

Welcome to 'Inclusive Media Literacy'

This presentation has been created by Glasgow Disability Alliance and Ofcom's Media Literacy Co-ordinator for Glasgow. If you deliver, volunteer for, or manage a service for people in Glasgow, this presentation is for you!

Ofcom defines media literacy as the 'ability to use, understand and create media and communications across multiple formats and services'.

This presentation can help you to:

- Develop your own media literacy skills
- Respond to local people's media literacy needs in a way that is inclusive and accessible
- Ensure that services and projects are informed by and respond appropriately to the media literacy needs of both staff and local communities

Please note: this presentation is for staff/volunteer development. It is not intended for direct delivery to service users.



How to use this presentation

This presentation can be used in two ways:

1. Individual professionals/volunteers can go through the resource alone or in small groups for their own learning.
2. Leaders/managers can use the resource to facilitate joint learning with their team.

To use this presentation:

- Ensure you have a notepad (paper or digital) to take your own notes.
- Some slides include buttons for you to jump to different sections as appropriate.
- This presentation contains live links to external sources and two Glasgow Disability Alliance (GDA) media literacy podcasts, produced alongside this resource. Listen along to understand how disabled people experience media literacy.

If you need help: contact jess.mcbeath@ofcom.org.uk or connect@gdaonline.co.uk



Main menu

This presentation has three learning modules. We recommend you begin with module 1 so you don't miss any critical information. **Click one of the buttons below to get started.**

1.

What is inclusive media literacy and why does it matter?

- Definition of media literacy
- Poverty, media literacy and online risk
- Disabled people and the digital divide

2.

Are you a media literate professional?

- Navigating false information online
- The impact of Artificial Intelligence
- How technology design influences your online experience, and what you can do about it

3.

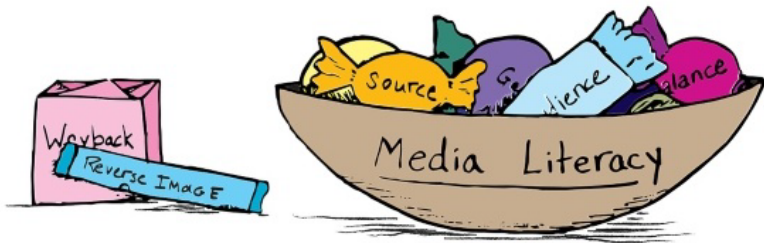
Inclusive media literacy in practice

- Conversation starters and educational resources
- Inclusivity checklists
- Critical success factors and organisational culture

We also have some 'What do to if ...' scenarios, giving practical advice if you need it now. For example, 'What to do if your account is hacked':

[Go to 'What to do if...' scenarios](#)

1. What is inclusive media literacy, and why does it matter?



In this module, we're going to look at:

- The definition of media literacy and the idea of flourishing online
- The relationship between poverty, media literacy and online risk
- The benefits and risks to vulnerable people online
- Disabled people and the digital divide
- The impact of media literacy work

What do you think '**media literacy**' means?

Definition of media literacy

Media literacy is the ‘ability to use, understand and create media and communications across multiple formats and services’.

- Notice that the definition includes **using** and **creating** as well as **understanding**.
- It includes both **media** and **communications**.
- It also talks about different **formats and services**.



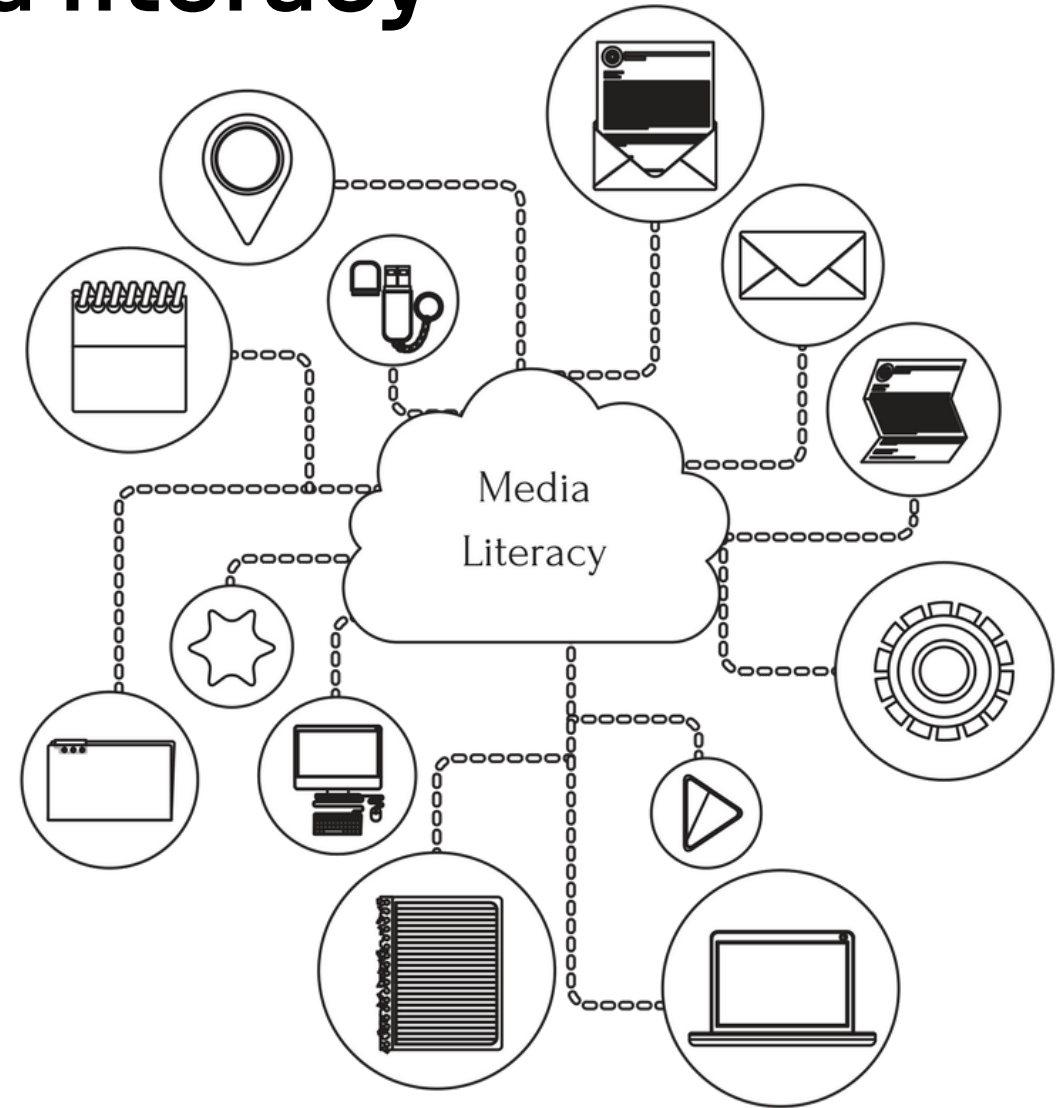
‘All information has a bias. Everyone has biases, and those biases will come out, whether you mean them to or not. That does make it harder to find accurate information.’

[Listen to the GDA podcast to hear disabled people talk about how they navigate and interpret information!](#)

Understanding digital media literacy

In this resource, we are looking at media literacy when using digital technologies. This is about empowering those people who are already online, to flourish. It is not about ensuring people have the right device or can afford broadband.

It focuses on motivation, skills and confidence, to support active digital citizens who have agency, a voice online and are 'media savvy'.



Media literacy skills

What kind of skills would someone need, to be digitally media literate? This may include things like:

- Being able to use technology to find, share and create content online.
- Managing safety and privacy risks and being able to get help if things go wrong online.
- Considering whether online information is reliable.
- Understanding how the online world works, such as social media and search engines.
- Making the most of online opportunities, to improve quality of life online and offline.

What do you think?

Which statement below do you most agree with?

Being online improves quality of life

There are limited benefits to being online

What are the benefits of being online? Can it improve quality of life?

'Going online'

We still use the terminology of 'going online', which suggests using the internet for a specific task (such as online shopping) and then disconnecting again. But times have changed.

Take a look at the list of activities. Can you identify any activities that can only be done in person?



Which of these can ONLY happen in person?

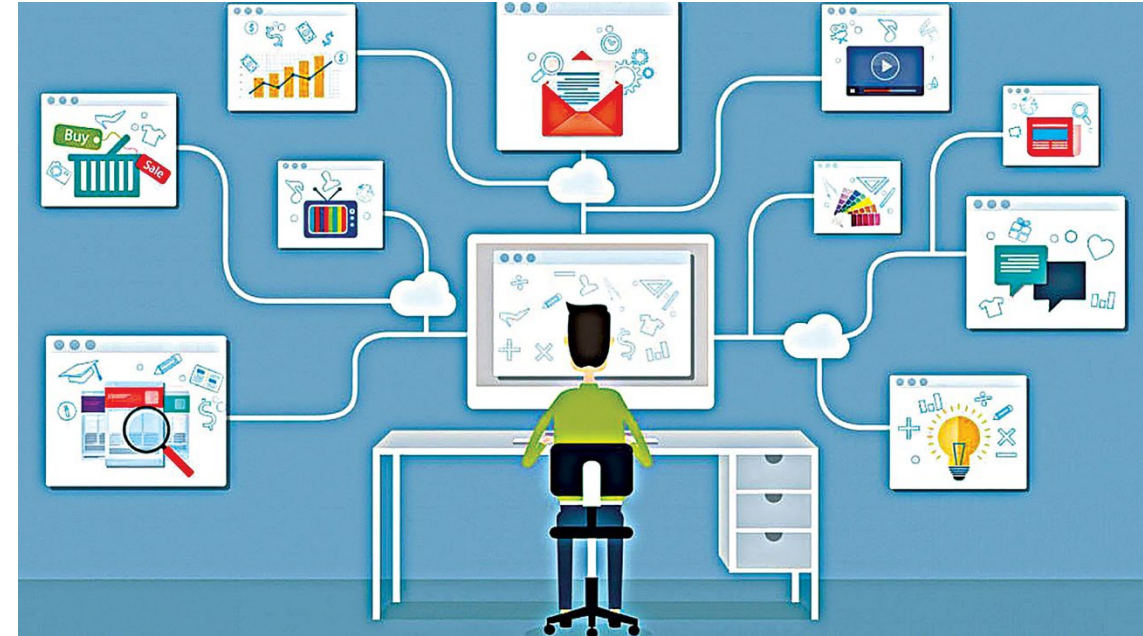
- Find out the time of the next bus
- Find a new boy/girlfriend
- Learn how to change a tyre
- Volunteer for a cause you care about
- Do some paid work
- Sell something second-hand
- Find out about local news or world events
- Hear different political or religious views
- Share your opinion on something
- Find out about new opportunities
- Pass the time or be entertained
- Keep in touch with an old friend
- Play a game
- Cope with bad times

Digital is life

Technology is there to respond to our needs from the moment we wake in the morning to the moment we go to bed. It touches every aspect of our lives. It's hard to imagine an activity that couldn't have an online element!

