**Focus Group questions for 9-12-year olds – Guidance notes**

Total time: around **1 hour**

***Intro (3 minutes)***

* Introduce names of staff running the focus group
* Introduce your organisation and the work it does
* Introduce your project

We want to talk to you about how children your experience online bullying, how they talk to their friends or fall out with them online, and how they feel about telling someone when they need help. This will help us learn how we can help children who have upsetting experiences online.

For example:

* Someone having an image taken of them not fully dressed and it gets shared around
* Someone gets sent a link to website that has upsetting or rude images of adults without clothes on
* Someone gets called names because they look or act differently to others
* Someone gets pressured to take a photo without clothes on

We also want to find out how these issues make children feel and what you think should be done about it.

Our aim is to make sure that children’s voices are heard so that you have a say in how schools and parents help with these issues. We will be writing advice and resources for schools and parents, as well as getting advice from children on how we can encourage reporting of these issues. Your suggestions and ideas in this discussion will really be helping us to shape the resources we create.

***Ground rules for young people (3 minutes)***

* You do not have to speak if you don’t want to
* You don’t have to join in if you feel uncomfortable
* We are not here to ask about your personal relationships or information, we are here to talk about the bullying and upsetting issues you might have seen or experienced, and your opinions on how these happen.
* You can talk about things you might have heard or seen but please don’t name any names. Eg. Use ‘a friend’ or ‘a person I know’
* Allow everyone to speak and respect their opinions.
* (*Explain that the focus group will be recorded*.) This is to help us remember what was said and write up notes later. Any comments you share will always remain anonymous. In the final copy of the resources we may choose to include some quotes from the focus groups simply recording underneath ‘child aged X, Childnet focus group. ’
* Everything you say is confidential. Please do not share what other people have said outside of this group, except if you are seeking advice from a trusted adult.
* The only time we might have to talk about this discussion with your teachers, is if we are worried a child’s safety is at risk.

***Feedback on language in general (1 minute)***

* During the discussion, please let us know if you think there are any particular words or phrases that children use to describe or talk about these issues.
* You don’t have to change the words you use to describe these things or way you speak– we want to hear how children really talk about these issues.

***Warm up discussion (5 mins***) -– *These are suggestions to help children feel comfortable in the group. You don’t need to ask all of these.*

* Ask group to introduce themselves
* If we turned the internet off tomorrow, what would you miss?
* What apps and games do you like using?

***Would you rather activity (10 minutes)***

*Split group into pairs/three’s.*

*Hand children would you rather cards, allow them 2-3 minutes to sort their sentences.*

Would you rather:

* Gaming or watching videos?
* Sharing things or liking things?
* Everyone see everything you do online, or no-one see anything?
* Spending 1 day a week online, or spend a little bit of time each day a week online?
* Adults know lots about what you do online or adults know nothing about what you do online?

*Make it clear to children everyone will probably have different answers and that is completely fine. There is no right or wrong answer.*

*Read aloud each statement, and give children opportunity to share and compare their views.*

***Scenario based discussion***

*Choose* ***2/3*** *out of the following scenarios. The questions are there to guide the conversation.*

***Scenario 1 (10 minutes)***

***Topics covered: non-consensual taking and sharing of intimate images***

Anisa is 10. She is at her local gymnastics club. She is getting changed in the changing rooms when someone else takes a photo of her getting dressed. They send it around to other people they know, some of whom also go to the same school as Anisa, so its gets shared through her school friends as well as her gym friends.

KEY QUESTIONS

***●*** How would Anisa feel?

● Why do you think they would feel this way?

● How long do you think they would be feeling these things?

● If you saw these things happening to someone else, would it worry you?

***●*** Have you seen these kinds of things happen online? What other similar things to Anisa’s story have you heard about or seen?

● Why might people do these things to each other? Do you think its mean or funny? Do you think it happens more online or offline or both?

● How do other people react online when they see this sort of behaviour?

● Do these sorts of things happen more often to girls? If so, why?

● Do you hear about this happening to older children? Like older friends, siblings or cousins?

● If someone told their parents about these things, how would they react?

***●*** What should Anisa do next?

● If this happened to a friend, what would you tell them to do?

● What might stop them from doing anything?

● If you were going to tell someone, what would make you trust them?

● Should they make a report to the app or place where it has been shared? Why? Do you know what is allowed? What would make it easier?

● What messages do you get told about online safety?

● What do you think you don’t get education on, but would like more information?

● Do you think young people need more information/education about the issues we talked about? Would you like to find out more?

● What types of things should be covered?

● Who should do this work and teach children about it??

● What types of messages would work? What would be the best way?

● What kind of resources/materials would you like to use to learn about these issues?

***Scenario 2 (10 minutes)***

***Topics covered: Sexual content (e.g pornography) shared to others without consent***

Ben is in Year (6/7 – choose same as group). A friend tells him about something they saw online which sounded very rude which showed pictures of older people without their clothes on. Later that evening, he gets a message from the same friend that has a link in it. He clicks the link and it takes him to a website that has more videos of people without clothes on.

KEY QUESTIONS

* How would Ben feel?

● Why do you think they would feel this way?

● How long do you think they would be feeling these things?

● If you heard about these things happening to someone else, would it worry you?

***●*** Have you seen these kinds of things happen online? What other things similar things have you heard about or seen?

