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Addressing hate speech through global citizenship education

A handbook for educators



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SHORT SUMMARY

Standing up to hate speech through global citizenship education

Around the world, two out of three people regularly encounter hate speech or harmful content, particularly on social media. This growing problem is fueled by inequality, injustice, populism and the misuse of technology. Hate speech manifests in many forms and contexts, driving human rights violations and undermining peace-building efforts.

Education has a unique role to play in countering hate speech.

From an early age, global citizenship education can help people recognize and challenge hate speech. It teaches respect, empathy and responsibility, which are essential skills to lead positive social transformations.

This handbook provides educators with a conceptual framework to understand the definitions, drivers and consequences of hate speech. It outlines concrete pedagogical practices, activities and resources to co-create inclusive learning spaces that promote diversity, cultivate critical thinking and facilitate the overall modelling of responsible citizenship that prevents hate speech and fosters a culture of peace.

The handbook builds on the publication *Addressing hate speech through education: policy guide*, published by UNESCO and the United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect (OSAPG) in 2023.



2 in 3
people regularly face hate
speech and harmful content



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"Since wars begin in the minds of men and women it is in the minds of men and women that the defences of peace must be constructed"

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Foreword



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Hate speech is not just a matter of words. It is a powerful and destructive force that can fracture societies, erode trust, and fuel violence. In recent years, its spread has accelerated, amplified by digital platforms and global connectivity. For educators, this reality presents both a challenge and an opportunity. Schools and learning spaces are where values are shaped, where empathy and respect can take root, and where young people learn to navigate the complexities of a diverse world.

Education is one of the most effective tools to counter hate speech. It not only transmits knowledge but builds resilience against harmful narratives, nurtures critical thinking, and empowers learners to engage responsibly in their communities and online.

UNESCO's 2023 Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development reminds us that peace is not simply the absence of war; it is the presence of justice, inclusion, and dialogue. Education helps create these conditions by fostering understanding and dismantling the roots of conflict.

Addressing hate speech through education requires a holistic approach. It begins with ensuring access to quality education for all and creating safe, inclusive learning environments where every learner feels valued and respected. It means integrating teaching practices that promote empathy, social and emotional learning, and media and information literacy - skills that are essential in an age of rapid information flow and online interaction. It also calls for empowering learners to become active global citizens who stand against discrimination and uphold human rights.

This handbook was developed to support educators in this vital mission. Drawing on the 2023 publication *Addressing hate speech through education: policy guide* by UNESCO and the United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect (OSAPG), it offers practical tools, strategies and examples to help educators create communities where hate speech has no place. It is also informed by several UNESCO initiatives, including media and information literacy, the social media for peace project and UNESCO's guidelines for the governance of digital platforms from 2023.

We hope this handbook becomes a trusted resources for educators, learners and communities, helping so to work together to build societies where diversity is celebrated, dialogue thrives, and hate speech gives away to understanding and respect.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stefania Giannini'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Stefania Giannini

Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO

Aknowledgements

This handbook was developed under the overall guidance of Christopher Castle, Director of Division for Peace and Sustainable Development, Education Sector, and direct supervision of Karel Fracapane and Cecilia Barbieri. The handbook was managed by Miren Gonzalez and Kuany Kiir Kuany, with the support of Gabriela Cieploch.

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Why this handbook

Introduction

Addressing hate speech is critical for societies globally, especially as recent advancements in information technology, online communications, social media, and artificial intelligence (AI) have accelerated the speed and reach of hateful narratives. As individuals spend more time in digital spaces, especially during and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, the risk of exposure to disinformation, divisive narratives and hate speech has increased.¹ Furthermore, the resurgence of armed conflicts coupled with aggressive populism, racism, discrimination and violence has only served to increase the proliferation of hate speech.

In 2015, the United Nations Education 2030 Agenda underlined the essential role of education in general, and global citizenship education (GCED) and human rights education in particular, in addressing hate speech through Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, Target 4.7:

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture

of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.²

As underscored in the 2019 United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech,³ the devastating impact of hate speech on human rights and peace, the safety of vulnerable communities, and the stability of institutions and societies, points to the urgent need for a whole-of-society approach.

The 2023 Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development further noted the critical role of education in addressing 'the global rise in disinformation, misinformation, hate speech and online harassment, which threatens the achievement of sustainable development, democracy and peace.'⁴ Thus, education, especially GCED, plays a pivotal role in cultivating the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary for addressing hate speech and building peaceful, just, inclusive and sustainable societies.

- 1 Analyses by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) in 2021 showed that extremist movements capitalized on the COVID-19 pandemic, to mobilize the mass proliferation of false and misleading information. This information served to diminish trust in institutions generally as well as health authorities, helping to fuel anti-vaccine and conspiracy narratives, while further contributing to anti-minority hatred.
- 2 UNESCO (2015): Education 2030 – Sustainable Development Goal 4, https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4#targets_and_indicators
- 3 UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech 18 June, https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/advising-and-mobilizing/Action_plan_on_hate_speech_EN.pdf
- 4 Available at: <https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/recommendation-education-peace-and-human-rights-international-understanding-cooperation-fundamental>

The role of global citizenship education in addressing hate speech

GCED is an approach to education that aims to equip individuals with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become informed, responsible, and engaged global citizens. It seeks to transform learning environments into safe spaces that foster conditions conducive to peace. At its core, GCED focuses on a shared sense of humanity as well as a respect for human rights, social justice, gender equality, diversity, and solidarity. Consequently, as highlighted in the UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech, GCED addresses hate speech by:⁵

1. emphasizing the importance of **understanding diverse cultures and perspectives**, fostering a sense of global awareness.
2. focusing on developing **critical thinking, social and emotional, as well as behavioural skills**, which enable individuals to critically engage with the world in an informed and responsible manner. By analysing information, discerning biases, and questioning stereotypes, and **actively engaging** in addressing societal issues, learners can become resilient to hate speech.
3. addressing the **root causes** of global challenges and social issues, including prejudice and discrimination, by examining systemic inequalities and historical injustices.
4. encouraging the development of **inclusive attitudes and behaviours** by emphasizing the importance of embracing diversity.
5. **connecting local and global issues**, demonstrating the interconnectedness of various social challenges.

Thus, within the GCED framework, the role of educators is to explore the drivers of hate speech and discrimination, zooming in on structural inequalities such as economic, social, and political ones.

In addition, when reconfigured through the lenses of GCED, education spaces can provide a platform where learners feel safe and included, where they can address conflicts through dialogue – in short, where they can learn and model behaviours that make it difficult for hate speech to arise. Through such spaces, educators can have the ability to directly impact the learning culture and learners' experiences by consistently providing a model for inclusive and respectful conduct. When learners and educators are connected through a relationship where each feels trusted, safe and comfortable to be, educators can promptly recognize and address instances of bullying, discrimination, or hate speech – and send powerful messages that such behaviours are unacceptable. Positive relationships with learners is also crucial in understanding and addressing the unique needs of each learner. In essence, GCED can be transformative at both the individual, relational and systemic levels – and herein lies its power to address hate speech and build learning spaces that are models for peaceful and sustainable societies.

⁵ Ibid. 11

Purpose and structure of the handbook

In 2023, UNESCO and the United Nations Office of the Special Advisor on Preventing Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect jointly launched the *Addressing hate speech through education: policy guide*⁶ to underscore the urgency to address hate speech through education. Building on the framework provided by the UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech and the 2021 Global Education Ministers Conference on Addressing Hate Speech through Education, this handbook incorporates the elements of UNESCO's GCED programme, human rights education, education to prevent violent extremism, antisemitism, and racism, and media and information literacy, that can be used to address hate speech.

Given the centrality of education in addressing hate speech, there is an urgent need for a handbook specifically designed for educators. Accordingly, this handbook offers:

1. **A conceptual framework** for educators to understand the definitions, drivers and consequences of hate speech
2. **Practices, activities, and resources**, organized into key action areas, to help schools co-create inclusive learning spaces that address hate speech by promoting diversity, cultivating critical thinking and facilitating the modelling of responsible global citizenship.

By addressing these key themes and following a multi-faceted and structured approach, the handbook aims to provide practical and actionable guidance for educators, incorporating the core values of GCED.

6 UNESCO (2023): *Addressing hate speech through education: A guide for policy-makers* | UNESCO, <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/addressing-hate-speech-through-education-guide-policy-makers>

1. What is hate speech, what drives it and how does it manifest

This chapter defines and categorizes various manifestations of hate speech and distinguishes it from other related issues. By unravelling the intricacies of hate speech, this chapter aims to equip educators with the knowledge and skills necessary not only to recognize and address this pervasive issue but also to foster safer and more inclusive learning environments. Furthermore, this chapter touches upon freedom of expression and the protection of human rights, which are critical considerations when discussing hate speech.

What is hate speech?

Addressing hate speech begins with the complex task of defining it. Definitions must carefully navigate the need to protect against discrimination while also upholding the principles of free speech. In 2019, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres highlighted this issue by underscoring the importance of achieving this balance,⁷ stating that ‘addressing hate speech does not mean limiting or prohibiting freedom of speech. It means keeping hate speech from escalating into something more dangerous, particularly incitement to discrimination, hostility, and violence, which is prohibited under international law.’

The protection of human rights and the fight against hate speech rely on the essential principle of freedom of expression as enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.⁸ While any form of hate speech is distressing and often discriminatory, efforts to limit or eliminate expressions of hatred must consider the rights

of all involved, including – perhaps confusingly – those who voice hateful sentiments. Upholding human rights requires a balance between competing claims of rights. The Threshold test of the Rabat Plan of Action provides clear guidance on striking this balance.⁹

Freedom of expression is vital for human dignity and is essential for the functioning of democratic societies. Despite the strong case for protecting free speech, human rights treaties, like the European Convention on Human Rights, recognize that certain speech can cause harm to individuals and society. As such, freedom of expression is a right that may need to be limited in specific circumstances and, at times, justifiably restricted. The challenge is to allow individuals to express themselves while also preventing harm to others and society as a whole.¹⁰

With this in mind, the UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech defines hate speech as ‘any kind of communication in speech, writing, or behaviour that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a

7 Available at: <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statements/2019-06-18/secretary-generals-remarks-the-launch-of-the-united-nations-strategy-and-plan-of-action-hate-speech-delivered>

8 Universal Declaration of Human Rights | United Nations, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

9 OHCHR and freedom of expression vs incitement to hatred: the Rabat Plan of Action | OHCHR, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/freedom-of-expression>. See also a video by UNESCO on the same: The Rabat Plan of Action on the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADrB32OSe3A>

10 Council of Europe (2020). Bookmarks – A manual for combating hate speech online through human rights education, Revised edition. <https://rm.coe.int/bookmarksen2020-web2/16809e5789>

person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender, or other identity factor.’

This definition of hate speech is pivotal for education, research and advocacy, particularly in understanding its broader societal impact. Harm resulting from hate speech can manifest at individual, group and societal levels, leading to psychological distress, communal repercussions, and the erosion of rights. Vulnerable communities, in particular, bear the disproportionate brunt of hate speech, being most frequently and violently targeted. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, social media platforms experienced a surge in hate directed towards vulnerable communities, along with instances of abuse and harassment targeting public figures such as health workers, journalists, and elected officials.¹¹

Intersectionality of hate speech

Educational responses to hate speech should be grounded in an awareness of, and readiness to address, the intersectionality of hatred, hate crime and other social and political issues.

Various manifestations of hateful speech, discrimination, and violence are often interconnected. Individuals may face discrimination based on multiple aspects of their identity simultaneously, such as age, race, gender, sexuality, or religion. This concept emphasizes the interconnected nature of social categories, acknowledging that hate speech can target individuals for a combination of factors, amplifying the harm inflicted.

Understanding this intersectionality is crucial for educators and society: Hate speech cannot be addressed by a simple, short-term, one-size-fits-all approach. It is necessary to understand and address the interactions between different forms of discrimination and the sometimes invisible, context-based experiences of oppression.

Thus, a nuanced approach to combating discrimination and fostering inclusivity is necessary. It highlights the need to address the complex ways in which individuals may be marginalized or targeted, emphasizing the interconnected layers of identity contributing to the impact of hate speech on individuals and communities.

