

WHAT IS COCO'S LAW?



Understanding the Harassment, Harmful Communication and Related Offences Act 2020 and the legal consequences of it for young people.

Teacher Information



3rd – 5th Year Students

What is Coco's Law?

Understanding the Harassment, Harmful Communication and Related Offences Act 2020

School Lesson for Post Primary 3rd-5th Year Students

Material to Read in Advance

Overview:

This lesson is designed for 3rd-5th year students.

Welcome to the What is Coco's Law? Lesson. This resource is intended to support the delivery of the Lockers Junior Cycle resource on the topic of non-consensual sharing of intimate images, created by Webwise. This talk must be delivered in conjunction with those lessons, in order for this message to be effective. The aim of this lesson is to reinforce the message that the making, taking, permitting to be taken, showing, possession and/or distribution of indecent images of minors is a criminal offence. The objective in delivering this talk is to try to prevent this behaviour from happening by empowering students with this knowledge.

This section contains information on preparing for the lesson, provides support materials to help deliver the talk and directs you where to find appropriate follow up information.

Using This Resource:

This lesson is best delivered after completing the Lockers resource, to ensure a clear progression in learning.

Disclaimer:

Information contained in this document does not constitute legal advice. Schools are advised to notify the Gardaí and seek specific legal advice when cases of this nature arise.

What is Coco's Law?

Understanding the Harassment, Harmful Communication and Related Offences Act 2020

Background Information

(Context, Prevalence and Legal Framework)

Before beginning the lesson read the background information provided in the Lockers resource including Legal Framework outlining Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020 also known as Coco's Law (p.5-21).

Getting Started – Preparing for the lesson

This is a really sensitive topic and advanced preparation is essential. **Being familiar with the background information is vital** as questions will arise.

- Due to the sensitive nature of this material, teacher preparation before each lesson is essential.
- Check the students' emotional state, before and after the lesson. This could be done by asking students how they feel about the topic about to be explored, before the lesson and by then asking if their feelings have changed at the end of the lesson. You could also use an ice-breaker game to check how students are emotionally. A simple game involves asking students what the weather is like with them. The students then describe their emotional state through a weather forecast (e.g. "There was a damp and dreary start to the day in Tom Town but things have started to pick up now and we might even get some sun in the evening"). It is important that teachers are aware of the school's child protection policy and that they follow its procedures carefully in cases where students make sensitive disclosures in the SPHE class.
- Know your students well and be aware of any possible issues they may have before teaching each lesson.

What is Coco's Law?

Getting Started – Preparing for the lesson

- Be aware of all the supports available to you and to the students in your school. It is important to be well informed on the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, Bullying Policy and Child Protection Procedures before teaching the lessons in this pack.
- These lessons deal with sensitive issues that can impact on the wellbeing of students in your class. For this reason, it is advisable that teachers have completed the introduction to SPHE two-day course before delivering this programme.
- The age demographic of the students is taken into account – this talk should not be delivered to 1st and 2nd year students, and should be toned down when delivered to 3rd year students.
- This talk includes scenarios which cover sensitive issues, for 3rd years use the A scenarios provided for on slides 11-15 only. The B Scenarios are suitable only for 4th year and up.
- Inform your students of the supports available to them and highlight how each support can be accessed. If necessary, arrange for introductions before lessons take place. The school should distribute the list of supports included in Appendix 2 (Lockers) and draw students' attention to this resource.
- Liaise with the guidance counsellor, pastoral care team or class tutor before embarking on this programme.
- Leave time for debriefing at the end of the lesson. The suggested activities might sometimes take longer than indicated. Feel free to alter and omit activities to ensure that you address the specific needs of your class.
- Discuss the content of these lessons with the SPHE team at your school. They may not all be trained in how to deliver these lessons or in how to teach SPHE. Ensure that the principal and parents are aware of the programme and when it will be taught in school. Parents (or in the case of a student over 18, the student him/ herself) have a right to request that a student does not attend lessons on the basis that they disagree with the content. A sample letter to parents is included in Appendix 4 of the Lockers resource.

What is Coco's Law?