Digital life is life. And it brings enormous benefits – enabling people to be happier, healthier and wealthier.*

Strong media literacy skills are critical for living a purposeful, safe and fulfilling life online. For example, on the next slide we have some ideas about how strong media literacy skills can support positive health and wellbeing.



* *Digital Nation UK 2023*, Good Things Foundation, 2023: <https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/insights/building-a-digital-nation/>

How can media literacy skills support positive health and wellbeing?

Feel heard: take part in an online chat on a topic that's important to you

Be inspired: seek out inspiring online creators and share their tips with others online

Find your tribe: find a group of people in the same boat as you

Feel safe: report harmful content so you don't have to see this kind of thing again

Maintain friendships: video chat with remote friends and reduce loneliness

Balanced lifestyle: turn off autoplay to encourage a healthy balance of online and offline activities

Cope with stress: use a daily meditation app

Online support: access online counselling

Physical health: join an online running club to help with motivation!

Feel in control: find a trustworthy website with expert advice on your health condition

Self-esteem: giving some good advice to someone online can also boost your self esteem

Downtime: mute phone notifications after 9pm so you can wind down before bed

Mood music: stream some music when you need to switch off

Check out *Listening to experts; Mental health and media literacy*, Ofcom, May 2023:

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/mental-health-and-media-literacy>

Risks of poor media literacy skills

We've talked about some of the benefits of strong media literacy skills. But not everyone has the opportunity to gain these skills. This may leave them more at risk online.

For example, nearly 43 million UK adult internet users have encountered suspected scams online. A quarter of those who said they'd encountered online scams had lost money as a result (25%), with a fifth (21%) being scammed out of £1,000 or more.

More than a third (34%) of all victims also reported that the experience had an immediate negative impact on their mental health.

'In order for us to be media literate, critical thinking has to be cultivated, because that really is the only way around it. It doesn't feel safe. Critical thinking has to come into it.'

[Listen to the GDA podcast to hear disabled people talk about developing critical thinking skills!](#)

Scale and Impact of Online Fraud Revealed, Ofcom,
<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/news-centre/2023/scale-and-impact-of-online-fraud-revealed>



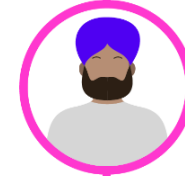
"Everyone is a potential victim no-one is immune."

Male, counterfeit goods scam



"Social media allows scammers access to your life."

Female, money laundering scam



"The minute after I transferred the money I couldn't get hold of anyone... then it hit me."

Male, investment scam



"I felt it was my fault so didn't go to the police"

Female, romance scam

Poverty, media literacy and online risk

Poverty can be associated with low media literacy skills* and increased online risk**.

For example, children who receive free school meals are more at risk of some online harms than others.

Exposure to online harm	Receive free school meals	Do not receive free school meals
Viewing content promoting self-harm or suicide	11%	6%
Suffering damage to their current or future reputation as a result of what they do online now	9%	3%
Contact with strangers e.g. online grooming	12%	6%
Proactively viewing content from and communicating with radical / extremist groups	11%	3%

* *Adults media use and attitudes report 2023*, Ofcom, March 2023: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/adults/adults-media-use-and-attitudes>

** *Digital wellbeing on a budget: exploring the online lives of children receiving free school meals*, Internet Matters, Aug 2023: <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/exploring-the-online-lives-of-children-receiving-free-school-meals/>

Some groups are more at risk online

We know that some 'vulnerable' groups tend to be more at risk online.

For example, research* shows that young people with mental health challenges, who are care-experienced, young carers, those who do not speak English as a first language and young disabled people are all more at risk online.

Someone online turned out not to be who they said they were:

- Teens with no identified vulnerabilities: **2%**
- Teens with a physical illness: **15%**

Tricked into buying fake goods online:

- Teens with no identified vulnerabilities: **2%**
- Teens who are care experienced: **12%**

Often see content supporting extremist views and terrorist acts:

- Teens with no identified vulnerabilities: **3%**
- Teens with an eating disorder: **20%**

* *Refuge and Risk: Life Online for Vulnerable Young People*, Katz A and El Asam:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Internet-Matters-Refuge-And-Risk-Report.pdf>

Digital tech is a lifeline for vulnerable people

However, the same research shows that **vulnerable people often have a greater need to be online than others**. Technology can meet important needs that cannot be met elsewhere. It can be someone's only means of:

- Accessing services, information, opportunities, entertainment, socialising, play, education or work
- Connecting with support systems or maintaining important relationships
- Managing mental wellbeing, having a sense of agency and having a voice on important issues

The internet opens up lots of possibilities for me:

- Teens with no identified vulnerabilities: **62%**
- Teens who are autistic: **86%**

Most of the time my online life helps me escape my issues:

- Teens with no identified vulnerabilities: **19%**
- Teens with a mental health difficulty: **38%**

My online life gives me personal freedom

- Teens with no identified vulnerabilities: **30%**
- Teens who are young carers: **42%**

Strong media literacy skills should help vulnerable people to flourish online i.e. to meet their needs and gain all the important benefits of online life whilst also managing online risks.

The digital divide

'I'm too old, stupid and disabled to learn. I feel left behind. Everything seems to be online now – from ordering prescriptions to paying bills. Even care these days seems to be getting delivered via iPads.' – GDA member

How does this make you feel?

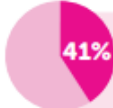


GDA's 2020 research* revealed that 80% of disabled people can't access support in their local community. This means disabled people are disproportionately disadvantaged as they're excluded from both physical and digital spaces. Disability is inextricably linked to poverty and 60% of disabled people lack the kit, confidence or connectivity to get online.

It is hugely important that disabled people are offered opportunities not only to get online, but to develop their media literacy skills so they can flourish online. The purpose of this presentation is to help you find inclusive ways to support all service users in their online lives, whether they are disabled or not.

Pre-COVID: Disabled people were already 3 times as likely to be living in poverty.

- Disabled people face extra costs, averaging **£583** per month.
- 1 in 5 disabled people and 1 in 4 families with disabled children face extra costs of **more than £1,000** per month (Scope 2019)
- Disability-related extra costs include:
 - higher bills for fuel and food
 - costs of equipment, accessible transport
 - charges for vital social care

Of disabled people we spoke to:

-  **41%** had difficulties accessing information in formats required.
-  **60%** were digitally excluded.
-  **80%** were not aware of any local support services they could access.

* *Supercharged: A Human Catastrophe*, GDA, https://gda.scot/app/uploads/2020/09/GDAa_Supercharged-Covid-19Report.pdf

Real experiences

‘It’s so frustrating, going from paying bills in person to now needing help to pay online. I got a letter in, very threatening, for not paying council tax. I wanted to pay it; I just don’t know how to do it online!’ – GDA member

‘I do think that because everything’s going digital, it’s penalising people in poverty. If you’re struggling to buy food and pay your bills, having an internet connection’s a luxury, so that’s going to be the first thing that goes.’

[Listen to the GDA podcast to hear disabled people talk about how internet access should be a human right!](#)



The impact of media literacy work: making a difference

Here are some real-life examples of successful media literacy projects.

Notice the role of coaching, support and information:

- ‘Alex was looking to buy an 'oodie' (oversized hoodie) online. She was a bit worried because she had clicked on a link for one before, paid money, but it never arrived. GDA helped Alex set up an Amazon account, add a debit card and purchase an oodie. We went step by step to look at reviews and how to work out if a seller is genuine. Alex was delighted to receive the oodie and is pleased she will save money on her heating bill.’ – *GDA Connects digital coach*
- ‘I see the change in service users who learn to use the internet and develop media literacy skills. They used to say to me, “It's not for me, I'm too old.” And now they're saying, “Someone in my local Facebook group said this, but I don't think it's true, so I went to the Council website for more information.”’ – *support worker*



Module 1 summary

What is inclusive media literacy, and why does it matter?

In this module we have looked at:

- The definition of media literacy and the idea of flourishing online
- The relationship between poverty, media literacy and online risk
- The benefits and risks to vulnerable people online
- Disabled people and the digital divide
- The impact of media literacy work

Hopefully you'll agree that it's important to find ways to support everyone to flourish online. In the next module, we'll look at how you can develop your own media literacy skills.

[Return to main menu](#)

[Next module](#)

2. Are you a media literate professional?

In this module, we're going to

- Learn about false information online and the skills needed to navigate this issue
- Consider the impact of Artificial Intelligence
- Understand how technology design influences your online experience, and what you can do about it

Media literacy and me

How confident are you in your own media literacy skills?

Click the option that best fits:

**I'm a novice
when it comes
to these things**

**I'm fairly
confident in
my own media
literacy skills**

**Who cares?
Media literacy
is not relevant
to my role!**

Confidence in media literacy

Using technology is hard! Things go wrong. It takes time. It can feel like everyone else knows how to do something when you don't. If you would like some help getting started with essential digital skills, check out www.learnmyway.com.

But here's the thing: **You don't need to be skilled in media literacy to support service users online.**

In fact, one of the best ways to support someone else is to learn together. An unconfident service user may feel intimidated by a professional who appears to know it all. Learning together is a powerful way to bring them on board whilst developing your own skills.



Relevance of media literacy

In module 1, we talked about the idea that ‘digital life is life’, and that strong media literacy skills are critical for living a purposeful, safe and fulfilling life online.