Vehicles of hate speech

Hate speech manifests in various forms, from overt verbal abuse to subtle microaggressions, and often intersects with other phenomena such as disinformation and conspiracy narratives. Hate speech encompasses a diverse array of communication methods spanning oral, written, and visual forms. Especially in the digital space, social media platforms are increasingly exploited in sophisticated ways to fuel hatred, propagate conspiracy theories, and provoke real-world violence. This includes spoken and written expressions in statements, speeches, news reports, blogs, and texts, as well as visual elements like still and moving images, video memes, and drawings. Manifestations of hate speech and related phenomena include:

- **Conspiracy narratives** which describe beliefs ‘that events are being secretly manipulated by powerful forces with negative intent. Typically, conspiracy theories involve an imagined group of conspirators

11 Institute for Strategic Dialogue (2021). *Between Conspiracy and Extremism: A Long Covid Threat? Introductory Paper*. *Between-Conspiracy-and-Extremism_A-long-COVID-threat_Introductory-Paper.pdf* (isdglobal.org), https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Between-Conspiracy-and-Extremism_A-long-COVID-threat_Introductory-Paper.pdf

to implement an alleged secret plot.¹² These narratives attempt to interpret events by alleging a clandestine plot engineered by influential entities; often, these narratives have antisemitic roots, portraying Jewish communities as orchestrating global events for nefarious purposes. Typically, followers of conspiracy narratives perceive themselves as in direct opposition to the authorities or institutions they believe are behind the scheme.

- **Disinformation** which describes ‘deliberate (often orchestrated) attempts to confuse or manipulate people through delivering dishonest information to them. This is often combined with parallel and intersecting communications strategies and a suite of other tactics like hacking or compromising of persons.’¹³ It is false or misleading information **intentionally** spread to deceive people. It aims to create confusion or manipulate beliefs, often for political, social, or economic purposes. Disinformation can be found in various forms, such as fabricated articles, misleading images, or deceptive social media posts.
- **Information manipulation** which describes the deliberate distortion, suppression, or fabrication of information. In times of crises, state actors also exploit insecurities and confusion to advance their own, often geopolitical, objectives and deploy so-called information operations. This is also referred to as Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI).¹⁴
- **Bullying** which ‘is characterized by aggressive behaviour that involves unwanted, negative actions, is repeated over time, and an imbalance of power or strength between the perpetrator or perpetrators and the victim.’ Bullying manifests itself in various forms, encompassing physical, psychological, sexual, and cyber dimensions.¹⁵
 - *Physical bullying* which involves repetitive acts of aggression, such as hitting, kicking, or theft of personal belongings, distinctly separate from conventional physical violence. *Psychological bullying* inflicts emotional harm through verbal abuse, social exclusion, or spreading hurtful rumours, targeting the victim’s confidence and sense of belonging. *Sexual bullying* ridicules individuals with sexual jokes or gestures, perpetuating discomfort, and shame. *Cyberbullying* leverages digital platforms for harassment, including sending hurtful messages, posting derogatory content, or sharing unconsented images, amplifying the reach and intensity of the harm inflicted.¹⁶
- **Harassment** which describes behaviour that is unwanted, unwelcome, and repetitive, and which can include actions, words, or gestures that intimidate, annoy, or make someone feel uncomfortable or unsafe. The purpose or effect of harassment is ‘an affront to the identity, the personality, the dignity or the physical integrity’ of

12 UNESCO (2022). *Addressing conspiracy theories: what educators need to know*, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381958>

13 UNESCO (2018). *Journalism, fake news and disinformation – Handbook for Journalism Education and Training*, https://web.archive.unesco.org/web/20230930104958/https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/journalism_fake_news_disinformation_print_friendly_0_0.pdf.

14 Institute for Strategic Dialogue (2023). *Capitalizing on crisis: Russia, China and Iran use X to exploit Israel-Hamas information chaos*, https://www.isdglobal.org/digital_dispatches/capitalising-on-crisis-russia-china-and-iran-use-x-to-exploit-israel-hamas-information-chaos/.

15 Institute for Strategic Dialogue (2021). *Between Conspiracy and Extremism: A Long Covid Threat? Introductory Paper*, https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Between-Conspiracy-and-Extremism_A-long-COVID-threat-Introductory-Paper.pdf.

16 UNESCO (2019). *Behind the numbers: Ending school violence and bullying*, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000366483/PDF/366483eng.pdf.multi>.

the targeted person, but also includes ‘the creating of an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.’ Forms of harassment also include *moral harassment* and *sexual harassment*.¹⁷

The rise of hate speech, especially in digital spaces, contributes to the decline in social cohesion, trust in democratic institutions, and a concerning trend towards authoritarianism. This climate has fostered increased support for political violence and witnessed heightened levels of alienation, radicalization and extremism.

Drivers of hate speech

Various motives drive the propagation of hate speech. Hate-based narratives are intertwined with local, national, and global histories, alongside contemporary dynamics of power, exclusion, and discrimination against various identity groups. In addition, belonging to a specific group is often based on external attributions rather than self-identification. While pinpointing a singular driver of hate speech may be difficult, the underlying dynamics leading to its proliferation are evident.

Hate speech stems from prejudice and a contempt for diversity, cultural differences, and differing opinions – attitudes that are learned and can be unlearned. Hate rhetoric is further justified by divisive and exclusionary narratives, often amplified during and around elections, by politicians, religious and community leaders, and mainstream media, in a deliberate effort to polarize, divide, antagonize, and instil fear within a population or specific groups.

Educators must recognize these narratives as incidents of hate speech, influenced by interconnected factors and conditions that either push individuals towards hate and its justifications (push factors) or attract individuals

toward adopting hate speech by providing some sense of meaning (pull factors). Adolescents in particular, may be drawn towards hate-based narratives because they fill a void or emotional need for an explanation of the challenges they face. They are often developmentally exploring their identities and are attracted to action in their search for meaning. The following list of push and pull factors will vary based on context, but provide educators with an understanding of what might attract their learners to hate-based narratives, which can be the precursor to other severe manifestations of violence.

Push factors

- Real or perceived sense of inequality, marginalization, grievance, social exclusion, frustration, victimization, and injustice.
- Economic uncertainty, unemployment, poverty, and lack of educational opportunities.
- Feelings of hopelessness, uncertainty, lack of meaning, and purpose.

Pull factors

- Exposure to stereotypes, discrimination, racism, sexism, and dehumanization.
- Sense of affinity, community, inclusion, and belonging with the sources of hate.
- Promise of empowerment and adventure, sense of purpose, and hope for the future.

Addressing hate speech also requires comprehensive efforts that dismantle systemic inequalities, inequities, and injustices, and foster inclusive cultural norms. Measures aiming at addressing hate speech through education should, consequently, involve activities challenging deeply ingrained prejudices as well as the critical examination of media and political influences.

17 UNESCO (2019). *Anti-Harassment Policy*, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000258969>.

Signs and indicators of hate speech

Addressing hate speech not only requires an awareness of related phenomena, such as conspiracy narratives, disinformation, bullying, and intolerance, but also an understanding of how covertly hate speech can be spread. Recognizing hate speech involves understanding its codes, signposts, and subtle manifestations within various communities, especially online. Recognizing hate speech is not always easy as it is often embedded in dominant narratives. It is crucial for educators to be able to recognize the signs and indicators of hate speech so they can be proactive in addressing and preventing its negative impact.

Common signs and indicators of hate speech include:¹⁸

- a. **Derogatory language:** Use of offensive or demeaning language targeting a particular group based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics.
- b. **Stereotyping:** Generalizations and assumptions that reinforce and perpetuate negative biases about a particular group.
- c. **Incitement of violence:** Language that encourages violence, harm, or discrimination against individuals or communities based on their identities.
- d. **Dehumanization:** Describing or portraying a group of people as less than human, stripping them of their dignity. This erasure of human qualities can lead to the loss of empathy and compassion.
- e. **Intolerance:** Expressing a lack of acceptance towards individuals or communities with different beliefs, backgrounds, or identities.
- f. **Online harassment:** Persistent and targeted abuse in digital spaces, including threats, intimidation, or bullying, directed at individuals based on their identities.
- g. **Hate symbols and imagery:** Use of symbols, imagery, or coded language associated with hate groups or historical acts of discrimination.
- h. **Exclusionary practices:** Advocating for or endorsing practices that alienate and discriminate against certain groups, denying them equal rights or opportunities.
- i. **Disparaging humour:** Making jokes or engaging in humour that targets a particular group, reinforcing negative stereotypes.
- j. **Conspiratorial thinking:** Spreading or endorsing conspiratorial ideological views and political stances that target specific communities, often contributing to the vilification and scapegoating of those groups.

18 Council of Europe (2020). *Bookmarks – A Manual for Combating Hate Speech Online Through Human Rights Education*, <https://rm.coe.int/bookmarksen2020-web2/16809e5789>.

Subtle forms of hate speech

Subtle forms of hate speech encompass indirect expressions of bias or discrimination that may be less overt but are equally harmful. Educators should be equipped to recognize and address these nuances to foster awareness, promote open dialogue, and create a space where all learners feel respected, valued, and free from the insidious impact of hate speech.

Subtle forms of hate speech include:¹⁹

- a. Microaggressions:** Subtle, often unintentional, comments or actions that convey discriminatory attitudes toward a person or group based on their identities.²⁰
- b. Coded language:** The use of veiled or coded language that carries hidden discriminatory meanings, allowing individuals to express prejudice without explicit language.
- c. Stereotyping:** Implicitly perpetuating stereotypes about certain groups, reinforcing biased beliefs through generalizations and oversimplified assumptions. This also includes **casual stereotyping** which involves engaging in casual conversations that perpetuate stereotypes without explicit intent, contributing to the normalization of biased beliefs.
- d. Backhanded compliments:** Offering compliments that contain an underlying insult or reinforce stereotypes, often subtly demeaning the recipient.
- e. Exclusionary jokes or humour:** Making jokes or engaging in humour that targets a particular group, contributing to a hostile environment through seemingly harmless comments.
- f. Selective ignorance:** Choosing to ignore or downplay the experiences and concerns of

certain groups, dismissing their perspectives or realities.

- g. Double standards:** Applying different standards or expectations based on an individual's identity, subtly reinforcing discriminatory practices.
- h. Subtle exclusion:** Excluding certain individuals or groups from social activities or conversations, creating an environment of isolation and alienation.

The role of technology in spreading hate speech

It is important for educators to understand the role of technology, not only in their learners' lives, but also when discussing and confronting hate speech. Hate speech online is not intrinsically different from hate speech offline, though technology does play a complex role in both its dissemination and efforts to counter it.

Many learners have already encountered hate speech and harassment in online spaces, taking on various roles such as victims, consumers, producers, perpetrators, or disseminators. The proliferation of hateful expressions, especially in youth-centric online environments like gaming platforms, meme-sharing sites, and audiovisual-based social media, is particularly troubling.

In addition, social media algorithms and AI are increasingly influential in shaping the spread of hate speech online. These **algorithms are designed to maximize user engagement, often by prioritizing content that generates reactions, comments, and shares. As a result, hateful content can quickly gain traction and visibility, reaching a larger audience than it might otherwise.** In a 2018 analysis on

¹⁹ UNESCO (2023). *What you need to know about hate speech*, <https://www.unesco.org/en/countering-hate-speech/need-know>.

²⁰ University of Cologne (2022). *Microaggressions*, <https://vielfalt.uni-koeln.de/en/anti-discrimination/glossary-discrimination-anti-racism/microaggressions>.

Facebook, the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) illustrated that a minority of highly engaged users exert a significant influence over the dissemination of far-right extremist content online. These findings indicate that far-right activists employ sophisticated tactics and exploit algorithms to proliferate hate campaigns across digital platforms.²¹

Furthermore, AI-powered platforms are becoming increasingly sophisticated in generating and disseminating multimedia content, including images, videos, and memes. This expansion into multimedia formats allows hate speech to be conveyed in more creative, humorous, targeted, personalized, persuasive and impactful ways, making it even more potent in influencing public opinion. For example, 'Deepfakes', highly realistic videos, images or audio, generated by AI, represent the most recent type of misinformation. 'Deepfakes' present misleading representations of people or events, leading audiences to believe in false narratives, challenging the public's ability to distinguish truth from fiction, and having a measurable impact on public opinion.²² Generative AI emerged prominently in the 2023 Argentinian General Election, earning the moniker of the 'first-ever AI election' by some observers. This technology was extensively employed by the two primary political factions to bolster their candidates' images and to vilify their opponents.²³

The viral dissemination facilitated by social media algorithms and AI poses significant challenges for addressing hate speech online. Once hateful content begins to spread rapidly, it can be challenging to contain, leading to its normalization and perpetuation within online communities. However, technology can also provide tools to combat hate speech, such as content moderation algorithms, reporting mechanisms, and educational resources to promote digital literacy and responsible online behaviour. (The UNESCO and the European Union Social Media for Peace Project provides an excellent example of harnessing social media platforms to address hate speech and build long-lasting peace).²⁴

Despite the ethical and technical challenges associated with the use of AI in detecting and moderating hate speech, AI is expected to play an increasingly important role in addressing hate speech. Understanding how AI can identify and mitigate hate speech online is essential for both educators and learners. AI-driven tools can scan large volumes of text and multimedia content to detect patterns indicative of hate speech, enabling timely intervention. Yet it is also important for users to recognize the limitations and biases inherent in these technologies: AI algorithms tasked with detecting and removing hate speech must navigate complex linguistic nuances, cultural contexts, and evolving forms of expression. The challenge lies in balancing the benefits of technological advancements with the responsibility to mitigate the negative impacts.