Getting Started – Preparing for the lesson

- Establish ground rules around classroom behaviour and etiquette before attempting to introduce the sensitive topics addressed in this programme. Sample ground rules are provided in the lesson.
- Give students time to develop the level of emotional literacy needed to access all content. It is advised that this topic not be introduced until after students have developed their emotional-literacy skills in modules such as 'How I see myself and others' and 'Being an adolescent'.
- Be mindful that students' views on why intimate images are sent or received can vary by gender. Research shows that girls often see unsolicited explicit images from boys as invasive and inappropriate, while boys are more likely to view sending these images as a way to impress, flirt, or initiate something sexual encounters.
- Promote strong home/school links. Due to the amount of time young people spend online in the home environment, it is important to gain parents support in reinforcing appropriate behaviour online. Webwise provide additional supports to help parents talk with confidence to their children about the benefits and risks of the online environment, including Parent's Guide to A Better Internet available to download at webwise.ie/parents/.

What is Coco's Law?

Understanding the Harassment, Harmful Communication and Related Offences Act 2020

During the Lesson:

- Remind students of the class agreement, particularly around respectful listening, not sharing personal stories, and understanding the limits of confidentiality.
- Highlight that if there are any disclosures indicating abuse of underage sexual activity you are obliged to report the incident.
- Avoid discussing cases familiar to the students, focus discussion on the scenarios presented in the lessons.
- **Use the law as context, not as a scare tactic:** The law is there to protect people, not criminalise them. Avoid moral panic and stick to the facts.
- If complex legal questions come up, remind students that each case is judged individually by the legal system. You're not a legal expert and you don't need to be. Additional legal detail is provided **if required** in script provided.
- Check the students' emotional state, before and after the lesson. This could be done by asking students how they feel about the topic about to be explored, before the lesson and by then asking if their feelings have changed at the end of the lesson (an emoji chart can be useful as a visual prompt).
- If a student makes a disclosure that raises concern, follow the Child Protection Procedures without delay.
- Don't assume students know what they're possibly doing is illegal, many don't.
- Be respectful, calm, and non-judgmental. The tone of the room sets the tone for what they'll take from the lesson.
- Build in time for student reflection and debriefing.
- Be ready to pause the lesson if strong emotions come up. Always follow your school's Child Protection and welfare reporting procedures if there are concerns about a student's safety.

What is Coco's Law?

Understanding the Harassment, Harmful Communication and Related Offences Act 2020

After the Lesson:

- Check in with the emotional state of students at the conclusion of the lesson. An emoji visual prompt can be useful to gauge responses.
- Report any Child Protection concerns or welfare concerns using your school's referral process, if concerns arose.
- Build on the learning from this lesson into future classroom discussions. When covering topics like consent (3.8), respectful communication (1.7), healthy versus unhealthy relationships (3.3), setting boundaries (3.4), emotional wellbeing (4.5), or recognising abusive behaviour (4.6) as part of the NCCA Junior Cycle Specification, you can refer to Coco's Law and the protections it offers.

Learning Intentions:

- Students will be able to recognise the key offences under the Harassment, Harmful Communication and Related Offences Act 2020.
- Students will understand that their online actions have consequences for both themselves and others and that they are accountable for their actions.
- Students will feel empowered to speak up about online sexual harassment and know where to go for help if it occurs.

Wellbeing Indicators:

- Responsible
- Connected
- Aware
- Resilient
- Respected

What is Coco's Law?

Lesson Plan

Curriculum Links Junior Cycle SPHE:

- 1.7 communicate in a respectful and effective manner and listen openly and sensitively to the views/feelings of others
- 2.4 demonstrate skills and strategies to help make informed choices that support health and wellbeing and apply them in real-life situations that may be stressful and/or involve difficult peer situations.
- 2.7 assess the benefits and difficulties associated with their online world and discuss strategies for dealing with a range of scenarios that might arise
- 2.9 explore why young people share sexual imagery online and examine the risks and consequences of doing this.
- 2.10 demonstrate how to access and appraise appropriate and trustworthy information, supports and services about health and wellbeing.
- 3.4 appreciate the importance of setting healthy boundaries in relationships and consider how to show respect for the boundaries of others.

Curriculum Links Senior Cycle SPHE:

Students should be able to:

- 2.3 discuss the need for consent and the importance of care, respect, empathy, trust and mutual pleasure within a sexual relationship
- 2.8 discuss image-based abuse, sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape and what to do and how to seek support if they or someone they know has experienced any of these

Resources Needed:

- Computer and Overhead projector with sound.
- PowerPoint presentation
- Copies of Appendix 4 – One for every two people.
- 'No Excuses' Intimate Images Video: [youtube.com/watch?v=I7yQcyPWu8M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I7yQcyPWu8M)

Methodologies: Pair work, Scenarios, Q&A.