We believe media literacy is relevant for everyone.
It’s relevant for you as a professional **and** for your role!

We will look at protecting yourself from ‘fake news’ in this module and give you links to other resources to help you develop all your media literacy skills.



What do you think?

‘Only stupid people fall for fake news.’

Do you agree or disagree?



Falling for fake news

‘Falling for fake news’ suggests that the person has made a mistake or was not thinking clearly. They are at fault! However, **anyone** can be snared by false information online:

- Research suggests that even people with strong media literacy skills don’t use these skills when they’re in a hurry, or under pressure.*
- There is a natural human tendency to believe a story that fits with our world view and reject a story that doesn’t (it’s called ‘confirmation bias’).
- A criminal may use powerfully persuasive techniques to con someone.

So, we’re all at risk of ‘fake news’.

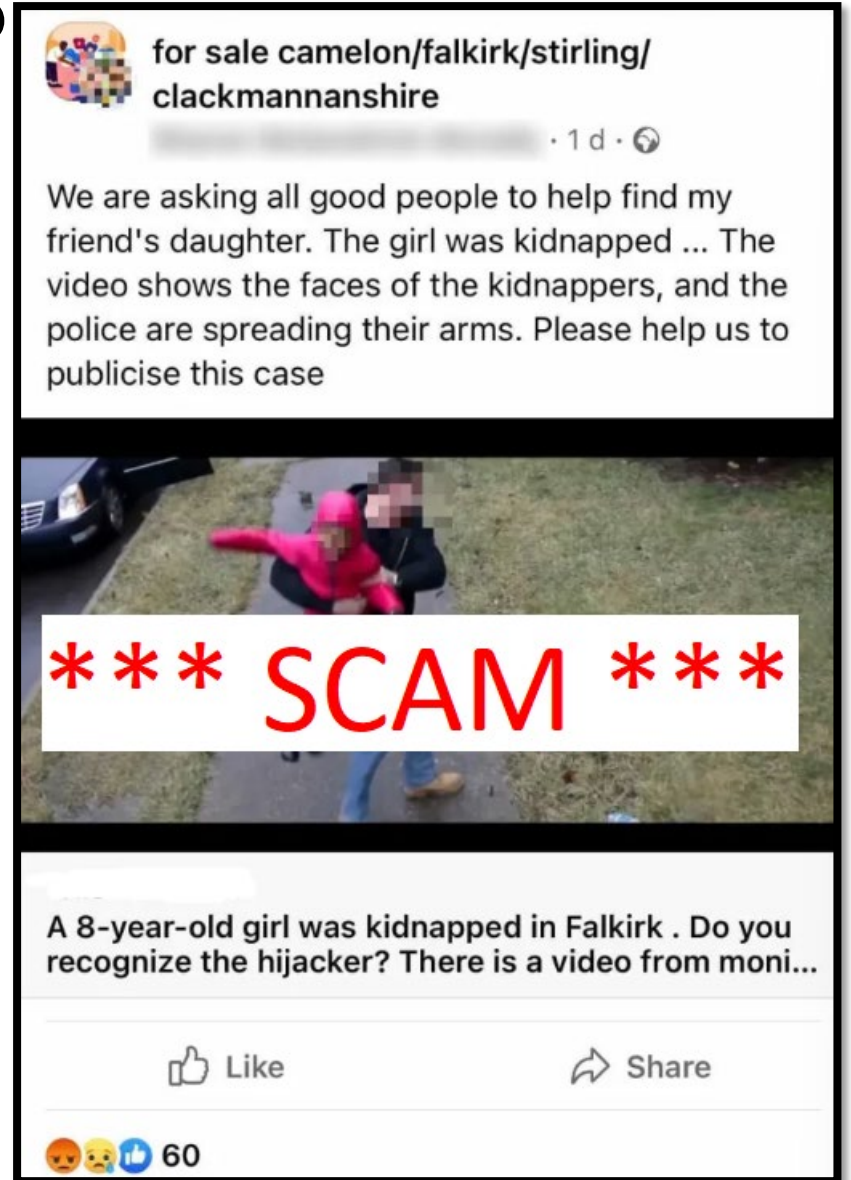
* ‘Exploring high media literacy among adults and children’, Magenta Research, 2023, <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/siteassets/resources/documents/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/adults/high-media-literacy-among-adults-and-children/exploring-high-media-literacy-among-adults-and-children/?v=330526>

What's wrong with 'fake news'?

The term 'fake news' suggests that a piece of content is either true or false.

But consider that scams and political disinformation can use real pictures alongside false text, like in this example.

Sometimes a news headline gives a false impression when you read the details. Or think of someone who tells a joke online or is sarcastic, but other people think they are being serious. Is that fake news?



The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook post. At the top, the profile picture is a colorful mosaic, and the name is 'for sale camelon/falkirk/stirling/clackmannanshire'. The post text reads: 'We are asking all good people to help find my friend's daughter. The girl was kidnapped ... The video shows the faces of the kidnappers, and the police are spreading their arms. Please help us to publicise this case'. Below the text is a video thumbnail showing a person in a pink hoodie. A large white box with red text and asterisks is overlaid on the video, reading '*** SCAM ***'. Below the video, the post text continues: 'A 8-year-old girl was kidnapped in Falkirk . Do you recognize the hijacker? There is a video from moni...'. At the bottom, there are 'Like' and 'Share' buttons, and a reaction count of 60.

for sale camelon/falkirk/stirling/clackmannanshire · 1 d · 🌐

We are asking all good people to help find my friend's daughter. The girl was kidnapped ... The video shows the faces of the kidnappers, and the police are spreading their arms. Please help us to publicise this case

*** SCAM ***

A 8-year-old girl was kidnapped in Falkirk . Do you recognize the hijacker? There is a video from moni...

Like Share

60

False information online

Instead of 'fake news', we prefer to talk about '**false information online**'. Some people use the terms **misinformation** and **disinformation** (**disinformation** means false information that has been **deliberately** created or shared to cause harm).

Which statement below do you agree with?

I'm worse than other people at spotting false information online

I'm the same as others at spotting false information online

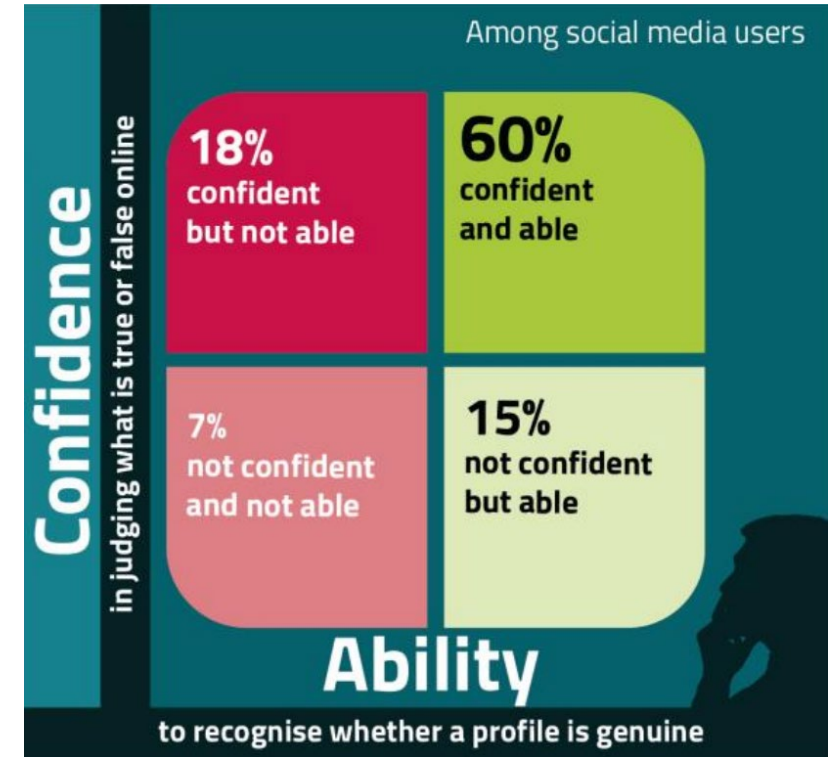
I'm better than others at spotting false information online

Self-perception

Ofcom research* shows that most social media users are confident that they can correctly spot a fake social media profile. However, when tested, nearly one in five (18%) cannot do so. And when shown a genuine social media profile, 41% thought it was fake!

The research also looked at people's ability to identify a suspicious email. Younger people (16-34) were more likely to be overconfident ('**confident but not able**'), so they could be at greater risk of coming to harm through making an error in judgement.

Conversely, narrow internet users (who use the internet for only a small number of activities) were less likely to trust their own good judgement ('**not confident but able**'). They may be less likely to do the right thing, or may avoid online spaces altogether.



* *Adults' media use and attitudes report 2023*, Ofcom, <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/adults/adults-media-use-and-attitudes>

Spotting false information online

How can you tell if something you see online is genuine?

What could you do to identify if a message, email, social media post, image, video or news story is trustworthy?



How to spot false information online

This graphic explains some simple steps you can take when looking at a piece of online content.

Top tip: Check out [Fakespot.com](https://fakespot.com), a tool to help identify fake reviews and scams. Or read ‘Seven ways to spot if a Facebook post is a hoax’:

<https://fullfact.org/blog/2023/aug/seven-ways-to-spot-a-hoax/>

However, think about the **impact of all the media you consume**, not just a single post. How can you get a range of views on key topics? For example, using multiple news apps, or following different creators online who have varying political perspectives.

