Media Literacy in the Digitalised Era: Supporting Teachers through a Whole-School Approach

MeLDE

Module 4: E-Safety

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Module 4: E-Safety

DESCRIPTION

This module aims to introduce teachers to a range of scenarios and ways to stay safe online. Issues like risks and responsibilities online, protecting personal data, online disinformation and harmful content, digital copyright, and cyberbullying effective and ineffective practice will be discussed.

Module 4: E-Safety

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Module 4: E-Safety

SYLLABUS

Topic 1: Risks and responsibilities online

- Potential threats to hardware and software
- Threats to Data and Information
- Ways of reporting Internet scammers
- Online rights and responsibilities

Topic 2: Protecting personal data

- Create and Keep Strong Passwords
- Importance of Updated Antimalware Software and Operating System
- Vulnerability of Mobile Devices and Ways to Keep them Secure
- Malicious Emails
- Ways of Protecting Personal Data on Social Networking Sites

Topic 3: Digital Copyrights

- Discuss new legal policy developments in copyright law and understand how copyright law has adapted to the digital age.
- Understand how to protect digital content created and published by you or your students
- Understand plagiarism and how it can be avoided in the age of information overload where the content can be used and reused in a variety of ways by countless sources
- Explore series of open access sources and understand what and when can digital content be used and reused for educational purposes
- Work in groups to produce a digital copyright short, easy-to-read manual for their schools

Module 4: E-Safety

SYLLABUS

Topic 4: Online misinformation and harmful content

- The difference between a genuine and a copycat website

- Evaluate and report fake websites

- The concept of 'fake news' and how to evaluate and identify them

- Why it is important to report fake websites and their detrimental impact on democracy, society and individuals

Topic 5: Cyberbullying

- What cyberbullying is and why it is important

- Different forms of cyberbullying

- Identify students who are victims of cyberbullying in a variety of ways

- Actions that will help students who are victims of cyberbullying

- The importance of having a cyberbullying intervention and prevention strategy in schools

Topic 4: Online disinformation and harmful content

BRIEF DESCRIPTION AND SUB-TOPICS

This topic introduces teachers to a series of Internet frauds (Internet scammers, fake websites) and aims to raise awareness and teach individuals how to spot phishing emails, fake websites and fake news and how to protect themselves from Internet scammers. In addition, the topic highlights the importance of a clean healthy online environment, teaching the participants how everyone can contribute to keeping our online environment free of fake news.

The following will be discussed:

➢ The difference between a genuine and a copycat website

➢ Evaluate and report fake websites

➢ The concept of 'fake news' and how to evaluate and identify it

➢ Why it is important to report fake websites and their detrimental impact on democracy, society and individuals

Topic 4: Online disinformation and harmful content

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A GENUINE AND A COPYCAT WEBSITE

Nowadays copycat websites tend to have a very similar look and feel to the genuine site. The logo and branding of the official site are often included and the sites are very realistic and deceptive. The main purpose of these websites is to obtain money from users or phish their personal data, like credit cards, bank accounts or just their log in credentials, in order to harm them and gain money illegally.

Copycat websites are even using tools and search engine optimisation (SEO), in order to be better ranked on search engines so that users would not question their credibility.

The biggest problem is that these sites are not always illegal, so it is crucial to be able to spot the tell-tale signs of a copycat website.

There are some common themes and features that copycat websites adopt, that can help a user to distinguish them from the genuine, official sites:

1. They use paid search engine advertisements

   ➢ The paid search engine advertisements are at the top of the search engine page, marked with the tag 'Ad' next to their URL. The genuine sites often appear in the organic SEO section, bellow the ads segment of the search engine results.

2. They use a similar URL with the genuine site

   ➢ Pay close attention to the URL of a page. The suffix of the URL will indicate if the site is official or copycat. For example, if the suffix is 'gov.uk', this indicates that the site is authentic. Otherwise, if the suffix is a '.org', it is not certain that the site is official.

Topic 4: Online disinformation and harmful content

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A GENUINE AND A COPYCAT WEBSITE

3. Read the homepage carefully

   ➤ Check for any grammatical or spelling mistakes that would indicate that the site is not very professional, before you enter any personal data/information. The footer of a genuine site is usually dedicated to information about a business or agency.

4. Check the payment options

   ➤ If a site has a bank transfer as a payment option, this should alert you that it is a potentially copycat website. The right to get your money back when you have used a bank transfer is less strong than when you have used a credit card, debit card or a Paypal account.

5. Check the connection security indicators (http or https)

   ➤ At the beginning of the URL there is the connection security indicator 'http::/' or 'https://'. The last one indicates that the site is encrypted in order to protect the user's details ('s' stands for 'secure'). Unfortunately, a secure connection doesn't always indicate that the site is safe. Many fake websites use free SSL certificates.