'What is Coco's Law?' 3rd-5th Year Lesson

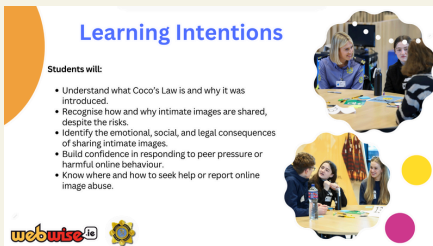
Script

Slide 1: Introduction

Timing: 1 minute

Script:

Today we are going to discuss the Harassment, Harmful Communication and Related Offences Act 2020. That's a mouthful, isn't it? Some of you may have heard of it before under a different name, Coco's Law. This is a new piece of legislation and we think it is important for you to know what it contains. The lesson is called; What is Coco's Law?, as hopefully by the end of this session everyone will have a clear understanding of this law and the part we all play in upholding it.



Learning Intentions

Students will:

- Understand what Coco's Law is and why it was introduced.
- Recognise how and why intimate images are shared, despite the risks.
- Identify the emotional, social, and legal consequences of sharing intimate images.
- Build confidence in responding to peer pressure or harmful online behaviour.
- Know where and how to seek help or report online image abuse.

weboise

Slide 2: Learning Outcomes

Timing: 2 minutes

Script:

1. Understand what Coco's Law is and why it was introduced.
 2. Recognise how and why intimate images are shared, despite the risks.
 3. Identify the emotional, social, and legal consequences of sharing intimate images.
 4. Build confidence in responding to peer pressure or harmful online behaviour.
 5. Know where and how to seek help or report online image abuse.
-

'What is Coco's Law?' 3rd-5th Year Lesson

Script



Slide 3: Class Agreement

Timing: 3 minutes

Teacher Information:

Encourage students to share what they've learned with friends and family, but keep the personal opinions shared, and the names of those who shared them, within the classroom, to support a sense of safety and privacy for students.

Script:

During this lesson, let's continue to remember our class agreement. It applies to this class as much as all other SPHE classes.

Let's quickly run through them again, to ensure that we are all clear on expectations within the SPHE classroom.

Firstly, there will be opportunities for you to ask questions and share opinions, so when you're sharing your thoughts, try to use 'I' statements like 'I think,' 'I feel,' or 'I believe.' This helps ensure the conversation doesn't refer to anyone else's experiences.

Also, please don't share specific examples from your own life or from others. This isn't just to protect privacy, but also to keep the focus on the topic rather than individual situations.

It's really important that everyone gets a chance to speak, so listen carefully when others are talking and try not to interrupt. Show respect in what you say and how you act; avoid any put-downs, rude gestures, or things like eye-rolling. We want to make sure everyone feels comfortable sharing.

Lastly, it is really important that you understand that if you share anything in the group that makes us concerned about your welfare, we can't keep it to ourselves. We have a responsibility to ensure that you are safe and protected, so we may need to take it to the right people to get you the right support.

‘What is Coco’s Law?’ 3rd-5th Year Lesson

Script

Slide 4: Context

Timing: 5 minutes

Script:

In February 2021 the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act was commenced. Sometimes this is known as Coco’s Law, after the 21-year-old woman who’s experience of online harassment spurred legislators to action. This law is in addition to existing legislation which makes it is illegal to send, receive or share any sexually explicit images, video or text of someone under 18 years of age.

Coco’s Law creates two new offences which criminalise the non-consensual distribution of intimate images: Importantly, this applies even if the person initially gave consent for the picture to be taken, but they were later shared with other people without their consent.

There is also a third new offence that has been introduced under the 2020 Act which is also appropriate to note. Section 4 (S.4) of the Act creates an offence of “Distributing, publishing or sending threatening or grossly offensive communication”. This offence will cover situations where the perpetrator distributes or publishes a threat or grossly offensive communications to the victim or about the victim and is likely to be used to address cyberbullying. This offence requires an intent to cause harm by the perpetrator, s.4(2) a person intends to cause harm where he or she, by his or her acts, intentionally seriously interferes with the other person’s peace and privacy or causes alarm or distress to the other person. It can cover once-off threatening or grossly offensive communications

Play the following video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I7yQcyPWu8M>

Once the clip is completed...

This legislation covers more than just what is depicted in the video and hopefully by the end of this session we will have teased out the main points of the new legislation which are important to know.