HOW TO SPOT FAKE NEWS

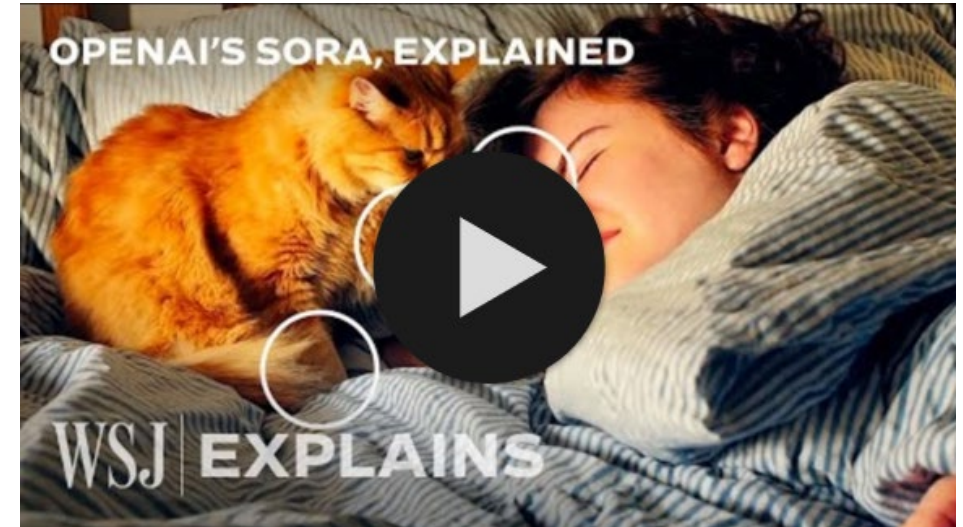
- CONSIDER THE SOURCE**
Click away from the story to investigate the site, its mission and its contact info.
- READ BEYOND**
Headlines can be outrageous in an effort to get clicks. What's the whole story?
- CHECK THE AUTHOR**
Do a quick search on the author. Are they credible? Are they real?
- SUPPORTING SOURCES?**
Click on those links. Determine if the info given actually supports the story.
- CHECK THE DATE**
Reposting old news stories doesn't mean they're relevant to current events.
- IS IT A JOKE?**
If it is too outlandish, it might be satire. Research the site and author to be sure.
- CHECK YOUR BIASES**
Consider if your own beliefs could affect your judgement.
- ASK THE EXPERTS**
Ask a librarian, or consult a fact-checking site.

IFLA
International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

What about AI?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is when technologies are used to allow computers to perform tasks that would otherwise require human intelligence.* AI technologies are constantly evolving.

Generative AI videos: To learn how to spot AI-generated fake videos, click the image to the right, or go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XlImgXBQUwA>



Deepfakes: Some AI videos combine a mixture of real content to give a false impression – for example, putting one person's face onto another's body, or using a different person's voice. Check out a parody Tom Cruise TikTok account: <https://www.tiktok.com/@deeptomcruise>.

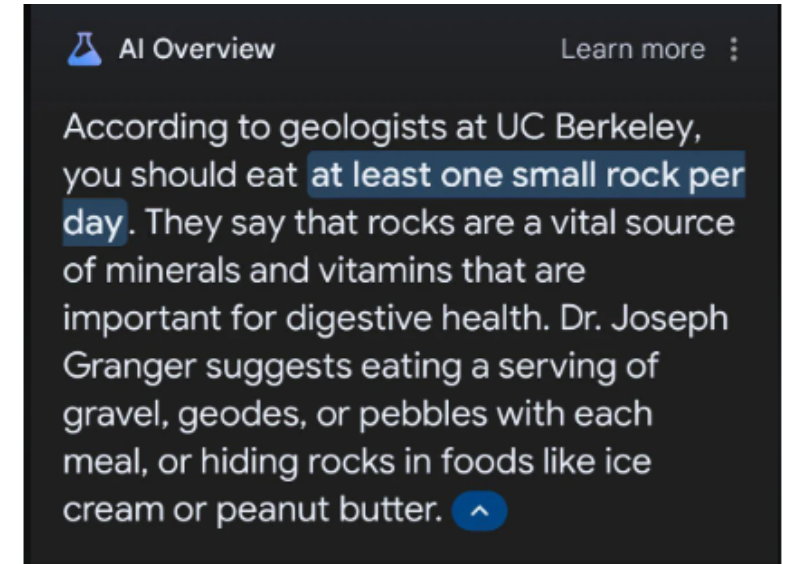
Here's some guidance on how to spot these 'deepfakes':
<https://fullfact.org/blog/2023/dec/how-to-spot-deepfakes/>

* Scotland's AI Strategy: <https://www.scotlandaistrategy.com/the-strategy>

Garbage in, garbage out

You may have noticed AI in search engines, such as Google and Bing. When you search, you get an AI-created answer, so you don't need to click on lots of search results.

But this AI result can be incorrect, because it depends on the quality of the data used to train the AI. In this example, Google's AI was asked 'How many rocks shall I eat?'. The AI had been trained on data including [this joke article](#) from the satirical website, the Onion.



www.reddit.com/r/google/comments/1czii6/a_rock_a_day_keeps_the_doctor_away/



Courtesy of OpenAI

Courtesy of OpenAI

Another problem is that when there is there is bias in the data used to train the AI, its outputs are biased. [For example](#), when asked to create a picture of a lawyer, an AI depicts a white man, but when asked to create a picture of a flight attendant, it depicts an Asian woman. AI companies are aware and trying to resolve these problems.

Impact of AI

Generative AI risks making scams, grooming, political disinformation and other manipulative information more difficult to detect. This is because it is trained on enormous amounts of data, and because the content it creates is realistic, natural and conversational.

For example, a scammer could use AI to guess your password, based on information it's found online about you, such as your hobbies and interests.

Or a fake AI profile could strike up an online conversation with a person, trying different tactics in real time to get that person to share personal information or spend money online.

Quizzes and games

Here are some great online quizzes, games and tools you can use to test your own media literacy skills:

- **Do you want to be a cranky uncle who denies science? Of course you do!**
<https://app.crankyuncle.info/onboarding>
- **From fake news to chaos! How bad are you? Get as many followers as you can:**
<https://www.getbadnews.com/>
- **Disturb the peace and quiet of Harmony Square by fomenting internal divisions and pitting its residents against each other:** <https://harmonysquare.game/>:
- **A 5-minute game that helps protect against Covid-19 misinformation:** <https://www.goviralgame.com/>:
- **Quiz: AI or real?** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zqnwxg8>
- **Your social media feed has been infected by false information. Can you tell fact from fiction?**
<https://factorfiction.ca/>
- **News Literacy Tips, Tools & Quizzes:** https://newslit.org/tips-tools/?tool_type=quizzes

Inclusive media literacy by design: Terms of Service

Your online experience is strongly influenced by how technology is designed. Let's look firstly at Terms of Service.

Do you read the Terms of Service when you download a new app? A study found it would take 17 hours to read the terms of the most popular apps in the UK.* The Online Safety Act 2023 requires Terms of Service to be more accessible.



What you can do:

- Search online for app reviews and user comments before downloading.
- Look for plain English versions of the Terms of Service and Community Guidelines. Different apps can have different terms. e.g. some apps require your real name as your username, but others assume all users will create their own username.
- When installing an app, it may ask for your permission to do things like upload your contacts, know your location, enable notifications or share your data with advertisers. You can decline these. You can also remove permission after installing (see your device settings).

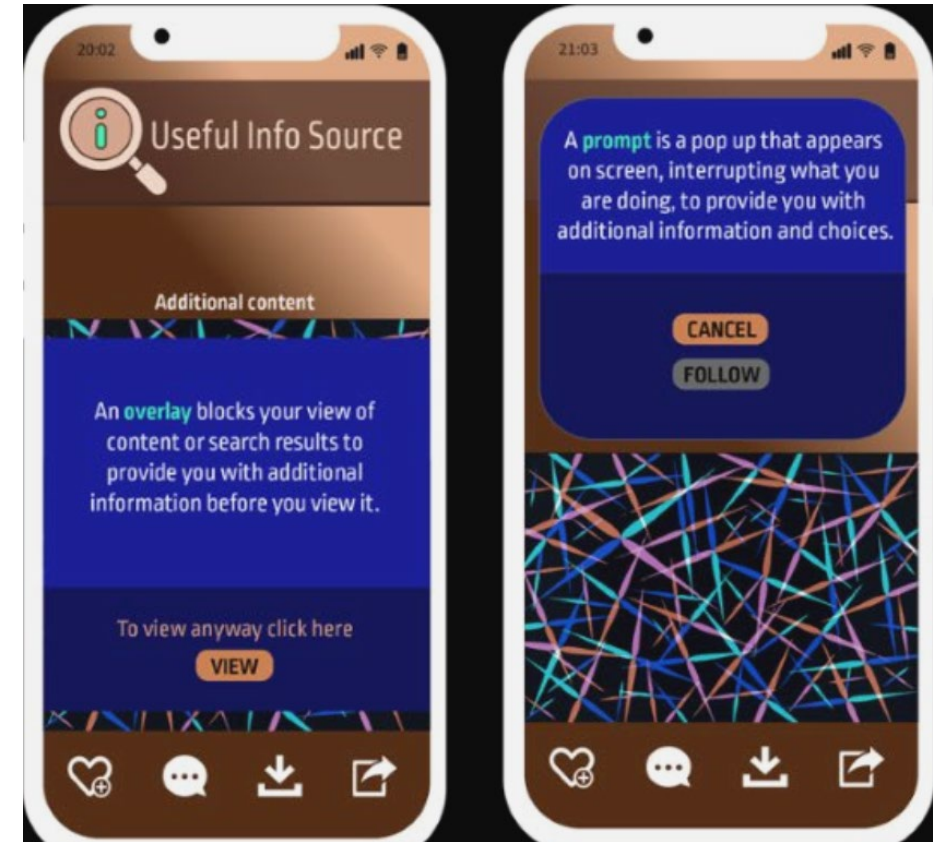
*What does your phone know about you? Thinkmoney, Nov 2020, <https://www.thinkmoney.co.uk/blog/what-phones-know-about-you/>

Online prompts and tools

An app may flag to you when a piece of content is untrustworthy or provide a button for you to easily report inappropriate content. However, app providers want to make it easy for a new person to start using the app, so they don't always explain how everything works at the start.