21 Institute for Strategic Dialogue (2018). *Hass auf Knopfdruck – Rechtsextreme Trollfabriken und das Ökosystem koordinierter Hasskampagnen im Netz*, https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ISD_Ich_Bin_Hier_2.pdf

22 Available at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/09732586241277335>

23 Institute for Strategic Dialogue (2024). *Vilify, ridicule, disinform – Political communication and media trust in the age of generative AI*, <https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Political-Communication-and-Media-Trust-in-the-Age-of-Generative-AI.pdf>.

24 See the findings of the Social Media for Peace Project: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000386777>.

2. Action areas: practices, activities, and resources

Part 2 of the handbook on addressing hate speech through education underscores the crucial role educators can play in fostering safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environments. Awareness of the prevalence and impact of hate speech and digital threats is a cornerstone for promoting learner well-being, ensuring that educators understand the potential emotional and psychological harm that hate speech can inflict on learners. Therefore, Part 2 **provides a comprehensive guide to equip educators with effective practices and activities**, emphasizing a holistic approach that covers themes such as hate speech identification, prevention and intervention strategies, digital literacy, and ethical considerations. It further acknowledges the significant role of technology in hate speech, touching upon how hate speech can be perpetuated in digital spaces.

And while Part 2 of the handbook touches upon the recognition of different forms of hate speech, it primarily aims at equipping educators with tools to create inclusive learning environments, ensuring that every learner feels valued and respected. Clear intervention strategies, both direct and indirect, are outlined to address hate speech incidents promptly. Educators are encouraged to promote responsible online behaviour, aligning with the principles of global citizenship education. The handbook emphasizes critical thinking and the promotion of diversity, inclusion, and respectful communication.

Note: Some of the activities in this handbook can trigger learners. To ensure that triggers are used for learning instead of emotional distress, educators are advised to consult UNESCO MGIEP digital resources²⁵ on simple SEL activities that they can weave into the modules. For example, breathing, mindfulness, journaling, and other short activities, could be implemented at the beginning, during, or at the end of each module to ensure that learning happens at a place of strength instead of distress.

Before delving into these specific interventions, it is essential to acknowledge that the successful implementation of these practices and activities is dependent on the existence of explicit policy mechanisms to address hate speech. Where these do not exist, the educators' role begins with advocacy to develop and implement comprehensive policies. Such policies should integrate anti-discrimination and anti-bullying measures with the goal of transforming the overall educational culture, from curriculum to educator training and professional development. As an example, Dresden and Cologne (both in Germany) applied the European Coalition of Cities against Racism (ECCAR) 10 Points Plan of Action to fight racism on the municipal level in Europe.²⁵ A Berlin-based initiative further developed a guideline for schools to address discrimination,²⁶ providing guidance for schools to establish their own anti-discrimination policies. Another example is the establishment of Amani Clubs in institutions of learning in Kenya by the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.²⁷ NCIC was created by the National Cohesion and Integration (NCI) Act, 2008, and is mandated to 'promote national identity and values, mitigate ethno-political competition and ethnically motivated violence, eliminate discrimination on ethnic, racial and religious basis and promote national reconciliation and healing.'²⁸

25 Available at: https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/integration-practice/european-coalition-cities-against-racism-eccar_en

26 Available at: https://adas-berlin.de/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ADAS_Schutz-vor-Diskriminierung-Schulen.pdf

27 Amani clubs brief, <https://cohesion.go.ke/amaniclubs/index.php/about-us/amani-clubs-brief>

28 NCIC at a Glance, <https://www.cohesion.go.ke/index.php/about-us/who-are-we>.

29 Available at: <https://webarchive.unesco.org/web/20240108233301/https://mgiep.unesco.org/all-courses>

The SEE Learning program at Emory University's Center for Contemplative Science and Compassion-Based Ethics provides these rich resources.³⁰ This review³¹ of Social and Emotional Learning for Education Systems UNESCO MGIEP on SEL has curated (Page 236 onwards) simple resources that spans child-friendly pedagogical methods to mobile apps and games. The MGIEP SEL Blog³² also curates rich posts with tips on multiple ways of integrating physical and digital SEL activities in formal and informal learning spaces. The Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT), University of Michigan has also offers simple to use guidance³³ for discussing difficult topics.

Action area 1: Build a positive and inclusive culture inside and outside of the classroom

Building a positive culture is essential for creating a learning environment that is inclusive and resilient to hate. Encouraging a culture of open-mindedness, where ideas can be challenged without demeaning the individual, is crucial. A positive culture is created deliberately by instilling certain norms around respectful communication and having learners take ownership of how the class functions. A growth mindset also allows learners to make mistakes, learn, and develop confidence. Parents, caregivers and the broader community also play an integral role in reinforcing the values of respect and inclusivity, thereby ensuring that these efforts are sustained and felt in the broader communities of the learners.

Practices

- a. Co-create classroom rules.** When rules, values, mottos and other norms and guiding principles of the learning space are co-created with the learners, they begin to hold themselves accountable in upholding those ethos.
- b. Establish clear expectations.** Clearly communicate behavioural expectations from the beginning. This includes academic standards, communication rules, and procedures. Consistency is key in reinforcing these expectations.
- c. Create a welcoming environment.** Ensure the physical space is welcoming and organized. Personalize the learning space with learners' work to encourage a sense of ownership and belonging.
- d. Foster positive relationships.** Build positive relationships with learners. Show genuine interest in their lives, experiences, and well-being. Create opportunities for one-on-one interactions.
- e. Use inclusive language.** Create a culture of respect that encourages learners to express their identities by avoiding stereotypes and embracing gender-neutral terms.
 - **Example of using inclusive language**
An example of the use of inclusive language could be in a setting where an educator addresses the learners. Instead of using gender-specific terms like 'guys' to refer to the class, the educator opts for a more inclusive approach, saying, 'class/learners, let's gather for a brief meeting.' This small adjustment ensures that

30 Available at: <https://seelearning.emory.edu/en/resources>

31 Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373890?posInSet=1&queryId=57aab792-3e23-468d-811a-432e52dca9f3>

32 Available at: <https://webarchive.unesco.org/web/20240614025651/https://mgiep.unesco.org/sel-for-everyone>

33 Available at: <https://crlt.umich.edu/tstrategies/tshctd>

everyone, irrespective of gender, feels included and valued within the group. Inclusive language extends beyond gender to consider factors such as ethnicity, age, abilities, and other aspects of identity, fostering an environment that is considerate and affirming for all individuals.

- f. Foster a collaborative learning environment.** Implement group activities and projects that encourage learners to work together, promoting teamwork and communication.
- g. Promote a growth mindset.** Offer constructive and specific feedback on both academic and behavioural aspects that highlight strengths and areas for improvement.

- h. Implement routine check-ins.** Gauge learners' well-being and address any concerns they may have. This can be done through informal conversations or more structured methods.
- i. Encourage learner voice.** Provide opportunities for learners to express their opinions, ideas, and preferences. Incorporate their input into decision-making processes when appropriate.
- j. Develop a strategy for engaging with the broader community.** Building resilience to hate and creating an inclusive learning environment will be hard to sustain without engagement from the broader community, including parents and caregivers.

Additional resources

- Learning for Justice, Teaching Tolerance: Classroom Resources | Learning for Justice: https://archive.learningforjustice.org/classroom-resources/lessons?keyword=&sort_by=search_api_relevance&page=6
- Education Scotland provides resources on various aspects of education, including classroom management: Education Scotland | Education Scotland: <https://education.gov.scot/>
- UNESCO and MGIEP's #Youth Waging Peace – a youth-led guide on prevention of violent extremism through education: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000260547>
- Be Internet Citizens - ISD increase young people's digital citizenship skills (isdglobal.org): <https://www.isdglobal.org/be-internet-citizens/>



Building a respectful communication charter

A critical first step for creating an inclusive classroom that values diversity is setting ground rules for communication. Ground rules that promote respectful communication include active listening, acknowledging diverse perspectives, and refraining from personal attacks. They should emphasize the importance of language choice, steering clear of offensive or discriminatory remarks. Establishing these guidelines creates an atmosphere where everyone feels valued, contributing to a more inclusive and collaborative exchange of ideas.

TARGET LEARNERS

- › upper primary and secondary

RELEVANT SUBJECT AREAS

- › all subjects

MATERIALS NEEDED

- › note pads, post-its, cards, markers

TIME NEEDED

- › 1 hour

OBJECTIVE

The activity helps learners to collaboratively set ground rules for respectful communication. It further fosters creativity and a shared commitment to the agreed-upon rules.

PROCESS

- Set the tone (5 minutes):** Emphasize the impact of language on everyone's well-being and learning experience. Discuss the importance of respectful communication to create a positive communication environment.
- Group brainstorming (15 minutes):** Divide the class into small groups and ask them to brainstorm key elements of respectful communication, such as active listening and empathy. Provide each group with a sheet of paper or a digital whiteboard.
- Create a charter (15 minutes):** Each group should transform their ideas into a set of ground rules. Each rule should be concise and actionable e.g. 'listen actively when others are speaking and do not check your smartphone'.
- Design a charter (15 minutes):** Each group should design a poster that represents their communication charter – the groups can get creative. The posters should then be displayed in the learning space, so the learners can see each other's suggestions.
- Create a common charter (15 minutes):** Bring the group back together and facilitate a discussion on common themes and rules across the different posters. Learners can provide feedback, and based on the class discussion, finalize the respectful communication charter.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTION

You may want to consider typing the charter up, printing it, and displaying it prominently in the education space for reference. If you have time left, the learners can also creatively design their respectful communication charter in a joint poster.



Engaging with the wider community

To ensure that learners can experience inclusion and a community that values diversity, learners and educators can think about how to best engage the wider community. By selecting a few strategies that are feasible and appropriate to their local context and culture, learners can engage in democratic decision-making while learning how to contribute to systemic change. This activity outlines strategies for engaging parents/ caregivers and communities in a collaborative approach to create a united front against hate speech. By fostering open communication and shared responsibility, educators are empowered to build strong partnerships beyond the learning space.

TARGET LEARNERS

- › upper primary and secondary

RELEVANT SUBJECT AREAS

- › all subjects

MATERIALS NEEDED

- › note pads, post-its, cards, markers

TIME NEEDED

- › 1 hour

OBJECTIVE

To collaboratively define a strategy to engage with the wider community on issues related to diversity and inclusion..

PROCESS

- Group brainstorming (10 minutes):** Divide the class into small groups and ask them to brainstorm what might be the barriers and opportunities to engage the wider community in creating spaces that value diversity and inclusion. Provide each group with a sheet of paper or a digital whiteboard.
- Choose strategies (15 minutes):** Go through the strategies below. Then, based on their initial brainstorm, have them select the top 3 strategies that they feel would be most appropriate for their context.
- Present strategies (15 minutes):** Each group presents their top 3 strategies and rationale for choosing them.
- Vote (5 minutes):** Every learner votes individually for their top 3 strategies by raising their hands.
- Develop strategy (15 minutes):** For the top 3 strategies, the educator asks learners when and how they could be put into practice.

LIST OF STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING BROADER COMMUNITY

- Open communication channels:** Establish clear communication channels with caregivers and the wider community. Utilize newsletters, emails, and social media to share information about activities, lessons, and initiatives related to addressing hate speech.
- Parent/caregiver-educator meetings:** Conduct regular parent/caregiver-educator meetings to discuss the curriculum, culture within the group, and any specific strategies being implemented to address hate speech. Encourage open dialogue and address any concerns or questions.