‘What is Coco’s Law?’ 3rd-5th Year Lesson

Script

Slide 5: Social media and relationships

Timing: 7 minutes

Script:

Technology and social media now play a key role in creating and sustaining relationships. In groups of 2 or 3, I want you to identify:

- two ways that social media can help form relationships
- two ways it helps maintain them.

Teacher Information:

Give the students about 4 minutes to discuss this and then take some feedback. Acknowledge their input without critiquing their answers. This is important as they might have different ideas and experiences of social media’s role in their relationships. This feedback will give you a good idea of where the room is at with relationship and their comfort level with participating.

If students are reluctant to volunteer answers, throw out a few ideas...

- Did any group discuss dating apps?
- How about looking someone up online to find out their interests, did any group discuss that?
- What were your thoughts on texting versus phone calls?

'What is Coco's Law?' 3rd-5th Year Lesson

Script

Slide 5: Social media and relationships

Timing: 4 minutes

Teacher Information:

Once this section is complete, click to add the following questions to the slide:

- Are there any downsides to technology when it comes to relationships?

Similarly, give then 2-3 minutes to discuss this question and then take some feedback. The potential range of answers for the question are vast. Anything from, always being contactable / FOMO – Fear of missing out / comparing your relationships to celebrities / misunderstanding the tone of a message / seeing all your friends in relationships when you are not.....etc.

Take feedback and don't comment on it (unless they break the rules in the previous slide, in which case stop them). This is the students opportunity to express their concerns.

Once you feel that all the major points are covered, then proceed;

We know how useful technology and social media is for keeping people connected. Unfortunately though, sometimes social media can cause problems for people in their relationships. This new law has been passed to help create a clear understanding of safe boundaries around technology and social media in relationships.

‘What is Coco’s Law?’ 3rd-5th Year Lesson

Script

Slide 7: Keywords

Timing: 1 minute

Script:

These words are going to be used in our discussion of the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act. It is important we all have a clear understanding of what they mean. So in pairs [ask the teacher to help you with ensuring that every child is in a group] discuss what you understand these words to mean.

Teacher Information: This activity might get some people embarrassed and we will not be taking feedback in case the students get the term wrong. The purpose is not to assess their understanding, but to get an opportunity to clarify any misunderstanding.

Slides 7-9: Jargon Busting

Timing: 2 minutes

Script:

What are genitals? The sexual organs; the testicles, penis and vulva

What is meant by intimate image?

s.1 of the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offence Act sets out that an intimate image is a visual representation:

- (a) of what is, or pretends to be the person’s genitals, buttocks or anal region and, in the case of a female, her breasts,
- (b) of the underwear covering the person’s genitals, buttocks or anal region and, in the case of a female, her breasts,
- c) in which the person is nude, or
- (d) in which the person is engaged in sexual activity.

‘What is Coco’s Law?’ 3rd-5th Year Lesson

Script

Slides 7-9: Jargon Busting

Child Pornography (also referred to as child sexual abuse images) is defined in s.2 of the Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 and it can be described as any audio, or visual, or written depiction of children & young people (under 18) in a sexually explicit manner in images, videos or in written text.

Deepfakes

Deepfakes are fake videos created using digital software, machine learning and face swapping. Deepfakes are computer-created artificial videos in which images are combined to create new footage that depicts events, statements or action that never actually happened. The results can be quite convincing. Deepfakes differ from other forms of false information by being very difficult to identify as false.

Additional Legal Information

Deepfake is not defined in legislation but the legislation is broad enough to cover ‘deepfakes’ – s.2 of the Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 includes ‘any representation, description or information produced by or from computer-graphics or by any other electronic or mechanical means’.

s.1 of the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offence Act includes any representation which ‘purports to be the person’s genitals, buttocks or anal region and, in the case of a female, her breasts’.

Coercion means to persuade someone to do something by using force or threats.

Additional Legal Information

The offence of Coercion is defined in law in s.9 of the Non Fatal Offence Act 1997.

