to post online and boost my dancing profile. The problem is my dad has been really stressed out working from home and is getting really annoyed at me saying I'm in my room on my phone all day and has even started threatening to take my phone off me. He doesn't get me and doesn't realise I'm in here practising my dance routines for my videos. How can I make him realise that I'm not wasting my time on my phone and taking my phone away is not the answer?

Sample advice: Encourage 'dancing girl' to talk to her father about her passion for dancing and how the internet and her social media profile allows her to find more content and routines that she can then practice, it also allows her to share her dancing skills with a wider audience. Listen to her fathers concerns and reassure him by showing him her profile, what content she likes to follow and share online to help him understand.

"Keep Smiling!" Girl: Another fight with my boyfriend Sean today. Everyone knows me as the positive, bubbly one and they think I have it all figured out. My advice and positivity videos are how I got so popular online. I want to help my followers but what would they think if they really knew my life was not as perfect as it seemed. Everyone else's life looks so perfect and stress free, I feel pressure to keep up the same image. I mean how will anyone take my advice seriously if they find out I'm struggling with my own stuff too?

Sample advice: Reassure Keep Smiling!" Girl that it is okay to feel sad, angry, scared, etc. and that she should not put too much pressure on herself to portray a perfect life. She should unfollow accounts that might lead her to make unhealthy or unrealistic comparisons about her life online. Strike a balance and spend some time offline - this will help her get perspective on what is going on in her on and offline life. Talk to someone she trusts, a friend, parent or trusted adult if she is going through a hard time, or perhaps Childline if she doesn't feel like she can talk to someone she knows just yet.

Advice Slides

Slide 14: Filtering the good from the bad: Tips on how to manage my online wellbeing

Our online wellbeing can be influenced by the content we see, the interactions we have, the choices we make, and even how long we spend using technology and the internet.

It is important that we recognise how being online can influence the way we feel, think, and behave. Showing kindness to yourself and others online will help boost your self-esteem and self-image online.

Use these simple tips to help you and others feel good about themselves online.

How can I manage my online wellbeing?

- **Think critically** about the content you see online. Remember it's **not the full picture**.
- **Set time notifications // screen free breaks.**
- Create a social media presence that is **true to you**.
- Remember your value as a person is **not reflected** in the number of 'followers' or 'likes' you have.
- **Unfollow** accounts that lead you to make **unhealthy or unrealistic comparisons**.
- Search for **new perspectives** and focus on the **positive/productive content online**.
- **Block & Report** online harassment & cyberbullying. If you are the victim of online bullying, harassment or any crime online **report it to An Garda Síochána**. Contact your local Garda station, they will take your case seriously and deal with it in confidence, without judging you.
- **Talk to someone you trust & get help.**
- If you can't speak to someone you know or trust **call Childline**.
 - **Free Phone: 1800 66 66 66, Free Text: 50100** or chat online www.childline.ie
- **Make time for rest & reflection.**
- **Set time notifications // screen free breaks.**

*Extension Activity

If time allows, ask students to create a list of their own tips for how they can manage their online wellbeing.

Here are some simple strategies that may help to reduce negative emotions, increase your overall wellbeing, and make going online more enjoyable.

How can you be more mindful online?

1. **Before you post something, think about why you are doing it?** Is it because you are looking for appreciation, inclusion, reassurance? Ask yourself why this is important to you.
2. **Pay attention to the amount of time you are spending online.** It's important to be aware of how it could be affecting your friendships, your family, or your school work. There are lots of apps and devices that help you to manage how much time you spend online. Consider turning off app notifications to minimize distractions.
3. **Quantity v Quality.** It can be very easy to lose track of time online. It's always a good idea to review what types of things you do online. There's so many great ways to spend your time online; learning, creating, communicating, entertainment... even looking at

a cat video can help cheer us up. It's important to get a good balance of productive and passive time online.

4. **Make time for the things and people that make you happy.** Think about how the content you see online is making you feel. If something comes up that makes you feel envious or not good enough, consider if it's helpful or realistic to think that way?
5. **Remember don't be too hard on yourself.** No one is perfect.
6. **Look after your physical health.** Make sure that you are eating well, and getting enough exercise.
7. **Get support – a problem shared is a problem halved.** If something is bothering you, or you are worried about a friend, reach out to someone you trust. There are also many organisations that offer support and advice.

Slide 15: How can I be a good digital citizen?

Here are simple tips to be a good digital citizen.

- **Seek out the positive.** For example, post, like, share positive, encouraging, inspiring content & messages.
- **Purposefully connect with others.** Be mindful/purposeful about how you use social media to connect with others, to learn or create something and not just to mindlessly scroll.
- **Be kind online.** Just as we would in a face-to-face situation, always treat others as you would like to be treated. Remember, online it can seem like you are speaking to real people, and it's important to consider their feelings and concerns. Even a simple like on a post can have an impact on others. Before you post, take a moment to put yourself in someone else's shoes to understand the impact it may have on them.
- **Don't feed the trolls.** Trolls are people who like arguing or aggravating others, and are usually found in comments sections, message boards, or anywhere else they can cause disruption. If you encounter a troll, resist the temptation to interact with them. Any response is likely to just encourage them to continue their behaviour. Don't post, like, share or comment on upsetting or nasty content & messages.
- **Respectfully Disagree.** If you disagree with someone that's okay but do so respectfully. Stick to the facts and don't get personal.
- **Don't harass others online.** This can include behaviour such as personal threats and intimidation, stalking, exclusion, impersonation, personal humiliation or false reporting.
- **#NoRegrets.** Our digital world is permanent, and with every post we are building a digital footprint. This is basically the trail of data you create when using the internet, for example everything that is said, posted, shared, or website you visit. When you post or share content online think about who could potentially see it. It creates an impression of who they are – are you comfortable with friends, family, teachers, or employers seeing it now or in the future? Taking steps such as checking your privacy, deleting old accounts, and thinking before you post can help to ensure that you manage your online reputation. Ensure your online experience is a positive one with these tips for managing your online reputation.
- **Take a stand.** Stand up for yourself and others if problems arise. Just like you would report an issue in real life, you should report problems, inappropriate content, and abusive behaviour. Speak to someone you trust, or get advice from organisations that can provide support.

- **Respect copyright, and fair use.** It's easier than ever to copy, paste, download and publish content. Writing, music, artwork, and movies can be easy to take without thinking twice. For anyone who creates material, copyright gives that person the right to control how this content is used. This means that you must check who owns the content, get permission to use it, give credit to the creator, buy it if necessary, and use it responsibly.
- **Unplug.** Knowing when to stay connected, and when to turn off your device is part of being a good digital citizen. Though technology can be an amazing tool for learning, growing, and creating social change, sometimes you need to unplug.

Slide 16: Reflection Activity

Ask students to reflect on their learning experiences in this lesson, what they have learned and how they have learned, using the following reflection questions:

1. What was the most important thing you learned?
2. What really made you think?
3. What do you need more help with?

Instruct students to note their responses in their SPHE learning log/journal. If time allows, encourage students to share their reflections with a partner or in a small group and they can apply these learnings to their lives.

Slide 17: End Slide

For more information, advice and tips on online wellbeing visit the Full Picture campaign page here: <https://www.webwise.ie/thefullpicture/#>