- c. Workshops and information sessions:** Organize workshops or information sessions specifically focused on hate speech awareness and prevention. Invite parents/caregivers, community members, and experts to share insights and strategies.
- d. Collaborative projects:** Implement collaborative projects that involve both learners and caregivers/parents and the wider community. This can include joint assignments, presentations, or events that promote understanding and awareness of the impact of hate speech.
- e. Community forums:** Host community forums or town hall meetings to discuss the broader issue of hate speech. Invite guest speakers, community leaders, or experts to provide diverse perspectives and insights.
- f. Parental/caregiver involvement in policies:** Encourage caregiver/parental involvement in the development of policies related to hate speech. Solicit feedback and perspectives to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach.
- g. Resource sharing:** Share resources with caregivers/parents and the wider community, such as articles, books, or online materials, that provide information on recognizing and addressing hate speech. This can help conversations move beyond the confines of the classroom.
- h. Community partnerships:** Establish partnerships with local organizations, community groups, or advocacy organizations that focus on promoting tolerance and combating hate speech. Collaborate on initiatives that involve both learning spaces and the broader community.
- i. Anonymous reporting systems:** Implement anonymous reporting systems for both learners and caregivers/parents to report incidents of hate speech. Assure caregivers/parents that their concerns will be addressed with sensitivity and confidentiality.
- j. Volunteer opportunities:** Create opportunities for caregivers/parents and community members to volunteer in initiatives addressing hate speech. This involvement fosters a sense of community responsibility and investment in the well-being of all learners.
- k. Empower community members as allies:** Empower caregivers/parents and community members to be allies in addressing hate speech. Provide resources and guidance on how they can support young people in understanding and navigating conversations about diversity and tolerance.
- l. Feedback mechanisms:** Establish feedback mechanisms to gather input from caregivers/parents and community members on the effectiveness of strategies in place. This ensures continuous improvement and adaptation based on community needs.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Global citizenship education: a handbook for parents, community and learners in Asia-Pacific: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000388130>

Action area 2: Develop intercultural competence

Consistent with approaches to social and emotional learning, intercultural competence requires that learners understand and manage their emotions, express empathy and establish positive relationships. Intercultural competence can be defined as a set of knowledge, skills and attitudes that allows effective and appropriate interaction with others across differences (due to ethnicity, race, gender, or religion, inter alia), whether within a society or across borders. It includes such elements as listening, empathy, open-mindedness, critical thinking, respect for diversity, and cultural self-awareness, among others.³⁴

Creating a supportive environment also relies on opportunities for self-reflection and positive reinforcement. By modelling the values of tolerance and empathy and instilling inclusive attitudes, educators empower learners to navigate a pluralistic world with respect and curiosity. Educators and learners should prioritize empathy, seeking to understand before being understood, and avoid making assumptions about others' intentions. Intercultural competence helps foster a generation of citizens capable of contributing meaningfully to a richly diverse and interconnected global community.

Practices

- a. **Promote empathy.** Valuing and engaging in activities that emphasize empathy is a critical part of any strategy to counter hate and build positive relationships and thriving communities.
- b. **Manage emotions.** Teach techniques that help learners deal with heightened emotions, including mindfulness and self-knowledge, and build emotional self-regulation and resilience.
- c. **Model intercultural competence.** Fostering an attitude of openness and a willingness to learn about diverse backgrounds can set a positive and respectful tone. Educators should approach different cultures with genuine curiosity rather than preconceived notions.
- d. **Develop dialogue skills:** Engaging in conversations about issues that impact learners can help build active listening and conflict resolution skills while seeking to build mutual understanding.
- e. **Highlight the value of diversity within the learning environment.**
 - **Appreciate differences:** Recognize cultural events and holidays from different backgrounds within the learning space. Encourage learners to share their traditions, foods, art projects and customs.
 - **Diversify curriculum:** Integrate diverse perspectives, authors, and cultures into the curriculum. Include literature, history, and science from various regions and communities, reflecting the experiences of a broad range of people.
 - **Ensure representation in decor:** Display posters, artwork, and materials that showcase diversity. Ensure that decorations represent a variety

34 UNESCO. (2013). *Intercultural competencies: Conceptual and operational frame-work*. Paris: UNESCO. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000219768/PDF/219768eng.pdf.multi>

of ethnicities, genders, abilities, and family structures.

- **Provide diverse literature and resources:** Build an inclusive library with books that feature characters from various backgrounds and experiences. Incorporate multimedia resources that represent diverse voices and perspectives.
- **Invite guest speakers and role models:** Seek guest speakers from diverse backgrounds to share their experiences and expertise. Highlight role models from different fields to inspire learners and broaden their understanding of success. This is also a great opportunity to include the wider community or parents.
- **Promote interaction:** Arrange seating in the learning space to promote

interaction among learners from different backgrounds. Encourage collaborative work and group activities that facilitate communication and understanding.

- **Establish diversity committees or clubs:** Establish a diversity committee or club within the learning space to involve learners in planning and organizing events that celebrate diversity. This empowers learners to take an active role in promoting inclusivity.

f. Address bias and stereotypes:

Incorporate discussions about bias and stereotypes into lessons. Teach learners to critically analyse media, recognize bias, and challenge stereotypes to foster a more inclusive mindset.

Additional resources

- Compassionate Integrity Training Manual: https://oercommons.s3.amazonaws.com/media/courseware/relatedresource/file/CIT_Participant_Manual_Final_46VxJh4.pdf?ResponseContentDisposition=attachment%3Bfilename%3D%22CIT_Participant_Manual_Final_46VxJh4.pdf%22



Veil of ignorance

TARGET LEARNERS

- › upper primary and secondary

RELEVANT SUBJECT AREAS

- › all subjects

MATERIALS NEEDED

- › note pads, post-its, cards, markers or nothing at all

TIME NEEDED

- › 60-90 minutes

OBJECTIVE

To foster empathy and self-reflection by exploring the concept of fairness between individuals and societies.

The activity described below and other similar activities are well-known thought experiments associated with the philosopher John Rawls and his theory of justice. The purpose of the activity is to engage learners in a thought experiment that encourages them to think beyond their personal identities and biases. The exercise aims at fostering empathy, fairness, and critical thinking.

- Introduce the thought experiment (10 minutes):** Briefly explain the concept of the Veil of Ignorance and its purpose. Set the stage for the thought experiment.³⁵
- Thought experiment (15 minutes):** Ask the learners to imagine designing a society without knowing their own identities and social and economic status. Allow time for individual reflection on what principles and structures they would prioritize.
- Small group discussion (20 minutes):** Divide the learners into small groups to discuss their ideas. Encourage them to explore different perspectives and negotiate shared values.
- Group discussion (15 minutes):** Bring the learners back together for a larger discussion. Facilitate a conversation about the challenges, compromises, and insights gained through the activity.
- Conclusion and debrief (10 minutes):** Ask learners to reflect individually on what they learned. Summarize the main points and connect them to real-world applications.

In its University Module Series, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) provides a role-playing activity based on John Rawls' theory of justice (Exercise 3: Expedition to Mars). The activity can be adjusted to different educational settings; the resource can support the implementation of the activity outlined above: Integrity Ethics Module 3 Exercises (unodc.org)³⁶

³⁵ More info on the Veil of Ignorance can be found here: <https://ethicsunwrapped.utexas.edu/glossary/veil-of-ignorance>

³⁶ Available at: <https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/integrity-ethics/module-3/exercises.html>



Empathy circles

TARGET LEARNERS

- › upper primary and secondary

RELEVANT SUBJECT AREAS

- › all subjects

MATERIALS NEEDED

- › soft ball

TIME NEEDED

- › 30 minutes

OBJECTIVE

To foster empathy through active listening and the building of connections between learners.

To implement the activity, educators should arrange the chairs in the learning space in a circle or open space for sitting and choose an object that indicates the speaker (e.g. a soft ball or another small item).

PROCESS

- Prior to the activity**, ground rules for respectful communication need to be established and the importance of active listening without judgement should be emphasized. Learners are encouraged to use 'I' statements.
- Round 1**: Start the empathy circle, having one learner hold the talking object and share a personal experience, feeling, or perspective on a chosen topic or prompt, for instance a guiding question such as *'When was the last time you faced a challenge?'* Others in the circle only listen without interrupting.
- Round 2**: After the first learner finishes, the talking object is passed to the next learners in the circle. The next person reflects on what was shared before, expressing empathy, and also shares how they would feel in a similar situation or asks follow-up questions. The process continues until everyone in the circle has had a chance to contribute to the exercise.
- Debrief**: Encourage a discussion on the experience but also the challenges among the participants.
- The activity can be adjusted to the group, for instance, instead of having a whole-group empathy circle, learners can also be organized into pairs or smaller groups. The circles can also focus on a specific topic or challenge.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Activating Social Empathy (ASE) programme: <https://www.universityofgalway.ie/media/unescochildandfamilyresearchcentre/2023/Activiting-Social-Empathy-SPHE-Resource.pdf>. Developed by UNESCO, this 12-week empathy training programme is structured around four key learning areas, such as (1) understanding empathy, (2) practicing empathy, (3) overcoming barriers to empathy and (4) putting empathy into action.³⁷

UNESCO MGIEP's Social and Emotional Learning Resources: https://d1c337161ud3pr.cloudfront.net/files%2F4c908f6e-80b6-42fc-8a06-16d0f6c7a107_Course%20brochure%20in%20%20%207x9.pdf

More information on running the *Empathy Circle* activity can be found here: Empathy Circle Website: <https://www.empathycircle.com/>

37 Dolan, P., Silke, C., Davitt, E., Flynn, N. & Murray, C. Activating Social Empathy: Junior Cycle Resource. Galway: UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, University of Galway. Adapted from the original Boylan & Dolan (2019). ASE Educator Manual. Link: <https://www.universityofgalway.ie/media/unescochildandfamilyresearchcentre/2023/Activiting-Social-Empathy-SPHE-Resource.pdf>



Story Circles

TARGET LEARNERS

- › upper primary and secondary (the tool has been tested with 12+ age groups)

RELEVANT SUBJECT AREAS

- › all subjects

MATERIALS NEEDED

- › note pads, post-its, cards, markers or nothing at all

TIME NEEDED

- › 1.5-2 hours

OBJECTIVE

To develop intercultural competence through sharing personal stories.

Story Circles were designed as a practical tool for developing and practicing intercultural competencies that would be structured yet flexible and adaptable to different contexts. This approach can be used with different groups of people in many settings around the world, in and outside of formal instructional settings, using little to no resources. Furthermore, Story Circles can be facilitated by those who may not have a strong background in intercultural knowledge and theory.

PROCESS

- Determine the purpose** of the Story Circle, for example, to develop the intercultural competencies necessary to address hate speech in educational contexts and settings.
- Assess the suitability** of the Story Circle process for the identified purpose.
- Identify possible participants** interested in developing their intercultural competencies (ensuring a variety of perspectives as much as possible – i.e. gender, age, religion, culture) – the more diverse, the better the intended outcomes. Based on the number of learners, you could divide the participants into an appropriate number of small groups, or circles (each should have from 3 to 7 participants) for the central part of the activity which involves sharing stories in response to the given prompts.
- Determine the language** that will be used for the Story Circles (based on which language is most accessible ideally for all of the participants, which may or may not be a first language for some of them). Note that all participants need to be able to communicate in a common language (or have accommodations made through interpretation).
- Select the facilitator/co-facilitators** (with the responsibility of maintaining a safe space for respectful dialogue, as well as welcoming participants, outlining the process, and guiding the discussion at the end). Please note that the facilitator/co-facilitators of the experience will not be part of the small groups once it comes to sharing stories, to ensure equality within the groups. The role of the facilitator/co-facilitators is to introduce the experience and set guidelines for the whole group,

then divide the participants into small groups for the actual sharing of stories and, once the experience in small groups is over, conduct the debriefing and discussion with the whole group. The facilitator/ co-facilitators can also be present to answer questions or support the learners during the actual experience in small groups, but they should not listen to the stories being shared.

- f. Choose the appropriate time and place** for the Story Circle (which should allow for chairs set in smaller circles, ideally with no furniture or barriers inside the circles, including no tables). Participants may also sit on the floor or stand in a circle if that is appropriate.
- g. Extend invitations** to the learners (this is important for affirming consent and the responsibility and accountability that comes with accepting to participate) that include the stated purpose, topic(s), and nature of the process (i.e. the importance of listening for understanding, of respecting the other participants, and so on). It is very important that the invitation be framed explicitly as an opportunity to develop intercultural competencies to create safe and inclusive learning spaces free of hate speech and related harmful speech. The Story Circle should be referred to as an 'experience' and not a 'workshop' or 'training' since that terminology sets up potentially unrealistic expectations.
- h. Plan an appropriate opening and closing** for the event, which will set an open and welcoming tone (could include a reading, deep breathing activities, music, etc.), will delineate the start and finish of the experience, and will be appropriate and understood by all participants.
- i. Decide whether there will be a symbolic centre piece in the circles** (such as flowers) and if food will be involved either at the beginning or end of the circle experience. (Another idea could be asking learners to bring their cultural dishes – this can serve to help participants feel more comfortable as they begin to get to know each other.) Also, determine if 'talking pieces' are to be used in the circles (and if so, provide an appropriate 'talking piece' that will be acceptable to all participants). A 'talking piece' is an object held by the person telling their story and then passed on to the next person, to ensure that only the person holding it may speak while the others listen without interrupting, and to help participants respect time limits.
- j. Co-create with the learners and select the prompts to be used.** You will need one 'get acquainted' prompt for the first round and one intercultural prompt for the second round. These prompts should be selected based on the specific intercultural goals for the Story Circle as well as appropriateness for the context and participants (please see the Manual for Developing Intercultural Competencies: Story Circles for more guidance and examples of the prompts that can be used).