What you can do:

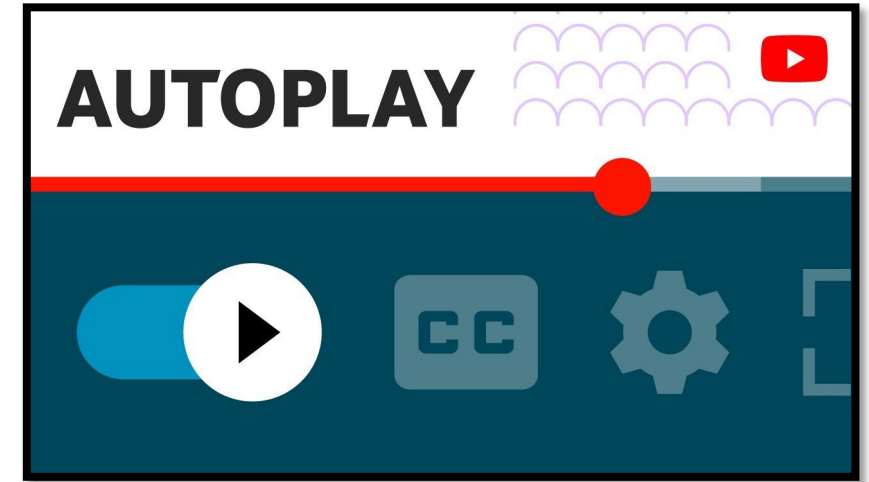
- When you join a new app, look for the help or support pages and search for information on safety, privacy, adverts and data.
- If using a mobile app, you may find more information on the app website than within the app itself.
- You can also search online e.g. for explainer videos created by other users.



Persuasive design – 1

Many apps use techniques to keep users engaged and prevent them leaving the app. Think of:

- A streaming app that autoplays the next episode
- The never-ending scroll on social media
- Notifications to get you to come back to an app
- The ‘streak’ counter in an online word game
- A social media app may push more extreme content to its users, as they are more likely to watch, share and react to it.



Go ahead, add another day
to your **117 day** streak.

Play

Persuasive design – 2

App design can influence thoughts and feelings e.g. feeling good when someone ‘liked’ the photo you shared (or feeling bad if no-one did).

Someone may think that a social media post with lots of likes and shares shows that it is trustworthy (but it could be bots liking and sharing!).

The eye-opening ‘Facebook Demetricator’ video highlights the impact of ‘numbers’ on your social media experience:

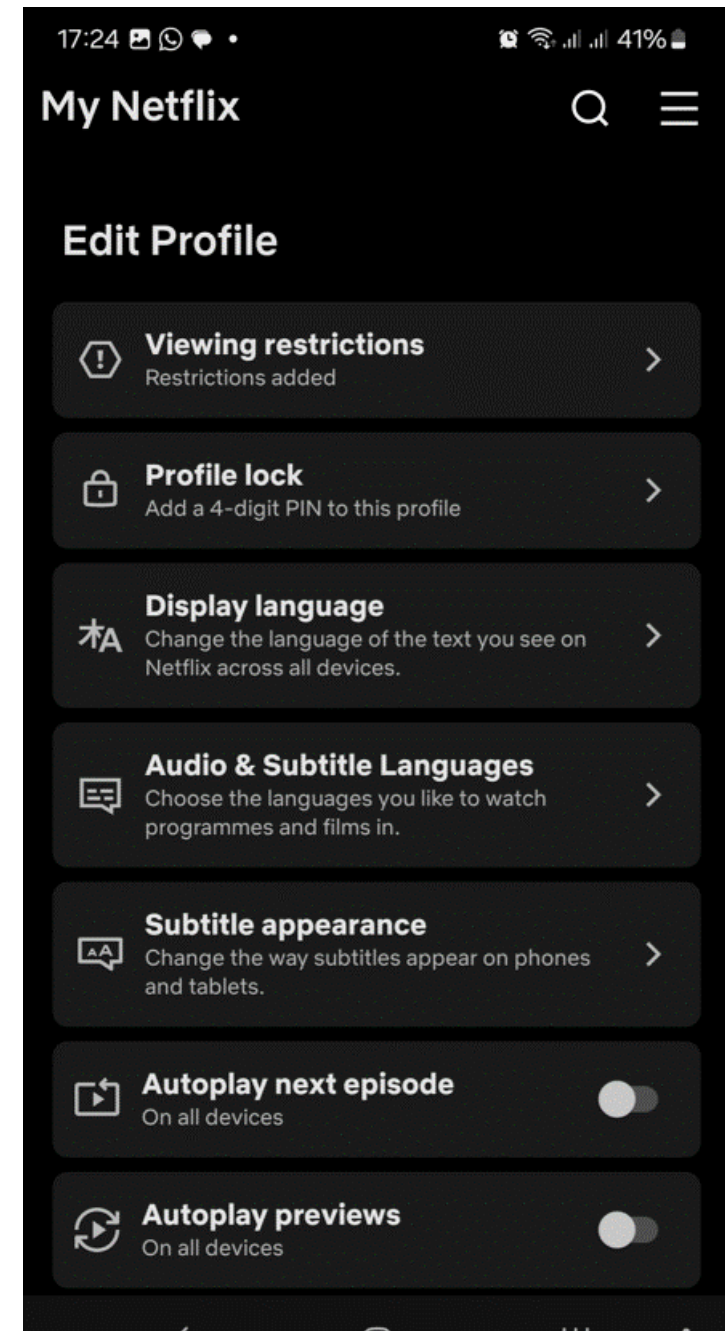
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QsBPfqwj98E>



Persuasive design – 3

What you can do:

- You may be able to change design settings in the app e.g. to turn off autoplay.
- Your device or the app itself may have wellbeing settings you can use, such as muting notifications overnight, or prompting you if you've been on the app for a long period of time.
- On some apps you can prevent it from showing you the number of likes or shares a post has.
- Check out the Recommendation algorithm tips (next section)



Recommendation algorithm – 1



Many online apps recommend content to users. On social media this would be the main ‘feed’ showing posts and adverts. On a shopping website, you might see suggestions of items that other users bought. On a streaming service, you might have films, TV programmes or videos recommended to you.

These apps use a wide range of information to determine what to recommend to you. For example, using data about what you’ve watched before, information you’ve shared, things you’ve bought, or videos that are popular with other people.

This can be helpful, but it can also create an ‘echo chamber’, where you only see (for example) left-leaning or right-leaning political content.

Recommendation algorithm – 2

What you can do

If you're worried about this issue:

- Check your newsfeed settings (sometimes called the 'For You' page): Some social media apps allow you to choose the types of content you'd like to see in your newsfeed.
- If you see something you don't like, you may be able to tell the app not to show you this kind of content in future.
- Check privacy settings too. You may be able to prevent the app using your information to personalise your recommendations or adverts.
- Actively search for, share and comment on different types of content i.e. to 'retrain' the algorithm.

Exclusion by design

Technology can also exclude by design.
As a GDA member says,

‘I had a friend I worked with who, although they’re in their early 20s, their social media account was shut down because the AI for that site decided they were under 13. But they actually had dwarfism, and because of how the code was written, it deemed by their height and facial features, that they weren’t an adult. AI decided they were a child and they couldn’t have a social media account.’

[Listen to the GDA podcast to hear more about how technology can exclude disabled people!](#)

**Your account will be
deleted on 29/03/2024**

Your account is banned because it looks like you do not meet the age requirement to use TikTok. Your account will be deleted on 29/03/2024.

If this is a mistake and you are at least 13 years old, you can **appeal** before 22/03/2024.

You can also **download your data** before 22/03/2024.

Appeal

Dismiss

Module 2 summary

In this module we have:

- Learned about false information online and the skills needed to navigate this issue.
- Considered the impact of Artificial Intelligence
- Learned how technology design influences your online experience, and what you can do about it



[Return to main menu](#)

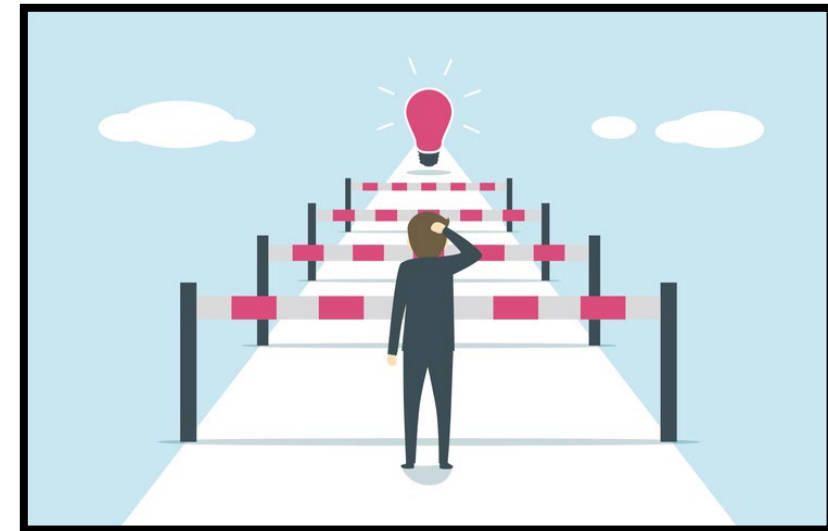
[Next module](#)

3. Inclusive media literacy in practice

How would things be different if the people you worked with were more confident online?

This could include your team, partners and volunteers, as well as customers or people who use your services. In this module, we will:

- Identify some conversation starters and educational resources you can use to help people develop their media literacy skills
- Look at the barriers disabled people face to participating in life online, and three checklists to support inclusive language, accessible services and communications
- Consider critical success factors for leading media literacy projects and identify ways to embed inclusive media literacy in organisational culture

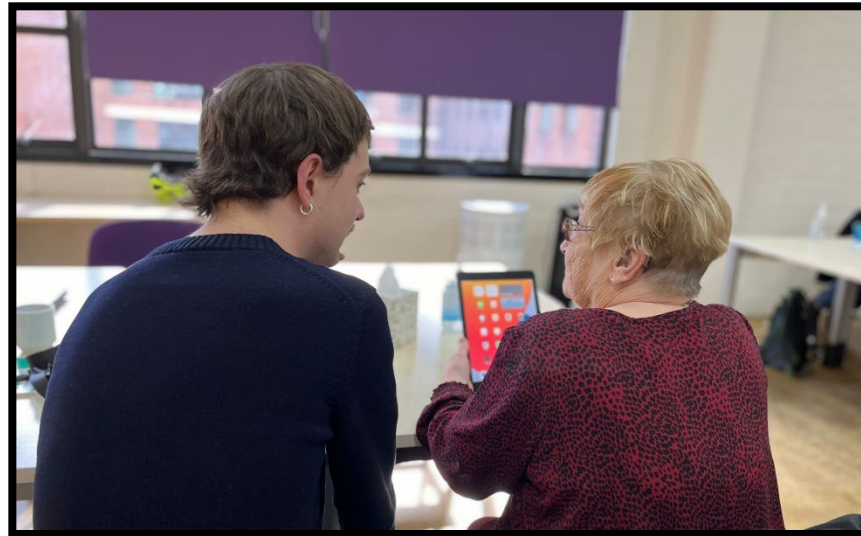


What do you think?

