

BE.SAFE

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this communication is to disseminate the BE.SAFE project which is an Erasmus + KA204 (Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices - Strategic Partnerships for adult education) project that began in September 2017. The partnership is formed by 5 partners, Poland, Portugal, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Belgium and Czech Republic, which represents an important combination of expertise and experiences.

Project is aimed on enabling educators who are providing education to persons with intellectual disability (ID) to mainstream the information about cyber violence into their educational programmes and empower persons with ID to stay safe online.

As a first step, project partners collected case studies which demonstrate the examples of situations in which persons with intellectual disability can be victims of cyber violence. Based on ethical standards, partners collected experience of persons with ID, which are the basis for the curriculum and training materials.

The case studies collection, the database, as well as the curriculum and other training materials that will be developed as intellectual outputs of the project, will be publicly available under open-license and in six languages, as well as in easy-to-read versions, which will be accessible to persons with ID. The final outputs quality will be controlled by persons with ID to ensure their relevance and appropriateness, as well as their accessibility and the adequacy of the method.

Additionally, partners will prepare a digital guide for police and other services with useful tips, a set of statements in easy to read text and infographics or pictograms which could be used during the interview with a person with intellectual disability. These materials will be prepared to computers, tablets and smartphones and could be used as AAC (Alternative and Augmentative Communication) tool during the interview with a person with disability who cannot communicate well.

1. INTRODUCTION

Today's world is based on the internet and social media. Ability to use the Internet, finding information, resources, and contact with others is now a requirement that makes an element of everyday life, for socialising, learning or getting a job placement even when no other qualification is required. People with intellectual disability also use the Internet more frequently and to manage more and more functions. What is more, they are encouraged to use new tools, as they are enabling their full inclusion into the society like nothing has before.

But anyone may be subject to cyber-violence and it is easy to conclude that people with ID are much more prone to this type of violence.

With this in mind, there is a great and urging need to develop tools that will help persons with intellectual disabilities cope with violence online. There is no service or space where persons with ID can get necessary support. This projects is an attempt to fill in the gap. Project objectives are to give educators and persons with ID necessary knowledge about the dangers of the internet, help them deal with cyber violence and find support that they need when they are exposed to it.

2. CASE STUDIES

Project partners collected 20 case studies which demonstrate the examples of situations in which persons with intellectual disabilities were victims of cyber violence. For example: Diogo is a 17-year-old with moderate intellectual disability and he is institutionalized. He is completing compulsory schooling, but with a specific individual curriculum, he has a reasonable oral expression, can read and write small sentences. Usually he uses internet to see music videos and Facebook. He started talking through Facebook with a stranger who asked for several personal information and set up a meeting at the Mall, but the young man was afraid and missed the meeting. He solved the situation on his own and went back to using the internet the same way, he's just careful not to talk to strangers. Collected cases are enriched by comments of psychologists: cyberbullying is a form of aggression that is often more insidious than traditional bullying. In victimization and aggression experiments, studies show that victims often have feelings of vulnerability or shame. Generally, the emotions experienced in the victims of cyberbullying are sadness, anger, sometimes will of revenge, fear, humiliation, will to flee, insecurity. Two key areas of intervention must therefore be considered: prevention and intervention. From the set of good practices known to prevent cyberbullying, we highlight:

- Use of pseudonyms or several, depending on the social network used (not to add information or not use the full name);
- Do not provide personal information (address, telephone number, date of birth, school, class and class schedule);
- Use different passwords according to the networks, email used;
- Choose a profile photo that is not too personal or that identifies us (anyone can copy and use);
- Do not provide detailed information about our day-to-day family life;
- Respect the privacy of the other, i.e. not sharing in our networks information about other colleagues;
- Restrict people who have access to the profile and choose carefully who is added as a friend;
- Be aware when a virtual "friend" wants a meeting (it assumes that he/she already know approximately the locality where we live or he/she want to know), we should never attend this meeting alone, we should inform the parents or caregivers and talk to them about it. If you decide to attend, be accompanied by friends or people of your confidence.