- k. **Determine the debriefing questions** to be used after the Story Circle process and be prepared to facilitate the whole group reflection/discussion.
- l. Arrive early to ensure that the space is adequately and appropriately prepared.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

The following activities might benefit the teaching of intercultural competencies in classroom settings, but also support educators when faced with hate speech incidents:

- a. Facilitating **cross-cultural dialogues** can contribute to building empathy and dispel stereotypes as learners can discuss their cultural backgrounds, traditions, and experiences.
- b. Educators (and learners) can engage in **role-playing scenarios** that simulate situations involving hate speech. This allows educators (and learners alike) to practice responding effectively, promoting dialogue, and addressing inappropriate behaviour in a constructive manner.
- c. Research and explore **real-world case studies** of successful intercultural initiatives or instances where hate speech was effectively addressed as this can provide insights and inspiration for educators facing similar challenges. Moreover, **encourage an open dialogue between colleagues** as they might struggle similarly to address hate speech.
- d. Integrate **literature from diverse authors, perspectives, and cultures** into the curriculum to expose learners to a variety of backgrounds.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Manual for developing intercultural competencies: story circles: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000370336>
- Developing Intercultural Competencies through a UNESCO Story Circles methodology: <https://iccglobal.org/developing-intercultural-competencies-through-story-circles/>
- Master Class Series against Racism and Discriminations | UNESCO: <https://www.unesco.org/en/no-racism-no-discrimination/masterclass>
- The UNESCO Master Class Series against Racism and Discriminations is a dynamic platform that equips young people to stand against racism, discrimination, and hate speech. Rooted in UNESCO's commitment to equality and human rights, it provides youth with the skills, knowledge, and tools to challenge prejudice and foster inclusive societies. Through interactive learning and dialogue, participants analyze the roots and impacts of these societal ills while developing strategies to counter intolerance online and offline. More than training, the Series is a catalyst for youth leadership, mobilizing young people as agents of change who promote solidarity, resilience, and human dignity.



Critical dialogue café

TARGET LEARNERS

- › upper primary and secondary

RELEVANT SUBJECT AREAS

- › all subjects

MATERIALS NEEDED

- › note pads, post-its, cards, whiteboard, markers

TIME NEEDED

- › 2 hours

OBJECTIVE

To engage learners in thoughtful dialogue on complex global issues, foster empathy, and encourage the exploration of diverse perspectives. Educators should prepare topic cards with global issues (e.g. climate change, migration, human rights, etc.), a large paper to record key points, and a timer or stopwatch.

PROCESS

- Topic selection (20 minutes):** Highlight the interconnectedness of the world and the role of individuals as global citizens. Distribute topic cards with global issues to each learner or group. Encourage them to choose a topic that interests or challenges them. Topics should be broad and open to interpretation.
- Critical dialogue (60 minutes):** Divide the class into small discussion groups, assigning each group a different global issue. Set a timer for 15-20 minutes for each round of discussion. During this time, learners engage in a critical dialogue, sharing their perspectives, asking questions, and challenging each other's viewpoints. Rotate the topic cards among groups to ensure exposure to various global issues.

How to encourage learners to think critically about topics.

- How might your assumptions limit your understanding of the issue?
- Whose perspective is not represented in this discussion?
- How might certain decisions impact different groups in society?
- Are there alternative solutions or perspectives that have not been considered?
- Can you approach this issue from a different angle?
- How is this topic connected to broader social, economic, or political issues?
- What historical events or cultural factors may have influenced this situation?

- c. Key point recording (15 minutes):** As each group discusses their assigned topic, record key points and insights on a large paper or whiteboard visible to the entire class. This serves as a visual representation of the multifaceted nature of global issues.
- d. Reflection and synthesis (30 minutes):** After the small group discussions, bring the class together for a reflection session. Ask learners to synthesize their insights, noting common themes, differences, and overarching considerations across the different global issues.
- e. Gallery walk and feedback (20 minutes):** Arrange the recorded key points from each discussion group as stations around the room. Learners engage in a gallery walk, providing feedback on each station. Encourage them to add comments, questions, or additional insights to the visual representation.
- f. Debrief and closing (15 minutes):** Conclude the activity with a debrief session. Discuss the challenges and benefits of engaging in critical dialogue on global issues. Emphasize the importance of ongoing critical thinking in becoming informed and active global citizens.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ThinQ: <https://www.thinq.education>
- Foundation for Critical Thinking: <https://www.criticalthinking.org/>

Action area 3: Develop media and information literacy and digital citizenship skills

Developing media and information literacy (MIL) is crucial for young people as it builds the skills and competencies needed to access, evaluate, critically analyze and contribute to various forms of media and information.³⁸ MIL is closely related to digital citizenship, which is defined as ‘the ability to engage positively, critically and competently in the digital environment, drawing on the skills of effective communication and creation, to practice forms of social participation that are respectful of human rights and dignity through the responsible use of technology.’³⁹ Educating learners to be digital and media and information literate citizens equips them with the skills to navigate the digital information landscape safely, ensure positive and ethical online engagement, and most importantly, transform those digital spaces for the better.

Practices

- a. Understand the fundamental right to freedom of expression** and its legitimate limits
- b. Foster a safe digital environment.** Initial lessons should focus on privacy awareness, cyberbullying prevention, a positive online presence, and the real-world consequences of digital actions.
- c. Encourage self-knowledge around media and information consumption habits.** Becoming conscious of their own media environments and information ecosystem helps learners assess and transform their own habits.
- d. Apply critical thinking skills.** Encourage learners to question why they agree with something, and whether opinions and viewpoints are based on credible information or an emotional gut-reaction. Learners should always ask ‘Do I only agree with this because it supports my biases?’ and ‘Is this content unhelpfully stereotyping a particular group in society?’ MIL is key to build resilience to online disinformation and misinformation which are always linked with hate speech.
- e. Emphasize the importance of informed decision-making.** Facilitate conversations on ensuring ethical conduct while engaging and assessing the credibility of information sources, particularly digital platforms.
- f. Foster a holistic understanding of digital environments.** Build on foundations progressively so that learners can not only understand how the digital environments work, and their respective business models, but also navigate and stay safe while participating in meaningful online communities to create positive alternatives in and through the progressively immersive digital landscape.
- g. Collaborate with fellow educators.** Integrate the most relevant and achievable aspects of media literacy and digital citizenship skills across the curriculum. Concentrate on evaluating how your current curricula, expertise, and networks can be effectively applied to one or two specific areas.

38 Global MIL curricula and its competency framework: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000377068>

39 Council of Europe (2017). Digital Citizenship Education – Working Conference. <https://rm.coe.int/digital-citizenship-education-working-conference-empowering-digital-ci/1680745545>



Assessing online information sources

TARGET LEARNERS

- › upper primary and secondary

RELEVANT SUBJECT AREAS

- › all subjects

MATERIALS NEEDED

- › note pads, post-its, cards, markers

TIME NEEDED

- › 15 minutes – 1 hour

OBJECTIVE

To assess online information ‘news’ sources.

PROCESS

- Guiding questions to get the learners to reflect on how they assess the credibility of news/information sources can be:
 - *What are the characteristics of news? Is this a fact or an opinion?*
 - *Is this news source a news outlet in your opinion?*
 - *If not, how would this qualify?*
 - *What are the characteristics of journalism?*
 - *How do we check the reliability of a news/information source?*
 - *How can we distinguish dis- and misinformation?*
- Here are a few tips from the Journey through the MILtiverse: media and information literacy toolkit for youth organizations on how to identify sources and ensure their reliability and accuracy:**
 - *Is this a fact or an opinion?*
 - *Analyse the headline (Is this sensationalist)?*
 - Check the source:
 - › *Identify if the piece of news includes a trackable source.*
 - › *Now, use your favourite browser to search for information about that source*
 - › *Consider the credibility of the source: Is it a reputable news outlet, a social media post, or an unknown website?*
 - › *Use the ‘Just add Wikipedia’ trick to check what it says about the source. Now, identify some signs of reliability: i.e. daily newspaper, formed in 1821, ‘newspaper of record’ in the the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.*
 - Check the claim:
 - › *Search the claim of the piece of news you want to fact-check on your favourite browser.*
 - › *Or type keywords to search if other media outlets have reported on it. Analyse the results. If there are other reliable media outlets reporting on it, it’s most likely to be reliable information.*
 - › *If fact-checking organizations have already reported on it as disinformation, these results will appear on your search.*

- Reverse image search:
 - › *If the piece of news you want to check has an image, use the 'Google Reverse Image Search' to track the original source of the image.*
 - › *Carefully analyse the results to see if the image corresponds to the news, if it was taken out of its original context, or if it is AI generated.*

- c. Teach journalism through different subjects:** For example, invite **history learners** to imagine they live in another era and must report on the events and people of that time; imagine they belong to a different group or community, and ask them to imagine how that group identity might influence the way they research, analyze, and present their ideas. **Science:** Ask learners to report on a scientific event or discovery as though they are presenting the information to a group of people who may be offended by the new information, for example, Galileo's theory that the Earth was not the centre of the universe. Ask them to consider how they would cover such an event, what concerns they might have about how the community responds to what they say, and what they feel the role of a journalist or the media is when handling a controversial subject. **Literature:** Have learners write an investigative profile of a character from a novel. Encourage them to find examples in the text where the dominating perspective of the character is challenged or problematized by information offered by other characters. How does a journalist decide which sources to trust?
- d. Design digital and media and information literacy training:** Identify articles from different sources on one topic. Ask learners to discuss questions such as: What is the author's position and opinion in the article? Who is the author? What are the assumptions she or he may have? Why does she or he have these assumptions? What implications may these have on the representation of the information in this article? Are there any limitations or contradictions to this position? How can this article be interpreted by different people in different contexts?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES/TIPS

- a. Incorporate media and information literacy in your teaching.** MIL should not be an additional burden, but a transversal topic that cuts through citizenship, history, or other relevant topics, subjects or classes.
- b. Combine discussion-based learning with practical activities,** for instance, educators could pick up current examples and case studies to discuss different human rights, including the rights to freedom of speech. Young people are fully capable of identifying arguments for and against the banning or limiting of speech and can further be encouraged to explore how human rights need to be negotiated in specific circumstances. Another topic could be discussing the banning of social media for minors.

- c. **Use examples that resonate with the learners** and relate to their real-life experiences as this usually further encourages them to take part in activities and discussions. Some of the examples should also include the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) considering the impact it has on how people access and engage with information.
- d. **Encourage learners to demonstrate effective media and information literacy** by asking them in follow-up lessons: Have you identified disinformation yet and how did you respond? Have you stood up for a friend or another person, offline or online? Celebrate examples of good (digital) citizenship but also discuss barriers to engagement to show that the learners are not struggling with them by themselves.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Media and information literate citizens: think critically, click wisely! - UNESCO Digital Library: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000377068>
- Journey through the MLTiverse: media and information literacy toolkit for youth organizations: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000392035>
- Online course: Media and Information Literacy Manual for Adult Educators: <https://learninghub.uil.unesco.org/enrol/index.php?id=63>
- Online course for digital content creators: How to be a trusted voice online? <https://journalismcourses.org/>
- Media and Information Literacy for Empowerment and Advocacy: https://www.gcedonlinecampus.org/_HTML/closed_course_view.php?id=76&returnurl=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ2NIZG9ubGluZWNhbXB1cy5vcmcvX0hUTUwvY2xvc2VhX2NvdXJzZV9saXN0LnBocD9hcHByb3ZhbF9hdXRvPTEmYW1wO3ZpZXc9Y2FyZA
- Critical Media Literacy: https://www.gcedonlinecampus.org/_HTML/closed_course_view.php?id=38&returnurl=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ2NIZG9ubGluZWNhbXB1cy5vcmcvX0hUTUwvY2xvc2VhX2NvdXJzZV9saXN0LnBocD9hYWdlPTImYW1wO2FwcHJvdmFsX2F1dG89MSZhbXA7dmlldz1jYXJk
- Digital Safety: https://www.gcedonlinecampus.org/_HTML/closed_course_view.php?id=75&returnurl=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ2NIZG9ubGluZWNhbXB1cy5vcmcvX0hUTUwvY2xvc2VhX2NvdXJzZV9saXN0LnBocD9hcHByb3ZhbF9hdXRvPTEmYW1wO3ZpZXc9Y2FyZA
- ReNews-teaching-booklet-V2.pdf (renews-project.org): <https://www.renews-project.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/ReNews-teaching-booklet-V2.pdf>
- Media and information Literacy for educators: Modules: <https://www.unesco.org/mil4teachers/en/curriculum>
- UNESCO MGIEP's #YouthWagingPeace: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000260547>



Digital footprint analysis

TARGET LEARNERS

- › upper primary and secondary

RELEVANT SUBJECT AREAS

- › all subjects

MATERIALS NEEDED

- › note pads, post-its, cards, markers

TIME NEEDED

- › 1 hours 30 mins

OBJECTIVE

Raise awareness about the concept of a digital footprint and its implications on a person's online presence and encourage learners to reflect on responsible digital citizenship and online behaviour.