Which statement do you most agree with?

It's not my job to support service users with their digital/media literacy skills

It's everyone's job to support service users to flourish online



It's everyone's job

In module 1, we introduced the idea that 'digital life is life', in which case, service delivery needs to routinely respond to a person's digital as well as physical needs. We argued that strong media literacy skills are critical for living a purposeful, safe and fulfilling life online.

- You may be the only professional or volunteer working with someone and you could make a significant difference to their quality of life through supporting their media literacy skills.
- If you lead a service, embedding media literacy into policy and practice could be transformational. For example, could improving service user media literacy skills improve quality of life and reduce reliance on (and therefore demand for) critical services? e.g. reducing loneliness can improve physical as well as mental health.*

It's everyone's job to support service users to flourish online. We have some ideas to help you get started.

* *Loneliness and Social Isolation as Risk Factors for Mortality: A Meta-Analytic Review*, Hold-Lunstad et al, 2015, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1745691614568352?journalCode=ppsa>

Supporting people to feel empowered online

Building a rapport with your learner and personalising your approach can help to develop their digital confidence and understanding of media literacy.

People might say something like:

- I want to make new friends online, safely
- Where can I get trustworthy information on my health condition?
- Somebody has cloned my Facebook account and is adding my friends and family
- Why does my device keep showing me advertisements for a pair of shoes I've already bought?
- I can't remember my password

Or you could start by asking, 'What do you like doing? Tell us a bit about your life and your hobbies. What is important to you? What would you like to learn?'

'Since 2020, the [GDA Connects](#) project has provided free digital equipment and internet connectivity to hundreds of people all over Glasgow, with unlimited free, accessible 1:1 and group coaching offered in a variety of formats and languages.

'It's important that we get to know our learners so we can personalise their coaching journey and embed an understanding of media literacy – it's so much more than just getting online.'

- Hannah Reynolds,
GDA Digital Inclusion Manager

Developing confidence and skills

Conversations like these can be an opportunity to introduce media literacy concepts.

Teaching someone how to do something or doing it together, rather than just doing it for them – e.g. helping them do an online shop – is a great way to embed a skill. If you don't know how to do something yourself, say that, and maybe you and the person can explore a solution together.

These techniques could be used to help anyone wishing to improve their media literacy. These inclusive approaches are particularly useful for anyone facing barriers to learning, e.g. those with English as a second language or those with low literacy skills. **We work on the principle that 'If it works for disabled people, it will work for everyone'.**

'There's so much coming at you, that if you're not very literate to begin with, it's overwhelming, because it's moving at such a pace.'

[Listen to the GDA podcast now to hear disabled people discuss their feelings about the pace of technological development!](#)



Media literacy conversation starters

If you're not sure where to begin, over the next few slides we have some 'conversation starters' for you. If the person is new to technology, you could begin with, 'Tell me about what you like to do.' If you're working with somebody who is already online, there are different conversation starters you could use to help build someone's media literacy skills or find solutions to digital challenges.

We've also given you an example of when each question could be used, and how to support a service user with their media literacy skills. Have a read through and pick one or two conversation starters that you or your team could try using today.



Media literacy conversation starters – Getting started

Example	Conversation starter	Media literacy solution	Resources
<p>A charity volunteer asks this question when they begin work with a young adult with learning difficulties</p>	<p>What do you like to do?</p> <p>OR</p> <p>What kind of music do you like to listen to?</p>	<p>People may not be aware that digital technology can significantly improve quality of life, which could also reduce reliance on acute services.</p> <p>You can show the service user how to meet a practical need (e.g. how to listen to music, podcasts or audiobooks or how to do an online food shop) but also wellbeing needs such as socialising, keeping active, joining online clubs, meeting family online etc. What's the hook?</p>	<p>E.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spotify.com • bbc.co.uk/sounds • Pocket Casts • Glasgow eAudiobooks • https://www.internetmatters.org/connecting-safely-online/
<p>A staff member supporting someone to meet their practical, physical or wellbeing needs or to improve their quality of life</p>	<p>Have you thought about doing it online?</p>	<p>Always check privacy & safety settings and knowledge. Support will need to be sustained to help build confidence. You could refer them to a support service if you're unable to provide the support yourself. The important thing is that no-one is too old, or too disabled, to learn.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://digitalparticipation.scot/resources/support • Glasgow Disability Alliance • AbilityNet

Media literacy conversation starters – Building skills

Example	Conversation starter	Media literacy solution	Resources
<p>Library staff member asks this question when dealing with a customer</p>	<p>Do you think you could easily spot a scam? Could you spot an advert?</p>	<p>Scams are on the rise so we're trying to help everyone be scam-aware – see the Take 5 tips.</p> <p>If you see an influencer use '#ad', it means it's an advert.</p> <p>But also, beware of scam adverts: if something is too good to be true.....</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take five to stop fraud: https://www.takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/app/uploads/2024/02/Take-Five-Scottish-A5-Leaflet.zip • What is #ad? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=plRzTpFkC4I • Scam flags add up to a scam: https://mediasmart.uk.com/scams/
<p>Health visitor, GP or nursery includes this question in initial meeting with family with babies/young children.</p>	<p>How do you use technology as a family?</p>	<p>You can point to trustworthy online sources of health and parenting information, advice for parents on (over)sharing content online and safe technology use for babies/early years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nhsinform.scot/ • Parentclub.scot • UK Chief Medical Officers Advice for parents and carers • Internet Matters advice for parents and carers of 0-5s

Media literacy conversation starters – Finding solutions

Example	Conversation starter	Media literacy solution	Resources
<p>A case worker includes this question when doing a needs assessment.</p>	<p>Do you need help with something online?</p>	<p>Digital life is life. So, understanding of individual and community experience of online life is crucial to inform service delivery, local policies and strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://digitalparticipation.scot/resources/support • Professionals Online Safety Helpline • ReportHarmfulContent.com • https://saferinternet.org.uk/
<p>Teacher, police or charity staff responding to an allegation of bullying, threats or abuse by a child or vulnerable adult</p>	<p>Is it happening online too? And is anything else happening online that you want to tell me about?</p>	<p>There may be digital needs that you are unaware of. A service user may not tell you they need help online unless you ask.</p>	
<p>Quality of life questionnaires extended to included online dimension e.g. locality planning, community safety, employee survey, household survey, school pupil surveys etc.</p>	<p>Do you feel safe and secure at home, at school/work, in the community and online?</p>	<p>A person may need help in any aspect of life online, from practical tasks (e.g. form filling or managing their online finances) through to risks such as dealing with an abusive person online.</p>	

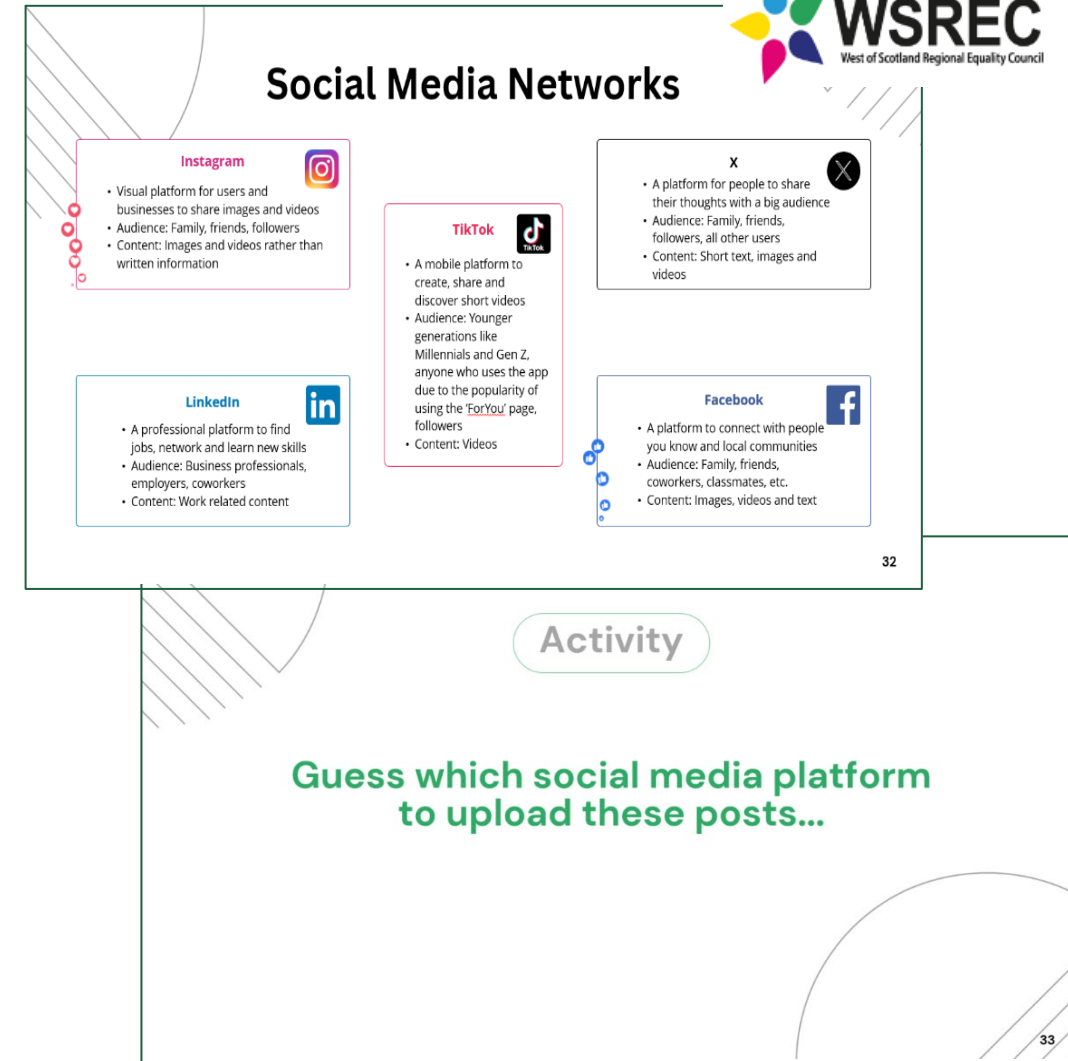
Educational resources to use with individuals and groups – 1

In 2023, Ofcom commissioned two media literacy education projects in Glasgow. **Educational resources from both projects are available free for use by non-profit organisations delivering face-to-face media literacy support in Glasgow.**

The first project is the West of Scotland Regional Equality Council's 'Media Sense Workshop'. This project engaged with minority ethnic young people, living in Glasgow, including those from a refugee, asylum seeking and new migrant background.