● Why might people do these things to each other? Do you think its mean or funny? Do you think it happens more online or offline or both?

● How do other people react online when they see this sort of behaviour?

● Do these sorts of things happen more often to girls or boy? Why?

● Do you hear about this happening to older children? Like older friends, siblings or cousins?

● If someone told their parents about these things, how would they react?

***●*** What should Ben do next? Do you think he will do that?

● If this happened to a friend, what would you tell them to do?

● What might stop them from doing anything?

● If you were going to tell someone, what would make you trust them?

● Should Ben make a report to the app or place where Ben saw this? Why? Do you know what is allowed? What would make it easier?

● What messages do you get told about online safety?

● What do you think you don’t get education on, but would like more information?

● Do you think young people need more information/education about the issues we talked about? Would you like to find out more?

● What types of things should be covered?

● Who should do this work and teach children about it??

● What types of messages would work? What would be the best way?

● What kind of resources/materials would you like to use to learn about these issues?

***Scenario 3 (10 minutes)***

***Topics covered: homophobic comments and reactions to gender non- conforming behaviour***

Molly has Instagram and loves using it to take selfies of her and her friends. Molly has short hair, and sometimes people mistake her for a boy when they first meet her. She gets a few comments online on her photos that make fun of her for looking like a boy, and not being very ‘girly’.

KEY QUESTIONS

* How would Molly feel?

● Why do you think they would feel this way?

● How long do you think they would be feeling these things?

● If you heard about these things happening to someone else, does it worry you?

***●*** Have you seen these kinds of things happen online? What other things similar things have you heard about or seen?

● Why might people do these things to each other? Do you think its mean or funny? Do you think it happens more online or offline or both?

● How do other people react online when they see this sort of behaviour?

● Do these sorts of things happen more often to girls or boy? Why?

● Do you hear about this happening to older children? Like older friends, siblings or cousins?

● If someone told their parents about these things, how would they react?

***●*** What should Molly do next? Do you think she will do that?

● If this happened to a friend, what would you tell them to do?

● What might stop them from doing anything?

● If you were going to tell someone, what would make you trust them?

● Should Molly make a report to the app or place where she gets the comments? Why? Do you know what is allowed? What would make it easier?

● What messages do you get told about online safety?

● What do you think you don’t get education on, but would like more information?

● Do you think young people need more information/education about the issues we talked about? Would you like to find out more?

● What types of things should be covered?

● Who should do this work and teach children about it??

● What types of messages would work? What would be the best way?

● What kind of resources/materials would you like to use to learn about these issues?

***Scenario 4***

***Topics covered: jokes of a sexual nature/pressuring someone for a sexual image of themselves.***

Jonas is in a group chat with his whole year group. He gets added to a smaller group chat by some other people in his year. He kind of knows them, but they are not really good friends. At first, he likes the attention. After a while, one person in the chat sends him a private message asking Jonas to send a picture of himself without his underwear on. It starts as a joke where they keep telling him they find him attractive, but he has a feeling they are not being serious. They keep asking Jonas for a photo and putting pressure on him to do it.

KEY QUESTIONS

* How would Jonas feel?

● Why do you think they would feel this way?

● How long do you think they would be feeling these things?

● If you heard about these things happening to someone else, does it worry you?

***●*** Have you seen these kinds of things happen online? What other things similar things have you heard about or seen?

● Why might people do these things to each other? Do you think its mean or funny? Do you think it happens more online or offline or both?

● How do other people react online when they see this sort of behaviour?

● Do these sorts of things happen more often to girls or boy? Why?

● Do you hear about this happening to older children? Like older friends, siblings or cousins?

● If someone told their parents about these things, how would they react?

***●*** What should Jonas do next? Do you think she will do that?

● If this happened to a friend, what would you tell them to do?

● What might stop them from doing anything?

● If you were going to tell someone, what would make you trust them?

● Should Jonas make a report to the app or place where this is happening? Why? Do you know what is allowed? What would make it easier?

● What messages do you get told about online safety?

● What do you think you don’t get education on, but would like more information?

● Do you think young people need more information/education about the issues we talked about? Would you like to find out more?

● What types of things should be covered?

● Who should do this work and teach children about it??

● What types of messages would work? What would be the best way?

● What kind of resources/materials would you like to use to learn about these issues?

***Last question:***

* Are there any issues we have not covered today that you think are important?

***Debrief (5 minutes)***

* *Thank the young people for their maturity when talking about these issues.*
* *Remind the young people to not share details with other young people outside of the group. Remember the ground rules we agreed at the start.*
* *Share what we’ve learned and what we’ll take away*
* *Remind young people of the recording taken.* This is to help us remember what was said and write up notes later. Comments shared by you will always remain anonymous. In the final copy of the resources we may choose to include some quotes from the focus groups simply recording underneath ‘child, age, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ focus group. ‘ (edit as necessary)
* *Next steps*. Your feedback will be used to help us understand these issues in more depth and to help us create a resource that will help children get through difficult experiences online, and to encourage people to report them.
* The resource will be ready to be trialled next year.
* If something we have spoken about today has worried you, or upset you, and you’d like more information, you should talk to a teacher, parent, or someone you trust for advice. See the ‘Further Information’ sheet for more places to get advice.
* Thank group for their time. Any other questions?
* **HAND OUT DEBRIEFING SHEET (example included in supporting document *d. Consent forms – focus groups with 9-12 year olds*)**