PROCESS

- Digital footprints (15 minutes):** Begin with a discussion on the term 'digital footprint.' Ask learners if they are familiar with the concept and what they believe it means. Map their responses on the board.
- Discussion (20 minutes):** Discuss how every click, like, share, and post contributes to our digital footprint or rather the trail of data that everyone leaves behind online. Distribute worksheets or ask learners to reflect individually on their own digital footprints. Encourage them to consider their current online activities and how they might shape their digital reputation. Share examples of positive and negative digital footprints, emphasizing the potential impact on college admissions, job searches, and personal relationships.
- Analysis (30 minutes):** Distribute printed articles or case studies on the consequences of digital footprints. In small groups, have learners read and analyse the materials, discussing the potential long-term effects of various online activities.
- Group Presentations (20 minutes):** Each group presents their findings to the class, highlighting key insights, lessons learned, and recommendations for responsible online behaviour.
- Reflection (15 minutes):** Facilitate a class discussion based on the reflections. Discuss strategies for maintaining a positive digital footprint, including privacy settings, thoughtful posting, and online etiquette. Summarize key takeaways and reinforce the importance of responsible digital citizenship.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **APCEIU's GCED Online Campus provides relevant online free courses:**
 - Media and Information Literacy for Empowerment and Advocacy: https://www.gcedonlinecampus.org/_HTML/closed_course_view.php?id=76&returnurl=aHR0cHM6Ly-93d3cuZ2NIZG9ubGluZWNhbXB1cy5vcmcvX0hUTUwvY2xvc2VhX2NvdXJzZV9saXN0LnBocD9hcHByb3ZhbF9hdXRvPTE-mYW1wO3ZpZXc9Y2FyZA
 - Critical Media Literacy: https://www.gcedonlinecampus.org/_HTML/closed_course_view.php?id=38&returnurl=aHR0cHM6Ly93d-3cuZ2NIZG9ubGluZWNhbXB1cy5vcmcvX0hUTUwvY2xvc2VhX2NvdXJzZV9saXN0LnBocD9wYWdlPTImYW1wO2FwcH-JvdmFsX2F1dG89MSZhbXA7dmlldz1jYXJk
 - Digital Safety: https://www.gcedonlinecampus.org/_HTML/closed_course_view.php?id=75&returnurl=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ2NIZG9u-bGluZWNhbXB1cy5vcmcvX0hUTUwvY2xvc2VhX2NvdXJzZV9saXN0LnBocD9hcHByb3ZhbF9hdXRvPTE-mYW1wO3ZpZXc9Y2FyZA
- UNESCO Global citizenship education in a digital age: educator guidelines: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000388812/PDF/388812eng.pdf.multi>
- The Institute for Strategic Dialogue offers a toolkit on digital citizenship education: 2020_03_05-YDL-Toolkit-Digital-Final.pdf (isdglobal.org): https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2020_03_05-YDL-Toolkit-Digital-Final.pdf.
- On this website, the Council of Europe provides resources and guidance for educators aiming at incorporating Digital Citizenship Education in their curricula: DCE for Educators - Digital Citizenship Education (DCE) (coe.int): <https://www.coe.int/en/web/digital-citizenship-education/educators>.
- Common Sense Education: Common Sense Education offers a wide range of resources, including lesson plans, videos, and interactive activities to teach digital citizenship skills: <https://www.commonsense.org/education>.
- International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE): ISTE provides resources and standards for educators, including guidelines on digital citizenship. Their resources often include lesson plans and activities: <https://iste.org/>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- NetSmartz Workshop: NetSmartz Workshop, a programme by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, offers interactive resources and activities to help children and teens stay safe online: <https://www.missingkids.org/netsmartz/resources>.
- Edutopia: Edutopia, a project of the George Lucas Educational Foundation, covers a variety of educational topics, including digital citizenship. Their website includes articles and resources on teaching responsible tech use: <https://www.edutopia.org/>.
- APCEIU's online GCED campus provides relevant online free courses on Media and Information Literacy for Empowerment and Advocacy (https://www.gcedonlinecampus.org/_HTML/closed_course_view.php?id=76&returnurl=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ2NIZG9ubGluZWNhbXB-1cy5vcmcvX0hUTUwvY2xvc2VhX2NvdXJzZV9saXN0LnBocD9hcHByb3ZhbF9hdXRvPTEyYw1wO3ZpZXc9Y2FyZA), Critical Media Literacy (https://www.gcedonlinecampus.org/_HTML/closed_course_view.php?id=38&returnurl=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ2NIZG9ubGluZWNhbXB-1cy5vcmcvX0hUTUwvY2xvc2VhX2NvdXJzZV9saXN0LnBocD9hYWdIPTI-mYW1wO2FwcHJvdmFsX2F1dG89MSZhbXA7dmlldz1jYXJk) and Digital Safety (https://www.gcedonlinecampus.org/_HTML/closed_course_view.php?id=75&returnurl=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ2NIZG9ubGluZWNhbXB1cy5vcmcvX0hUTUwvY2xvc2VhX2NvdXJzZV9saXN0LnBocD9hcHByb3ZhbF9hdXRvPTEyYw1wO3ZpZXc9Y2FyZA) among others.
- Google's Be Internet Awesome: Google provides a curriculum called Be Internet Awesome, which includes lesson plans and games to teach learners about internet safety and digital citizenship: https://beinternetawesome.withgoogle.com/en_us.
- UNESCO MGIEP's Games for Learning: <https://mgiep.unesco.org/games-for-learning>



Prebunking conspiracy theories⁴⁰

TARGET LEARNERS

- › upper primary and secondary

RELEVANT SUBJECT AREAS

- › all subjects

MATERIALS NEEDED

- › note pads, post-its, cards, markers

TIME NEEDED

- › 1 hours 30 mins

To support the development of critical thinking skills and build resilience to hate-based narratives, UNESCO has developed a resource giving them insight into the nature and characteristics of conspiracy theories and preparing them both to prebunk and debunk the narratives with their learners.

The document, entitled *Addressing conspiracy theories: what teachers need to know*,⁴¹ provides an overview of strategies and classroom practices to guide educators in helping the learner to identify, deconstruct and dismiss conspiracy theories and in leading discussions on the topic, including with learners who already believe in those theories. This resource builds on the #ThinkBeforeSharing campaign,⁴² launched by UNESCO and the European Commission in 2020 in response to the rise of conspiracy theories during the COVID-19 pandemic and implemented in partnership with the World Jewish Congress. The campaign includes 10 educational infographics available in 10 languages.

40 UNESCO (2023), *Addressing hate speech through education: a guide for policy-makers* - UNESCO Digital Library, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000384872>

41 Available at <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381958>

42 Learn more at <https://webarchive.unesco.org/web/20231008075158/https://en.unesco.org/themes/gced/thinkbeforesharing>

Action area 4: Recognize and respond to hate speech

Educational approaches aimed at understanding and tackling hate speech are ineffective unless they account for national and regional legacies, encompassing historical and contemporary inequities, inequalities, and injustices. Such efforts should include open discussions about power and privilege, along with strategies to enhance social inclusiveness and diversity at all levels. Awareness around hate speech should emphasize its impact on individuals' well-being and the broader community. Raising awareness also entails reaffirming a sense of shared responsibility in addressing hate speech in educational contexts and settings. At the same time, effective intervention strategies are essential last resorts for creating a safe and inclusive environment, preventing harm, addressing underlying issues, and fostering a cultural shift toward inclusion and respect. A timely intervention further helps prevent the escalation of hate speech into more severe forms of discrimination or violence, while mitigating the emotional and psychological harm targeted individuals and groups may experience. Whether as an educator, parent/caregiver, learner, bystander or policy-maker, everyone can play a role in responding to and preventing hate speech. Thinking through policy changes and prevention strategies can also empower learners to be agents of change.

Practices

a. Take a trauma-informed approach.

There is a need for thoughtful approaches to untangle historically rooted grievances and address the trauma and stigmatization stemming from violent pasts. Recognizing that different cultures may have unique ways of understanding and coping with trauma prevents one-size-fits-all approaches. This understanding is crucial in educational settings, for it encourages critical thinking and adopting multiple perspectives. Overall, educators should be mindful when selecting material and resources so as not to retraumatize learners or worsen the division caused by recent atrocities to prevent further trauma.

b. Incorporate creative methods. Teaching approaches that incorporate the arts allow learners to channel their emotions into creative expression, providing a more indirect yet powerful way to engage with and process historical trauma. It also encourages a sense

of shared experience and empathy within the learning community.

c. Recognize what is and isn't hate speech.

Ensure that learners know the school's policy and definition of what qualifies as hate speech. Activities that also explore the nuances of what can become hate speech are equally important when establishing a learning space with accountability structures and clear consequences in place.

d. Set up a reporting mechanism. To establish effective reporting mechanisms for addressing bullying or hate speech incidents, schools should implement accessible channels at multiple levels within the learning environment. This can include:

- **Setting up confidential reporting systems** through which learners can report incidents directly to trusted faculty members, counselors, or designated school administrators.

- Additionally, schools may establish **online reporting platforms or hotlines** where learners can submit reports anonymously, providing a safe space for disclosing instances of hate speech without fear of retaliation.

It is crucial to ensure that these reporting mechanisms are easily accessible and widely publicized throughout the school community, including in classrooms, hallways, and on school websites. Furthermore, collaboration with external partners, such as local law enforcement agencies, community organizations, and mental health services, can enhance the effectiveness of reporting mechanisms by providing additional support and resources for intervention and resolution. By implementing comprehensive reporting mechanisms across various levels of the

school environment, educators can create a culture of accountability and responsiveness, promoting the safety and well-being of all learners.

- e. Address incidents immediately.** Promptly address bullying and/or hate speech incidents, making it clear that such behaviour is unacceptable.
- f. Implement restorative justice practices.**⁴³ As a response to bullying, hate speech, or negative behaviour, implement restorative practices that foster a process encouraging empathy, understanding, and accountability among those involved in the incident. Encourage open communication between the parties involved to address the harm caused and provide an opportunity for reparations and reintegrating into the community.

⁴³ Consistent with social and emotional learning and the importance of inclusion and social connection, restorative justice provides an alternative to zero tolerance approaches to bullying.



Recognizing subtle forms of hate speech

TARGET LEARNERS

- › upper primary and secondary

RELEVANT SUBJECT AREAS

- › all subjects

MATERIALS NEEDED

- › handout

TIME NEEDED

- › 45-60 mins

INTRODUCE THE FOLLOWING FORMS OF HATE SPEECH⁴⁴

- Microaggressions:** Subtle, often unintentional, comments or actions that convey discriminatory attitudes toward a person or group based on their identities.⁴⁵
- Coded language:** The use of veiled or coded language that carries hidden discriminatory meanings, allowing individuals to express prejudice without explicit language.
- Stereotyping:** Implicitly perpetuating stereotypes about certain groups, reinforcing biased beliefs through generalizations and oversimplified assumptions. This includes **casual stereotyping** which involves engaging in casual conversations that perpetuate stereotypes without explicit intent, contributing to the normalization of biased beliefs.
- Backhanded compliments:** Offering compliments that contain an underlying insult or reinforce stereotypes, often subtly demeaning the recipient.
- Exclusionary jokes or humour:** Making jokes or engaging in humour that targets a particular group, contributing to a hostile environment through seemingly harmless comments.
- Selective ignorance:** Choosing to ignore or downplay the experiences and concerns of certain groups, dismissing their perspectives or realities.
- Double standards:** Applying different standards or expectations based on an individual's identity, subtly reinforcing discriminatory practices.
- Subtle exclusion:** Excluding certain individuals or groups from social activities or conversations, creating an environment of isolation and alienation.

⁴⁴ UNESCO (2023): *What you need to know about hate speech*, <https://www.unesco.org/en/countering-hate-speech/need-know>.

⁴⁵ University of Cologne (2022): *Microaggressions*, <https://vielfalt.uni-koeln.de/en/anti-discrimination/glossary-discrimination-anti-racism/microaggressions>.