‘What is Coco’s Law?’ 3rd-5th Year Lesson

Script

Slides 7-9: Jargon Busting

s.9

(1) A person who, with a view to compel another to abstain from doing or to do any act which that other has a lawful right to do or to abstain from doing, wrongfully and without lawful authority —

(a) uses violence to or intimidates that other person or a member of the family F10[or the civil partner within the meaning of the Civil Partnership and Certain Rights and Obligations of Cohabitants Act 2010] of the other, or

(b) injures or damages the property of that other, or

(c) persistently follows that other about from place to place, or
(d) watches or besets the premises or other place where that other resides, works or carries on business, or happens to be, or the approach to such premises or place, or

(e) follows that other with one or more other persons in a disorderly manner in or through any public place,

Sexually Explicit: According to the Child Trafficking and Pornography Act, any photo, video or audio recording that shows a child engaged in sexually explicit activity, or that focuses specifically on the genital region of a child is considered as child pornography and thus illegal.

Ultimately only a court would decide if particular content could be considered illegal under this section.

Additional Legal Information

While the Child Trafficking and Pornography Act does not refer to provocative, or sexually suggestive material it is possible that such material could be deemed criminal given The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017 in s.2 defines “sexual activity” as meaning ‘any activity where a reasonable person would consider that —

(a) whatever its circumstances or the purpose of any person in relation to it, the activity is because of its nature sexual, or

(b) because of its nature the activity may be sexual and because of its circumstances or the purposes of any person in relation to it (or both) the activity is sexual;

Child abuse material in practice is separated into categories for sentencing, provocative and suggestive material is often still considered child abuse material though at the lower end of the scale.

‘What is Coco’s Law?’ 3rd-5th Year Lesson

Script

Slides 7-9: Jargon Busting

Consent by the child, or person, depicted is not a defence to charges under the Child Trafficking and Pornography Act . Consent is a defence to sexual activity with a child under the age of 17 where, and only where, the defendant –

- (a) is younger or less than 2 years older than the child,
- (b) was not, at the time of the alleged commission of the offence, a person in authority in respect of the child, and
- (c) was not, at the time of the alleged commission of the offence, in a relationship with the child that was intimidatory or exploitative of the child.

This is set out in s.3(8) of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2006, as amended.

Sexting: Sending, receiving or forwarding of images, videos & text that are sexually explicit.

Please note: Sexting is not defined in legislation.

Slides 10: Some key points

Timing: 2 minutes

Script:

- An intimate image includes an image of a person in their underwear. The person in the image or video does not need to be naked or fully undressed.
- The wide definition of “publish” **will include** the distribution of an image or video on WhatsApp, Snapchat or any other social media platform.
- A picture or a video of a person engaged in sexual activity is also included. For a picture or video involving sexual activity, the person depicted can be fully clothed and it will still constitute an intimate image.
- A photoshopped picture or a “deepfake” video will constitute an intimate image if it is pretending to be an image or video of that person. Therefore, photoshopping a person’s face onto a naked body, will be an offence under the Act.

‘What is Coco’s Law?’ 3rd-5th Year Lesson

Script

Slide 11 – Other applicable laws

Please note: The term child pornography is still used in legislation in Ireland. For the purposes of highlighting the relevant legislation on this slide we have used the legal term. The preferred term is Child sexual abuse material. In non-legal contexts the term Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) should be used.

Coco's Law is in addition to existing legislation which makes it is illegal to send, receive or share any sexually explicit images, video or text of someone under 18 years of age.

Under 18? It is illegal to...

Send sexually explicit images, video or text of yourself to someone

Why?

Produced and distributed Child Pornography

Under 18? It is illegal to...

Receive sexually explicit images, video or text of yourself to someone

Why?

In possession of child pornography.

Under 18? It is illegal to...

Share sexually explicit images, video or text of someone under 18 to someone else

Why?

Distributed child pornography

Important Note: The Child Trafficking and Pornography Act states that the creation, distribution and possession of child pornography are all illegal. This could be interpreted as meaning that anyone who creates, sends, shares, stores or even just receives explicit images of a child under the age of 17 could potentially be prosecuted under the 1998 Act. In cases of self-generated explicit content or ‘nude selfies’, the person him/herself can be the creator, distributor and possessor of illegal content. **The law in this area was designed to protect children from exploitation and not to criminalise their reckless acts. That said, approaches will differ from Garda Station to Garda Station.**

‘What is Coco’s Law?’ 3rd-5th Year Lesson

Script

Slide 12: Scenarios – Has an offence occurred?

Timing: 10 minutes

Teacher Information: Distribute Photocopies of Appendix 4 and get the students in their pairs to discuss the scenarios. This is a key element of the session, as by giving them an opportunity to discuss the scenarios they are teasing out the issues without you needing to explicitly go through each element of the legislation. This will probably take about 10 minutes – don’t try and hurry it along. Circulate around the room and ask probing questions if you can (health and safety permitting).