And by comments of police representatives: today we are all increasingly subject to this and other types of crimes or abuses. The best way to avoid them is by prevention, which can be done through actions Fig. [1] to raise awareness specifically of this type of population.



Figure 1 - Safe School - action of prevention

In cases where there is some type of abuse, such as the case studies, the advice is that a complaint be lodged at the National Republican Guard (NRG) so that it can investigate the facts. These young people and this type of crime are treated like any other type of victim or crime, and the case can go to court if this is demanded.

Public Security Police (PSP), mainly through the agents who are seconded to this service (Safe School), maintain proximity to schools and students and often collaborate in several joint actions of prevention, dissemination and sensitization to try to improve attitudes and behaviours diminishing the risks to which we are exposed.

Experience shows that this type of population tends to devalue some behaviours of abuse or crime and usually also have difficulty talking about the subject.

They suggest that, within a period of 6 months after the occurrence, the police authority should be informed of what has happened, with each case being the subject of an investigation, first internally and later if there is evidence of crime at the Public ministry.

The agents also point out that they are not given any training to speak with this type of population and their experience and sensitivity is that they are conducting them in these processes and procedures, sometimes needing to call on an interlocutor who is closer to the youth to talk to him and collect the necessary testimonials.

3. DATABASE

After collecting the case studies the partners updated the database of safety rules (<http://besafe-project.eu/en/database/>) Fig. [2] concerning the following issues: how to be safe in internet, how to recognize that a person with intellectual disability suffers any problem caused using the computer, internet, social media etc. The database users can be teachers, psychologists, parents and persons with intellectual disability. The user interface is equipped by the filter, so user can limit rules list only to rules addressed to specific type of receiver. Also, the search engine is implemented and all the database can be searched by given categories or by any phrase.

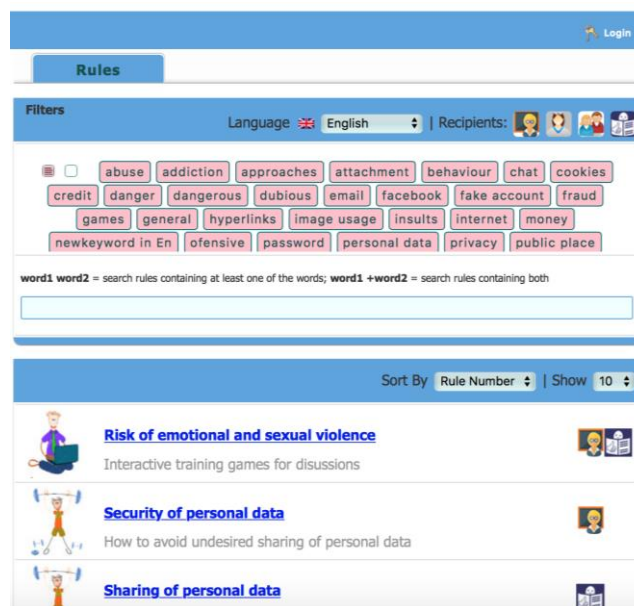


Figure 2 – Database of safety rules

The knowledge collected in the database is unique and it is presented in attractive way. There are not only, plain articles, but also articles with easy to read text Fig. [3], PowToon films, multiply choice tests and other forms. The database is open. The logged users can add new rules to it.



Figure 3 – Easy to read text

4. NEXT STEPS

The next steps will be the training activities which are crucial elements of the project. During these activities people who give professional support to people with disabilities as well as persons with intellectual disabilities will benefit from a curriculum based on the study cases and will use the materials presented in the database.

We expect that persons who support people with intellectual disabilities will improve their knowledge about how to react when a person with disability is a victim of violence or abuse on internet. They will be acquainted with our material and will receive information about safe behaviour on Internet. At the same time, they will learn how to work with the database of safety rules.

People with disabilities will learn about dangerous activities in Internet. They will be trained, using the case studies and the database of safety rules, on how to avoid these situation, how to react and how to improve their skills to be use safely Internet.

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