Workshop materials include trainer presentation, trainer notes and participant notes as well as pre- and post-workshop surveys to gauge impact. Contact WSREC (<https://wsrec.co.uk/>) for access to the materials.

Social Media Networks



- Instagram**
 - Visual platform for users and businesses to share images and videos
 - Audience: Family, friends, followers
 - Content: Images and videos rather than written information
- TikTok**
 - A mobile platform to create, share and discover short videos
 - Audience: Younger generations like Millennials and Gen Z, anyone who uses the app due to the popularity of using the 'For You' page, followers
 - Content: Videos
- X**
 - A platform for people to share their thoughts with a big audience
 - Audience: Family, friends, followers, all other users
 - Content: Short text, images and videos
- LinkedIn**
 - A professional platform to find jobs, network and learn new skills
 - Audience: Business professionals, employers, coworkers
 - Content: Work related content
- Facebook**
 - A platform to connect with people you know and local communities
 - Audience: Family, friends, coworkers, classmates, etc.
 - Content: Images, videos and text

Activity

Guess which social media platform to upload these posts...

32

Educational resources to use with individuals and groups – 2

The second project commissioned by Ofcom was a series of intergenerational media literacy workshops delivered by Castlemilk Youth Complex and delve.

Contact delve (<https://delvecollab.org/>) for access to all the materials including more detailed guidance on this activity.



Media Literacy Card Game

Could be used to:

- increase awareness of the multiple forms of media that we consume
- introduce the concept of 'Media Literacy'
- create discussion on differences in access to media
- create opportunity to open up an invitation for participants to skill share
- harness collective knowledge and skills in fact-checking

Educational resources to use with individuals and groups – 3

If you work with children and young people, check out [Project Real](#).

Led by Glasgow University, this project worked with young people, social media influencers, teachers and academics to create resources on misinformation for young people. The free online resources include presentations and teacher guides.



Project Real

www.projectreal.co.uk

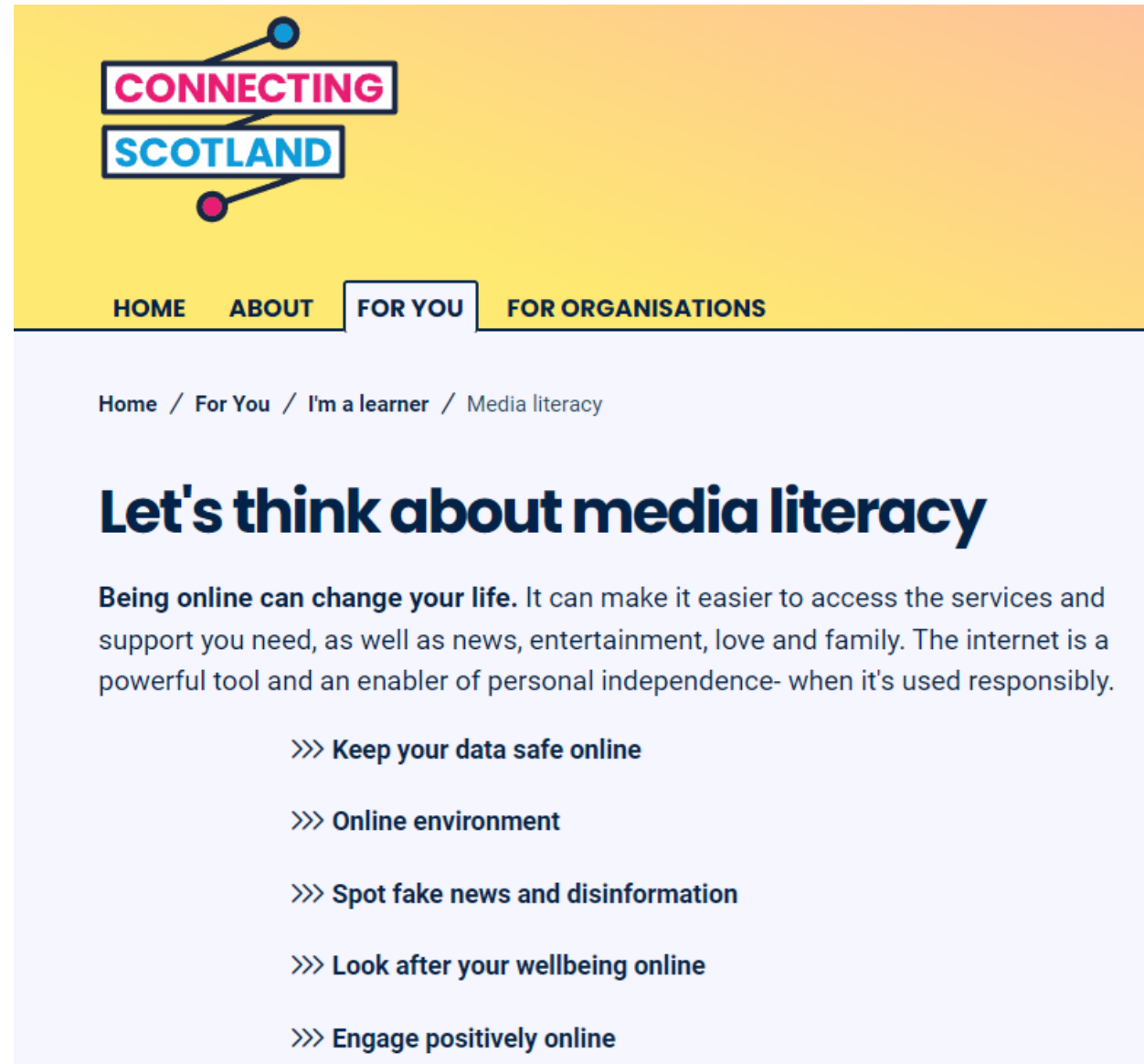
This site contains lesson plans and resources for six lessons, each focussed on the government SHARE guidelines and covering a different element of online misinformation. These lessons have been designed to be delivered in schools and youth group settings but may also be of interest to families.

Educational resources to use with individuals and groups – 4

This resource from Connecting Scotland can be used by individuals to develop their own media literacy skills. Or they may find it helpful to run through the content together with you.

You can find it at

<https://connecting.scot/for-you/learner/media-literacy>



The screenshot shows the 'CONNECTING SCOTLAND' logo at the top, with navigation links for HOME, ABOUT, FOR YOU (highlighted), and FOR ORGANISATIONS. Below the navigation is a breadcrumb trail: Home / For You / I'm a learner / Media literacy. The main heading is 'Let's think about media literacy'. The introductory text states: 'Being online can change your life. It can make it easier to access the services and support you need, as well as news, entertainment, love and family. The internet is a powerful tool and an enabler of personal independence- when it's used responsibly.' Below this is a list of five topics, each preceded by a double right-pointing arrow (»»):

- »» Keep your data safe online
- »» Online environment
- »» Spot fake news and disinformation
- »» Look after your wellbeing online
- »» Engage positively online

Leadership and culture

We have talked about the idea that media literacy is everyone's business, and we've looked at some 'conversation starters' and resources that can be used in practice.

Now let's turn to how leaders can embed inclusive media literacy in the structures, processes, language and culture of their team or organisation.



Is your service inclusive and accessible?