PRESENT THE FOLLOWING SCENARIOS TO YOUR LEARNERS. ASK AND DISCUSS WHICH FORM OF SUBTLE RACISM THEY REPRESENT:

- a. Consider a scenario where a learner, Aisha, consistently faces microaggressions from a peer, David. David comments 'Wow, your English is excellent for someone from your background!' implying surprise at Aisha's language skills. These seemingly harmless remarks create discomfort for Aisha, emphasizing stereotypes and making her feel isolated based on her ethnicity. Such microaggressions, even unintentional, contribute to a hostile education environment, impacting Aisha's well-being and sense of belonging. **(Answer: micro-aggression)**
- b. In 2019, the Guardian published an article on the coded language of far-right groups in the aftermath of the Christchurch attack in New Zealand, making it difficult to spot hate speech right away.⁴⁶ **(Answer: coded language)**
- c. In an education setting, a learner, Sarah, excels in mathematics and consistently receives backhanded compliments from her classmates. For instance, a peer might say 'It's surprising you're so good at math, Sarah. I mean, girls aren't usually known for being great at it.' While it may seem like a compliment on the surface, the underlying implication reinforces gender stereotypes, suggesting that Sarah's mathematical proficiency is an exception for her gender. **(Answer: backhanded compliments)**
- d. Two learners, Alex and Taylor, submit similar science projects. The educator praises Alex for their 'innovative approach' and 'outside-the-box thinking.' However, when providing feedback on Taylor's project, the educator remarks 'Your work is good, but it's expected from someone like you.' This situation exemplifies a double standard, as the educator applies different criteria and expectations to learners based on factors like gender, race, or other personal attributes, unintentionally reinforcing inequality. **(Answer: double-standards)**
- e. A group of friends often gathers in the cafeteria to discuss weekend plans. As new learners, Maya and Ahmed, approach the table to join, the existing group becomes subtly exclusive. The friends continue their conversation without trying to include the newcomers or invite them to join in. This subtle exclusion, manifested through body language and continued private conversation, makes Maya and Ahmed feel unwelcome and creates a sense of isolation in the social environment. **(Answer: subtle exclusion)**

46 Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/17/far-right-groups-coded-language-makes-threats-hard-to-spot>



A theatrical exploration of hate speech

TARGET LEARNERS

- › upper primary and secondary

RELEVANT SUBJECT AREAS

- › civic education, history and government, social studies, physical education

MATERIALS NEEDED

- › note pads, post-its, cards, markers

TIME NEEDED

- › 30 minutes–2 hours

OBJECTIVE

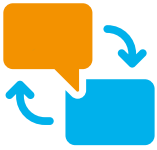
To deepen learners' understanding of the impacts of hate speech and promote empathy and critical thinking.

PROCESS

- Introduction (10 minutes):** Begin with a brief discussion on the power of words and the impact they can have on individuals and communities. Introduce the concept of hate speech and its various forms.
- Identity exploration (15 minutes):** Discuss different aspects of identity such as race, religion, gender, and more. Choose aspects that are relevant to your respective setting. Ask learners to write words or phrases related to these identities on cards. Collect the cards and randomly distribute them among the learners.
- Character development (10 minutes):** Each learner receives a card representing an identity. They are tasked with developing a character that embodies the emotions and experiences associated with the words on their card. Encourage creativity in portraying diverse perspectives.
- Scripting in small groups (15 minutes):** In small groups, learners collaborate to create short scripts or monologues that showcase the impact of hate speech on their assigned identities. They should focus on emotions, relationships, and societal consequences.
- Rehearsals (20 minutes):** Allow time for learners to rehearse their scenes. Encourage them to consider body language, tone, and facial expressions to convey the emotional impact of hate speech.
- Performances (40 minutes):** Learners present their scenes to the class, allowing for a powerful exploration of the varied impacts of hate speech. After each performance, facilitate a brief discussion on the emotions evoked and the importance of empathy.
- Reflection and discussion (15 minutes):** Conclude with a class reflection on the activity. Discuss the challenges faced, insights gained, and the role of empathy in combating hate speech. Encourage learners to share strategies for fostering inclusivity.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Hate Speech Explained | Where Does It Start?: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Xvx_ZTWNd8
- No one is born to hate: Addressing hate speech through education: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2PXLvKT1U4M>



Unravelling historically grown grievances (direct and indirect)

Note: In certain countries or regions, memories of recent ethnic or religious conflicts are still vivid. For example, in the case of conflicts, atrocity crimes and other human rights violations, histories of discrimination or oppression, or in the context of the repercussions of colonization. These memories are particularly vivid for parents, adult community members, and educators who may use this handbook. It is important to recognize that while democracies often find it easier to confront difficult pasts directly, other cultural contexts may prefer indirect approaches to trauma, such as utilizing creative methods such as the arts. Additionally, educators might hesitate to openly discuss such issues due to concerns about potential backlash or discomfort among learners or parents.

If appropriate or needed, reading materials or chosen case studies could focus on positive actions taken against inequities, inequalities, and atrocities to pivot the focus onto a collective way of moving forward.

Below, two approaches, direct and indirect, to untangle historical grievances through dialogue are introduced, which might be suitable for different educational settings.

TARGET LEARNERS

- › upper primary and secondary

RELEVANT SUBJECT AREAS

- › all subjects

MATERIALS NEEDED

- › note pads, post-its, cards, markers

TIME NEEDED

- › 2 hours

OPTION 1. DIRECT APPROACH: DISCUSSING CASE STUDIES.

Note: The activity below is likely more suitable for older learners (14 to 18 years old). This is because the content involves complex historical and sociopolitical discussions that may require a higher level of cognitive maturity and critical thinking skills. The learners would likely benefit from, and engage more deeply with, the nuanced discussions surrounding historical inequities, societal trauma, and the impact of violent histories on communities. It is advisable to introduce such topics in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner, maybe preceding them with grounding social and emotional activities (for example, breathing and mindfulness exercises).

The importance of sensitive language. Using sensitive language is essential in fostering inclusive and respectful educational settings. It involves avoiding the reproduction of discriminatory language or stereotypes that can marginalize or harm individuals or groups based on their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, or any other characteristic. By employing language that is respectful, inclusive, and free from bias, educators create an environment where all learners feel valued, heard, and safe to express themselves.

Process

- a. **Set the tone (10 minutes):** Establish a collective framework/general rule within the classroom to foster a positive and constructive mindset during the discussion. For instance, the learners might collectively commit to respecting each other. It could also involve creating a list of words/phrases to avoid, especially words that are associated with blame, fault, superiority, derogatory language, or discriminatory language.
- b. Ensure that learners have **basic social and emotional skills** to help them calm themselves whenever triggered (**5 minutes**), for example, simple breathing and mindfulness exercises. UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP)⁴⁷ has a lot of such simple SEL practices.
- c. **Introducing the case studies (15 minutes):** Provide reading materials or case studies that highlight national and regional legacies related to inequities, inequalities, and atrocity crimes. Ask participants to read the materials individually and reflect on the key points.
- d. **Small group discussions (30 minutes):** Divide participants into small groups and assign specific aspects of the reading materials for discussion. Encourage groups to delve into the implications of historical legacies on contemporary issues, considering power dynamics and societal structures.
- e. **Facilitated open discussion (40 minutes):** Bring the groups back together for a facilitated open discussion. Use discussion prompts to explore power, privilege, and strategies for improving social inclusiveness and diversity.
- f. **Interactive mapping exercise (25 minutes):** Provide a visual representation of historical timelines and legacies on a whiteboard or flipchart. Ask participants to contribute key events, inequities, and milestones to create an interactive map of the region's history.
- g. **Reflection and action plans (20 minutes):** Conclude the activity with individual journaling reflections on the discussions. Ask participants to identify and journal a few actionable steps they can take to contribute to a more inclusive and equitable society. Summarize the key takeaways.
- h. This activity hopes to create a space for meaningful conversations about the historical context of hate speech, encouraging participants to reflect on their roles in promoting inclusivity and addressing systemic issues.
- i. The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) provides resources, materials and activities aimed at promoting tolerance, understanding, and combating hate speech: Southern Poverty Law Center (splcenter.org)⁴⁸

47 UNESCO MGIEP | Building Kinder Brains, <https://mgiep.unesco.org/>.

48 Available at: <https://www.splcenter.org/>

OPTION 2. CREATIVE APPROACH: USING ART OR MUSIC.

Note: Educators should gauge the readiness and emotional maturity of their learners before implementing this activity, ensuring that learners have the necessary background knowledge and emotional resilience to engage meaningfully with the content. As described, the activity below is generally appropriate for learners in the age range of 14 to 18 years old.

Objective

To foster awareness and understanding of historical events and their impacts through creativity.

Process

- a. **Exploring emotions (15 minutes):** Initiate a discussion about the impact of historical events on individuals and communities. Encourage the learners to acknowledge emotions related to these events.
- b. **Guided meditation (10 minutes):** Lead a brief guided meditation to create a calm and introspective atmosphere, allowing the learners to explore and reflect on their emotions.
- c. **Get creative (30 minutes):**
 - *Option A:* Encourage learners to create visual representations of their emotions or reflections on historical grievances. Alternatively, introduce collaborative art projects that symbolize unity and healing, turning the attention toward more positive actions.
 - *Option B:* Play a curated playlist of music from diverse cultures related to the historical context discussed. Ask learners to reflect on the emotions evoked by the music and its connection to historical narratives.
- d. **Journaling/reflection (15 minutes):** After the creative exercise, learners should have time for written reflections to articulate their feelings and thoughts. What have they discovered about themselves and their understanding of historical trauma?
- e. **Discussion (15 minutes):** Conclude with a group discussion about the impact of the activity on their understanding of historically grown grievances and the potential of creative expression in addressing trauma indirectly. If Option A is chosen (creating visual representations), you may include a gallery walk, so learners can showcase their work.

The National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children provides information and resources in the fields of trauma-informed education: Trauma Informed Care Training - Starr Commonwealth⁴⁹

49 Available at: <https://starr.org/>



Exploring historical case studies

TARGET LEARNERS

- › secondary

RELEVANT SUBJECT AREAS

- › civic education, history and government, social studies, physical education

MATERIALS NEEDED

- › printed case studies

TIME NEEDED

- › 2 hours

OBJECTIVE

To use real-world case studies to deepen understanding of the historical impact of hate speech and to analyse its role in inciting violence against specific groups. This activity not only provides an in-depth exploration of historical case studies but also encourages learners to draw connections between the past and present, fostering a deeper understanding of the consequences of hate speech.

PROCESS

- Introduction to case studies:** Provide a list of historical case studies involving hate speech and violence (e.g. genocide of the Jewish people during the Second World War, also known as the Holocaust or Shoah, the 1994 genocide of the Tutsis in Rwanda, etc.). Learners should be allowed to choose a case study that resonates with them or the educator, depending on the class focus.
- Research support (15 minutes):** Introduce research guidelines emphasizing the importance of using reputable sources. Encourage learners to explore primary and secondary sources, documentaries, survivor testimonies, and academic articles for a comprehensive understanding.
- Group discussions (30 minutes):** Form small groups based on the chosen case studies. Facilitate group discussions on the historical context, the role of hate speech, and the consequences leading to violence.
- Presentation preparation (20 minutes):** Guide each group in preparing a brief presentation summarizing their findings. Important: Emphasize the need for sensitivity and respect when discussing the chosen case study.
- Presentations (40 minutes):** Allow each group to present their findings to the class (5–10 minutes per group). Encourage questions and open discussions after each presentation.
- Reflection and discussion (15 minutes):** Facilitate a reflective discussion on the patterns observed across different case studies. Explore the long-term consequences of hate speech and violence on affected communities and discuss the relevance of historical lessons in addressing contemporary issues related to hate speech. Summarize key takeaways from the activity.



Strategies to prevent and counter hate speech

Note: The repercussions of an unchecked escalation in hate speech and expressions of hatred are complex. Hate speech frequently precedes acts of violence against targeted groups and individuals, posing a direct security threat. It dehumanizes people, violates their human rights, and subjects them to psychological distress. Depending on its extent, magnitude, and level of institutionalization, hate speech can profoundly affect living and learning environments, undermining social cohesion.

Hate speech serves the dual purpose of fostering cohesion among in-group members and creating division from out-group members. Functioning as a means of communication that delineates 'us' versus 'them', it frequently establishes a threat from 'the other', provoking a harmful reaction portrayed as the heroic defense or protection of one's own group. Hate speech provides fertile ground for violence and facilitates the emergence of violent extremism. The documented link between hate speech and incitement to violence, bias, and discriminatory acts underscores this, as do numerous historical case studies. Top of Form

TARGET LEARNERS

- › upper primary and secondary

RELEVANT SUBJECT AREAS

- › civic education, history and government, social studies

MATERIALS NEEDED

- › printed case studies

TIME NEEDED

- › 1 hour

OBJECTIVE

To demonstrate the consequences of hate speech through case studies. Learners will also be empowered to develop recommendations on how to prevent and counter the proliferation of hate speech online.