Note – The A Scenarios are suitable for 3rd year (slides 12-18), the B Scenarios (slides 19-25) should only be used with students in 4th year and up.

Slides 13-25 – Answers to scenarios

Bring the class back to focus and discuss their answers. Use the slides and answers on Appendix 5 to help. It will emerge after a few slides, that all of the scenarios are offences under the legislation. In all likelihood questions will then emerge about prosecution and sentencing.

If they do, state that the Gardaí have an obligation to investigate all allegations and present their findings to the Director of Public Prosecutions. It is up to the DPP if a child under 17 years of age can/will be charged with an offence under this particular Act.

‘What is Coco’s Law?’ 3rd-5th Year Lesson

Script

Slide x Scenarios A – Answers (suitable for 3rd year up)

1. This is an offence. Section. 4 of the act may be used to prosecute the unsolicited sending of “nude selfies” to persons. Sending “nude selfies” could constitute an offence of exposure, offensive conduct of a sexual nature under S.45 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017.

Additional Legal Information

Exposure under s.45(1) requires an intent to cause fear, distress or alarm to another person.

s.45(2) sets out specific conduct which is an offence [sending nude photos is not prescribed conduct.]

Under s.45(3) it is an offence for a person who intentionally engages in offensive conduct of a sexual nature.

2. This is an offence. It is an intimate image of John as he is in his underwear and John did not consent for the photo to be taken. By sending it to someone John’s “Friends” published it.

3. This is not an offence as the image is not explicit and is shared consensually.

Important: While this scenario is not an offence, a bikini photo is capable of being an intimate image as there is little practical distinction between a bikini and underwear.

4. This is an offence. A threat to distribute the image is sufficient to trigger the provisions of the Act, even if the image is never sent to anyone. Furthermore, even if the threat was a joke and the person who made the threat never actually intended to share the image, it is still an offence. While it is correct that it is irrelevant if there is no intent to share the image, intent to or recklessness as, to cause harm is required for criminal liability to accrue.

‘What is Coco’s Law?’ 3rd-5th Year Lesson

Script

Additional Legal Information

s.2(1) (b) of the Acts requires the defendant ‘with intent to cause harm to, or being reckless as to whether or not harm is caused to, the other person

For criminal liability to accrue the person making the threat must have an intent to cause harm, or be reckless whether harm is caused.

Reckless as a matter of law requires a person to know there is a risk that their conduct would bring about the consequence of their conduct(harm), and nonetheless proceed with the conduct .

5. This is an offence. “Up-skirting” is covered in the legislation under section 3. that recording an intimate image such as a person’s genital area is an offence. S.3 also requires that the conduct seriously interferes with that other person’s peace and privacy or causes alarm, distress or harm to that other person. ‘Up-skirting’ is behaviour likely to interfere with the victim’s peace and privacy.

6. This is not an offence as the image is not explicit and is shared consensually.

7. This is an offence under section 3 as it is an intimate image taken without consent. **It is important to note that there is no requirement to distribute the intimate image and the recording is sufficient on its own to complete the offence.**

8. This is not an offence as the image is shared on Ian’s timeline consensually and he is happy to join in on the banter around the image.

‘What is Coco’s Law?’ 3rd-5th Year Lesson

Script

Scenarios B –Answers (suitable for 4th year up, not suitable for 3rd year)

1. This is not an offence as the image is shared consensually.

2. This is an offence. A person who by any means (i) distributes or publishes any threatening or grossly offensive communication about another person, or (ii) sends any threatening or grossly offensive communication to another person with the intent to cause harm will have committed an offence.

3. This is an offence. Even though the intimate images are shared consensually, as both students are minors and they are taking and distributing child pornography.

4. This is an offence. Under Section 4 of Coco’s Law, it is an offence to distribute, publish or send a threatening or “grossly offensive communication” to another person, with the intent to cause harm. A person intends to cause harm where he or she, by his or her acts, intentionally or recklessly seriously interferes with the other person’s peace and privacy or causes alarm or distress to the other person. This offence will cover situations where the perpetrator distributes or publishes a threat or grossly offensive communications to the victim or about the victim. It can cover once-off threatening or grossly offensive communications.

5. This is an offence known as Revenge Porn and is covered under Section 2 of the Act. It is the most serious of the new offences introduced under the Act and carries the most serious penalties if convicted. This offence is focused on the distribution and publication, or threat to distribute or publish intimate images with an intent to cause harm or being reckless as to whether harm is caused.