6. Check for online reviews

   ➤ Both copycat and genuine websites might have reviews. Always check to see that these reviews have come from a variety of independent sources and were posted on various dates. Look out for strange or lots of similar reviews, as they may indicate an internal or paid-for source and not a genuine customer.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A GENUINE AND A COPYCAT WEBSITE

7. Check for trust marks

   ➢ In Europe, there are several trust marks for a genuine site. These logos, however do not guarantee a genuine site as someone could have copied them. These marks should be judged along with the overall website.

Topic 4: Online disinformation and harmful content

HOW TO REPORT FAKE WEBSITES

If you have given money to a suspected copycat website, the first step is to demand a refund. If this doesn't work then you should report the website to the appropriate government department, agency or local government organisation.

You can also report the website through the following ways:

- https://safebrowsing.google.com/safebrowsing/report_badware/
- https://www.mozilla.org/en-US/about/legal/fraud-report/
- https://www.econsumer.gov/#crnt
- Internet explorer: Go to Tools, Safety, select "Report Unsafe Website"

Topic 4: Online disinformation and harmful content

'FAKE NEWS': HOW TO EVALUATE, IDENTIFY AND REPORT THEM

Fake news includes articles that are intentionally and verifiably false, and could mislead readers.

In order to evaluate a news article you can search on the following sites to find out if the story has already been shown as false:

➢ http://www.google.com

➢ http://www.snopes.com

➢ http://www.factcheck.org/

➢ http://leadstories.com

➢ https://truthorfiction.com

➢ https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/

If you want to evaluate if a picture is 'fake news' you can search on these sites:

➢ https://www.tineye.com/

➢ https://www.getsurfsafe.com/

Topic 4: Online disinformation and harmful content

'FAKE NEWS': HOW TO EVALUATE AND IDENTIFY IT

To work out whether something in 'fake news' you can:

➢ Read the "about us" section of the site, which will state openly if the site is a fake news one, but a satire or entertainment one.

➢ Check the page links and if there aren't any, chances are that the site is fake.

➢ Check if another news page has reported the same story. If not it might be made up.

➢ Check if the reporter has quoted more than one source and what do you know about the people quoted.

➢ Check the evidence the reporter provides for their story.

➢ Check for pop-up advertisements and clickbait. Many fake news sites get paid for posting ads, that readers click on.

➢ Check the punctuation of the article and for words that play on emotions. Multiple exclamation points and words that written on capital letters, give away a probable fake news article.

Topic 4: Online disinformation and harmful content

THE IMPORTANCE OF REPORTING FAKE WEBSITES

The public is not well equipped in order to separate quality and genuine information from false and fake information. Unfortunately, there is no easy way to fix the problem, even if Facebook and Google are trying to do so by tweaking their algorithms. The real solution must come from the consumers who need to be more skeptical and better equipped to rate the quality of information they encounter and report the fake websites.

For this reason, it is important that the consumers are trained to media literacy and equipped with tools that will allow them to distinguish the legitimacy of information.
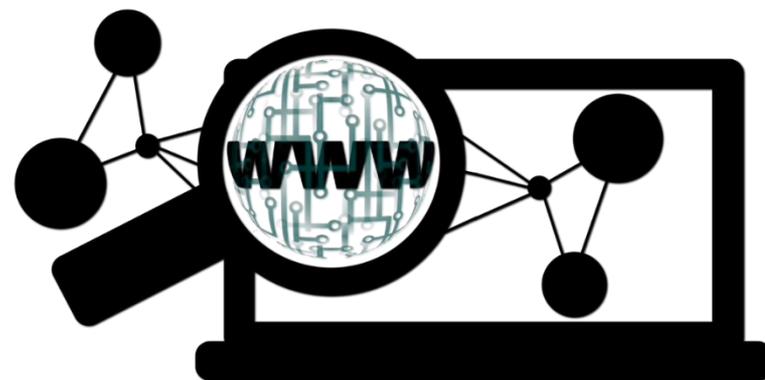
Topic 1: Risks and responsibilities online

SUMMARY

In this topic teachers were introduced to a series of Internet frauds (Internet scammers, fake websites), phishing emails, fake websites and fake news and how to protect themselves from Internet scammers.

Have any questions?
You can find us at http://meldeproject.eu

A few things to remember:

➢ Copycat websites tend to have a very similar look and feel to the genuine site.

➢ The main purpose of these websites is to obtain money from users or phish their personal data, like credit cards, bank accounts or just their log in credentials, in order to harm them and gain money illegally.

➢ If you have given money to a suspected copycat website, the first step is to demand a refund. If this doesn't work then you should report the website to the appropriate government department, agency or local government organisation.

➢ Fake news includes articles that are intentionally and verifiably false, and could mislead readers.

Topic 4: Online disinformation and harmful content

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Module 4: E-Safety

EXTRA RESOURCES

A list of extra resources that can be in the form of text, video etc.

1. How false news can spread - Noah Tavlin:

   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSKGa_7XJkg&feature=youtu.be

2. How to separate fact and fiction online | Markham Nolan:

   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sNV4yIyXXX0

Module 4: E-Safety

GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Fake News	False stories that appear to be news, spread on the internet, usually created to influence political views or as a joke.