PROCESS

- Divide the class into 4 or more groups of 3 to 5 learners.
- Assign each group one of the case studies below.
- Ask each group to make three recommendations to prevent or counter the proliferation of hate speech online. These could be policy recommendations, guidelines for social media companies, educational programming, etc.
- Have every group present their recommendations.

The following case studies provide real-life examples of instances of hate speech and how the propagation of hateful narratives contributes to an escalation of violence:

- **Easter Sunday Attacks in Sri Lanka.** On Easter Sunday in 2019, a series of coordinated, ISIS-related suicide bombings targeting churches and luxury hotels in Sri Lanka resulted in the killing of at least 290 people and injured hundreds more. The attacks were carried out by a local extremist group, targeting primarily Christians. These acts were fueled by a combination of factors, including religious extremism, geopolitical influences, and, to some extent, the propagation of hate speech targeting religious and ethnic minorities in the country.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Sri Lanka attacks: Easter Sunday bombings marked one year on (bbc.com), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-52357200>

- **Attacks on LGBTIQ+ communities in Brazil.** Online platforms have been used to disseminate derogatory stereotypes targeting marginalized communities, such as Black, LGBTIQ+, and indigenous communities, incite violence, and promote discrimination against these groups. This online hate speech has contributed to acts of discrimination and real-world incidents of violence, including physical attacks and murders.⁵¹
- **Christchurch shooting in New Zealand and its global repercussions.** The perpetrator, who live-streamed the attack on Facebook, was motivated by a white supremacist and anti-Muslim ideology. Prior to the attack, the attacker had posted a manifesto online containing hateful rhetoric and references to anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim sentiments. This manifesto was widely circulated on social media platforms, contributing to the radicalization and mobilization of individuals sympathetic to extremist ideologies across the world. The attack highlighted the role of online platforms in disseminating hateful ideologies and inciting violence, prompting calls for greater regulation of social media and efforts to combat online extremism.⁵²

51 Brazil's LGBTQ community faces surging violence, but they're fighting back | openDemocracy, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/democraciaabierta/violencia-anti-lgbtq-brasil-en/>

52 Institute for Strategic Dialogue (2024): Five years on from Christchurch: Assessing the evolution of the threat landscape and policy response, https://www.isdglobal.org/digital_dispatches/five-years-on-from-christchurch-assessing-the-evolution-of-the-threat-landscape-and-policy-response/.



Bystander intervention

TARGET LEARNERS

- › upper primary and secondary

RELEVANT SUBJECT AREAS

- › civic education, history and government, social studies, physical education

MATERIALS NEEDED

- › note pads, post-its, cards, markers

TIME NEEDED

- › 1 hour 15 minutes

OBJECTIVE

To recognize and respond to incidents of hate speech, harassment, or bullying by promoting a culture of active bystanders who intervene safely and effectively. The activity fosters empathy, courage, and a sense of responsibility.

PROCESS

- Understanding the bystander effect and bystander intervention strategies (30 minutes):** Explain the bystander effect and how the presence of others can influence individual decision-making. Present different intervention strategies, such as direct intervention, distraction, delegation, and documenting the incident.

Direct intervention: Address the situation calmly and assertively express disapproval of hate speech; use non-confrontational language to discourage the behaviour. For example, in response to overhearing hate speech about a classmate's religious background, directly intervene by calmly telling the speaker, 'Those comments are hurtful and not okay. Let's focus on creating a positive and inclusive environment here.'

Distract: Intervene by diverting attention away from the individual engaging in hate speech; start a conversation on a different topic or introduce a positive element to change the atmosphere. For instance, during a class discussion, an educator notices a learner making inappropriate comments about a peer's appearance. To intervene, the educator employs the distract strategy by saying, 'I appreciate your input, but let's shift our focus back to the main topic. We're here to learn and discuss positively. Any thoughts on the subject we're covering today?' This approach redirects the conversation away from hate speech, steering it toward the intended academic discussion.

Delegate: Seek assistance from authority figures, such as counsellors, supervisors or other school administrators. For instance, an educator witnessing a persistent pattern of hate speech among learners may delegate the responsibility to the counsellor. They could say, 'I've noticed hate speech in the classroom. Let's involve our counsellor for additional support and a comprehensive response.'

- b. Scenarios and role-playing (30 minutes):** Use scenario cards depicting various situations involving hate speech or bullying. Divide participants into small groups and assign each group a scenario. Ask the groups to brainstorm and perform role-plays demonstrating effective bystander interventions.
- c. Group reflection (15 minutes):** After each role-play, facilitate a group discussion on the effectiveness of the intervention strategies used. Encourage participants to share their thoughts and experiences.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- More information and resources on bystander interventions as well as free trainings can be found here: Homepage - Right To Be: <https://righttobe.org/>

Further reading and resources

Below is a compilation of resources and materials you can use in your teaching activities or as further education material to help develop your own methods.

Videos

- Anne Frank House – Free2choose-Create | Anne Frank House: <https://www.annefrank.org/en/education/product/75/free2choose-create/>
- Common Sense Education – Countering Hate Speech Online | Common Sense Education: <https://www.common sense.org/education/digital-citizenship/lesson/countering-hate-speech-online>
- Extreme Dialogue – Extreme Dialogue – Stop hate. Start the dialogue today: <https://extremedialogue.org/>.

Presentations and activities

- Council of Europe, Bookmarks – A Manual for Combating Hate Speech through Human Rights Education – Bookmarks/ Connexions - No Hate Speech Youth Campaign (coe.int): <https://www.coe.int/en/web/no-hate-campaign/bookmarks-connexions>
- Council of Europe, Toolkit on Hate Speech during Electoral Processes – Countering Hate Speech in Electoral Processes - Electoral assistance (coe.int): <https://www.coe.int/en/web/electoral-assistance/-/countering-hate-speech-in-electoral-processes>
- Council of Europe, We CAN! – Taking action against hate speech through counter and alternative narratives We CAN!/ Alternatives - No Hate Speech Youth Campaign (coe.int): <https://www.coe.int/en/web/no-hate-campaign/we-can-alternatives1>
- Educate against Hate – Classroom resources Archives - Educate Against Hate: <https://www.educateagainsthate.com/category/teachers/classroom-resources/>
- Institute for Strategic Dialogue, Digital Citizenship Education: Programming Toolkit – Digital Citizenship Education: Programming Toolkit - ISD (isdglobal.org): <https://www.isdglobal.org/isd-publications/digital-citizenship-education-programming-toolkit/>
- SELMA: Hacking Hate (EU-funded, EU-focused) – SELMA - Hacking Hate: <https://hackinghate.eu/>

Resources, reading and courses

- Council of Europe: Toolkit for human rights speech (coe.int): <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-speech/home>
- Ditch The Label | Youth Charity | Mental Health, Bullying & Relationships: <https://www.ditchthelabel.org/>
- Facing Facts Courses – Facing Facts: <http://www.facingfacts.eu/>
- Facing History and Ourselves - <https://www.facinghistory.org/>
- Institute for Strategic Dialogue, Online Antisemitism: A Toolkit for Civil Society - ISD (isdglobal.org): <https://www.isdglobal.org/isd-publications/online-antisemitism-a-toolkit-for-civil-society/>
- Institute for Strategic Dialogue, The 101 of Disinformation Detection - ISD (isdglobal.org): <https://www.isdglobal.org/isd-publications/the-101-of-disinformation-detection/>
- MGIEP, Social Emotional Learning Skills Development – Social Emotional Learning: <https://web.archive.org/web/20240614025651/https://mgiep.unesco.org/sel-for-everyone>
- Reporters without borders, Press Freedom Index – Index | RSF: <https://rsf.org/en/index?year=2021>
- Stand up, Speak out – Open Textbook (umn.edu): <https://open.lib.umn.edu/publicspeaking/>
- The Happy Schools project, launched by UNESCO Bangkok under the ESD and GCED framework: <https://web.archive.org/web/20231219094609/https://bangkok.unesco.org/theme/happy-schools>
- UNESCO – GCED Topics and Learning Objectives: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000232993>
- UNESCO, Addressing hate speech through education: A guide for policy-makers - UNESCO Digital Library: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000384872>
- UNESCO, Addressing violent pasts through education: A policy guide <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000395088>
- UNESCO, Fighting Racism and Discrimination – A UNESCO Toolkit – <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000387454/PDF/387454eng.pdf.multi>
- UNESCO, Media and information literate citizens: think critically, click wisely! - UNESCO Digital Library: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000377068>
- UNESCO & MGIEP – #Youth Waging Peace – a youth-led guide on prevention of violent extremism through education: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000260547>
- UNICEF – How to talk to your children about hate speech | UNICEF Parenting: <https://www.unicef.org/parenting/how-talk-your-children-about-hate-speech>

Example: Facebook and the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar

Meta, the company behind platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, has been implicated in contributing to the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar through the spread of hate speech, misinformation, and the amplification of divisive content on its platform Facebook. The Rohingya, a Muslim minority group in Myanmar, have faced widespread persecution and violence. Several factors point to Facebook's role in exacerbating the situation:

- 1. Hate speech and disinformation.** Facebook became a major channel for the dissemination of hate speech and false information targeting Rohingya, as extremist groups used the platform to spread hateful content, leading to increased tensions and violence.
- 2. Algorithmic amplification.** Facebook's algorithms played a role in amplifying sensational and divisive content, meaning that hateful content and disinformation gained more visibility and engagement.
- 3. Lack of moderation.** The company further faced criticism for not effectively moderating and removing content that violated its community standards. The platform struggled to curb the spread of harmful content, allowing misinformation and hate speech to proliferate.

The online hate speech and disinformation on Facebook contributed to the violence against the Rohingya community. Reports suggest also that the platform was used to coordinate attacks on Rohingya villages.

Example: Social Media 4 Peace

The Social Media 4 Peace project is premised on the realization that while digitalization of societies presents opportunities for information flow, digital communication tools have also become instrumental platforms for spreading harmful content with a significant impact on conflict dynamics and peace. Through the project, UNESCO seeks to enhance understanding of the root causes, scale and impact of potentially harmful content and of the effectiveness of the tools to address it in the three pilot countries – Kenya, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Indonesia. The project seeks to strengthen resilience of civil society to potentially harmful content spread online, in particular hate speech inciting violence, while enhancing the promotion of peace through digital technologies, notably social media. The project is funded by the European Union and will contribute to the achievement of SDG 16, to promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies and to the UN Plan of Action on Hate Speech launched by UN Secretary-General António Guterres to combat the disturbing online groundswell of xenophobia, racism and intolerance.

For more information: visit <https://www.unesco.org/en/social-media4peace>

Example: History under attack – Holocaust denial and distortion on social media

The swift dissemination of polarizing and hateful ideologies through social media has spurred a worldwide proliferation of hatred. In 2022, UNESCO and the United Nations, with the support of the World Jewish Congress (WJC), collaborated on a report investigating the dissemination of hateful narratives, specifically focusing on Holocaust denial and distortion as they feed into antisemitic conspiracy narratives, substituting historical facts and evidence with myths about Jews and purported 'Jewish power'. This trend has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Alarming, these narratives are easily accessible to young individuals seeking information about the Holocaust on social media platforms, thereby facilitating the dissemination of hate speech and violent ideologies.

The analysis revealed that Holocaust denial and distortion are prevalent across all online platforms, including those with targeted content moderation policies aimed at combating Holocaust denial and antisemitism. The situation is particularly concerning on Telegram, where nearly half of the content (49 per cent) related to the Holocaust either denies or distorts it. The report further emphasizes that Holocaust denial and distortion often manifests itself in covert and coded ways, posing challenges to efforts aimed at mitigating their spread online. It is often further propagated through memes and humour, which are used by online communities to glorify or ridicule the Holocaust while promoting violent extremist ideologies. This use of humour and memes allows hateful narratives to gain acceptance and legitimacy among broader audiences, serving as a tool to spread racist and white supremacist ideologies, recruit and radicalize new members, and signal a sense of group identity. Additionally, Holocaust denial and distortion frequently coexist with other forms of online harms such as homophobia, misogyny, and racism.

For more information:

UNESCO and the United Nations (2022). History under attack – Holocaust denial and distortion on social media.

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000382159>



unesco

United Nations
Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organization

APCEIU

Asia-Pacific Centre of
Education for
International Understanding
under the auspices of UNESCO

Addressing hate speech through global citizenship education

A handbook for educators

This handbook builds on UNESCO and United Nations Office of the Special Rapporteur on Preventing Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect publication *Addressing hate speech through education: policy guide* (2023). It provides educators with a conceptual framework to understand the definitions, drivers and consequences of hate speech. Additionally, it outlines concrete pedagogical practices, activities, and resources to co-create inclusive learning spaces that promote diversity, cultivate critical thinking, and facilitate the overall modelling of responsible citizenship that prevents hate speech and foster a culture of peace.