6. This is not an offence as the image is not explicit and is shared consensually.

Important: A bikini photo is capable of being an intimate image as there is little practical distinction between a bikini and underwear.

7. This is not an offence as the image is not explicit and is shared consensually.

‘What is Coco’s Law?’ 3rd-5th Year Lesson

Script

Slide 26 – Coco’s Law Recap

Script: In February 2021 the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act was commenced, known as Coco’s Law.

Does Coco's Law Apply to Minors?

This new Act will apply to minors in the same way. Children who offend will first be considered for diversion and will be prosecuted only in circumstances where the offer of diversion is refused or considered as not suitable given the seriousness of the offending behaviour.

Slide 27 –What should I do?

Script: If you find yourself in a situation where you have been sent a sexually explicit image/video/text that makes you feel uncomfortable it can be embarrassing and distressing and difficult to know what to do.

The following is the recommended course of action: ask the sender to stop, talk to a trusted adult and report it to An Garda Síochána.

It is important that you do not forward this image on to anyone else.

If an intimate image of you has been posted online without your consent you can now report the matter to the Irish Internet Hotline ([hotline.ie](https://www.hotline.ie)) which will help in getting them removed. Reports can also be made to An Garda Síochána

Slides 28 -Where to get help?

Script:

If you found yourself in any of the situations we discussed today – Where would you get help?

Note: Give students a moment to think and then elicit answers from the floor.

ANTICIPATION EXERCISE: WORKSHEET 1

1. Genitals	(A) Sharing private, intimate images or videos of someone without their permission, usually to embarrass or hurt them.
2. Intimate Image	(B) Sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit images, videos, or messages.
3. Sexually Explicit	(C) Giving clear and voluntary permission for something to happen, without any pressure.
4. Child Pornography	(D) The sharing of private images or videos, even with just one other person or online.
5. Consent	(E) Photos, videos, or other materials showing someone under 18 in a sexual way or activity, which is illegal.
6. Deepfakes	(F) A person's private parts, like the penis, testicles, vulva, or breasts.
7. Coercion	(G) Trying to make someone do something by using threats or force.
8. Harm	(H) Realistic fake videos or images made using AI to make it look like someone said or did something they didn't.
9. Revenge Porn	(I) Doing something on purpose to upset someone's privacy or make them feel worried or hurt.
10. Publish	(K) Content, like photos or videos, that clearly shows sexual activity or focuses on someone's private parts.
11. Sexting	(L) Photos or videos that show private parts, someone naked, in their underwear, or involved in a sexual activity.

Worksheet 2.1: Behind the Why...

Reasons why a person might send an intimate image to others	Why they feel that the risk is worth it?	What could go wrong?	How does Coco's Law apply?	Advice as an outsider?
Someone sent it to them, and they forward the picture/ video to their friends.	They don't realise that they are breaking the law by forwarding the picture.	The person in the image or video didn't agree to it being shared. This can have serious emotional consequences for them, and the person who shared it may be committing an offence under Coco's Law.	The person who shared the picture/ video is committing an offence under Coco's law. If the person in the video is under 18, they are also distributing child pornography, which is also against the law.	Don't forward intimate images if they are shared with you. Report it to do your bit and protect the person whose image was shared without their consent.

Worksheet 2.2: Behind the why...

Reflection Questions

1. Which reason for sharing an image surprised you the most, and why?

2. What do you think people often misunderstand about the risks involved in sharing intimate images?

3. How might understanding Coco's Law help someone make a different choice in a high-pressure situation?

4. If a friend was about to share an image of someone else, what would you say to stop them and why?

HELP AND SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

(APPENDIX 1)



Childline

Talk to us for free by calling 1800 66 66 66, or chat to someone online 24 hours a day, every day.

childline.ie/



An Garda Síochána

Ireland's National Police and Security Service

An Garda Síochána

garda.ie/en/



Irish Internet Hotline

www.hotline.ie

Irish Internet Hotline

If an intimate image or video of you has been shared without your consent, we can help with reporting and removing the content online.

[hotline.ie/report/](https:// hotline.ie/report/)





Thank You

This work is made available under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial ShareAlike: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>. You may use and re-use this material (not including images and logos) free of charge in any format or medium, for non-commercial purposes only.



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth



Co-funded by
the European Union