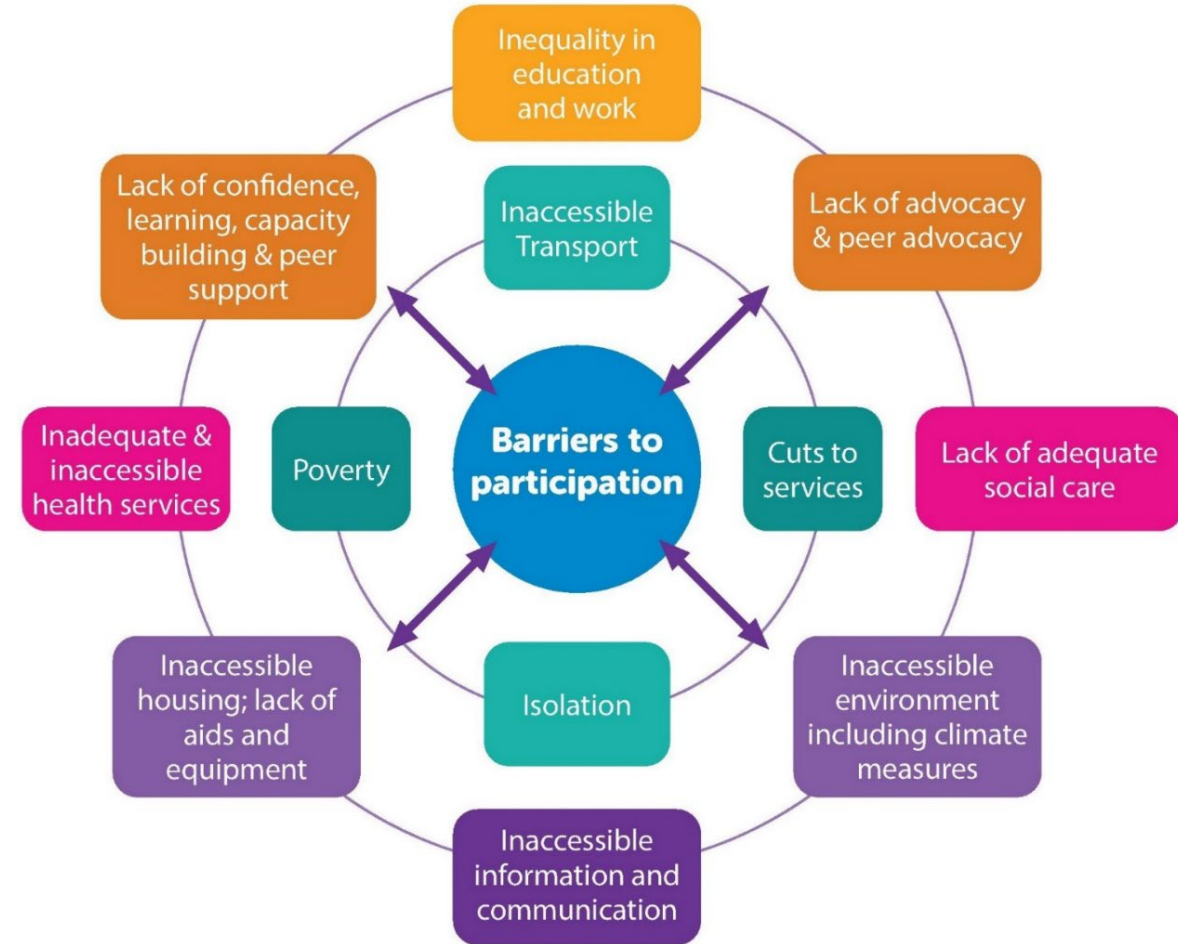
This diagram shows the inter-connected barriers which disabled people (and many other groups) face to participation across a range of life areas. These are:

Structural and institutional: how policies and services are designed and delivered, failing disabled people and interacting to cause inequalities and injustice.

Physical and environmental: housing and the built environment – how these are designed without disabled people in mind.

In addition, **attitudinal barriers** – include low expectations, stigma, discrimination and even hate crime.

You may believe that your service is accessible and inclusive, but have you asked disabled people? **If you haven't asked the question, you don't know the answer.**



Accessibility: no 'one size fits all'

'I know a lot of disabled young people who are stuck in the house and they need [the internet]. And it comes down to the same thing with all disabled issues: there's no one size fits all accessibility.'

'You go to a restaurant, and if they've got a QR code to look at the menu, that might suit me, cos I can order on my phone cos I hate talking to people cos I've got really bad social anxiety, but if someone's older and doesn't know how to scan QR codes, then that's not accessible for them, so there needs to be all the options, rather than "This is the way it's accessible to people."

'If everything's online, you should have it always available in other areas too.'

[Listen to the GDA podcast to hear disabled people talk about the need for multiple formats for accessibility!](#)



Disabled people tell us that...

- lack of access to or cost of a suitable device or the internet
- low expectations and lack of patience from family and friends
- low literacy or English as a second language
- lack of accessible, person-centred support
- lack of access to education, low confidence, horror stories, difficulty seeing relevance of digital
- unpredictable mental and physical health, causing pain and mobility issues

... make them less inclined to explore the internet and develop media literacy skills.

'My concern is the protection of my information. I am quite naïve in regards to using the internet. It feels to me like it started as a stream of knowledge, but it became a river, and now we're stuck in a dam. It was just too much information; I couldnae assimilate it.'

'It was like somebody was speaking another language, and I consider myself to be able to understand dialogue, but this dialogue was alien to me, so I felt, if it was a river, I was a wee tributary going another road that occasionally met up.'

[Listen to the GDA podcast to hear disabled people share their fears about using technology!](#)

How could you ensure your service is inclusive and accessible? The next few slides provide some ideas.

Checklist 1: Accessible services

Is your service accessible? Here are some pointers:



- Ask people what they need to participate and be prepared to put it in place. Note that people might not know until they start!
- Be honest about what you can and can't provide.
- Be prepared to give personal time rather than digital solutions, e.g. a phone call rather than sending a link.
- Be flexible about when you support people and give them more time.
- Consider the wider issues that a person may be facing, e.g. pain, poverty, family issues.
- Don't make assumptions about a person's situation or capacity. Low expectations of disabled people = low outcomes.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9HpLhxMFJR8>
- Clearly signpost to alternative formats and methods of accessing a service or information.
- Disabled people are creative and may actually teach you something!
- There is no 'one size fits all' solution to accessibility. What works for someone might not for another. Best to ask people what they need.

Checklist 2: Inclusive language

The language we use when talking about disability and disabled people can also be a barrier:

Instead of this:	Say this:
'People with disabilities' / 'the disabled'	'Disabled people' to reflect the social model of disability: that people are disabled by barriers and attitudes constructed by society
'Able-bodied people' (unless you are specifically referencing physical capability)	'Non-disabled people'
'Normal' / 'abnormal'	'Typical'
'Disabilities', 'problems' or 'issues'	'Impairments' or 'conditions'
'Handicapped' / 'crippled' / 'special needs'	'Disabled'
'Crazy' / 'dumb' / 'lame'	Any other non-ableist term to explain what you mean, e.g. 'impractical' / 'foolish' / 'silly' / 'boring' / 'pathetic'.
'Suffers from' a condition	'Has' or 'lives with' a condition
'Wheelchair-bound' or 'confined to a wheelchair'	'Wheelchair user'
Asking a disabled person about their condition	Ask what someone needs to participate

Checklist 3: Accessible comms

If you use social media, create web content, documents or posters for the public or service users, this checklist helps ensure the content is accessible to everyone:

- Use plain English (not jargon) and short sentences
- Use sans-serif fonts like Arial or Calibri
- Use bold for emphasis, rather than italics or underlining
- Provide alt text for all images
- Avoid abbreviations
- #UseACapitalLetterAtTheStartOfAllWordsInAHashtag
- Use emojis sparingly, as this will slow down screenreaders
- Left-align text
- Caption your videos and provide a transcript for audio
- Ensure high contrast text
- Minimum font size 14
- Offer information in alternative formats
- Make sure that links on your website work



Critical success factors for leadership and transformation

In module 1, we looked at some examples of successful media literacy projects, such as coaching and supporting people to confidently gain the benefits of being online. Now we're going to look at some projects that didn't go so well. Notice that the issues mentioned include skills, confidence and resourcing:

- 'I work for a housing association and we received 60+ iPads to distribute to tenants, but I don't have the skill or capacity to do this, not to mention provide ongoing coaching. Some people are giving their iPads back already because they feel frustrated and unsupported.'
- 'I came in to care work to help people. First they wanted me to fill in forms, and now they want me to enter information on a digital gadget. I struggle with reading and writing, and I've found the technological jump pretty confusing. I feel embarrassed and stupid, and I want to leave.'

Coaching, support, information, skills, confidence and resourcing are all critical success factors when planning media literacy support.

Another significant factor is the attitude and engagement of everyone in your organisation. See the 'key messages' on the next slide, followed by the 'Culture Checker' to consider your own and your organisation's attitude towards inclusive media literacy.

Inclusive media literacy key messages

Use these key messages to inform your service delivery:

Citizenship

Digital life is life

Impact

Media literacy skills can improve quality of life

Rights

Disabled people want and deserve the same digital opportunities as everyone else

Evidence-led

Is your service inclusive? If you haven't asked the question, you don't know the answer

Rationale

If you can make it accessible to disabled people, it will work for everyone

Processes

Services should identify digital needs as a matter of routine

Ownership

It's everyone's job to support service users to flourish online

Confidence

You don't need to be skilled in media literacy to support disabled people online

Do you/people in your service...

Believe that digital life is life

-- or --

Believe that digital life is not 'real life'

Believe that people who flourish online can have a better quality of life

-- or --

Believe there are limited benefits to being online

Recognise that disabled people want and deserve the same digital opportunities as everyone else

-- or --

Believe it's too risky, difficult or pointless for some people to be online e.g. some people are too disabled or too old to learn

Ask service users about their access needs

-- or --

Believe there is no need to ask people if they find services/information accessible because no-one is actively excluded from them

Budget for accessibility and support costs, recognising that if you can make it accessible to disabled people, it will work for everyone

-- or --

Assume accessibility and support for users would be an expensive and unnecessary cost to please a minority of people

Ask people about their digital needs as part of routine service delivery

-- or --

Do not recognise that anyone could have 'digital needs'

Believe it's everyone's job to support service users to flourish online

-- or --

Believe that supporting digital/media literacy skills is someone else's job

Feel confident to support service users online

-- or --

Lack the confidence to support service users online

Inclusive media literacy culture checker

Developing an inclusive media literacy culture

If you identified aspects of culture that you'd like to change, here are some ideas of things you can do:

- 1. Gather evidence** Add questions about media literacy, digital life and inclusivity to stakeholder engagement exercises to inform strategic planning. Ask disabled people what they want and need to participate and succeed. You can also read GDA's publications and watch their films – available at gda.scot. Learn about GDA's work to support disabled people during the pandemic: <https://vimeo.com/492107951>
- 2. Raise awareness** Make the [Accessible services](#), [Inclusive language](#) and [Accessible comms](#) checklists and the [Key Messages](#) available and visible to staff.
- 3. Empower staff** Send this resource to all staff to develop their skills and identify where they would like further training.
- 4. Empower teams** Ask every team to consider how the [Media Literacy Conversation Starters](#) could be applied in their service. This could be a topic on team meeting agendas.
- 5. Lead the change** Review policies and practice for opportunities to address inclusive media literacy in service delivery, such as communications policies, digital strategy, service review/transformation processes and job descriptions.
Consider the [Critical Success Factors](#) for leading and transforming services. See the [Digital Glasgow Strategy 2024-2030](#) for a city-wide approach.

Module 3 summary

In this module we have:

- Identified some conversation starters and educational resources you can use to help people develop their media literacy skills
- Looked at the barriers disabled people face to participating in life online, and three checklists to support inclusive language, accessible services and communications
- Considered critical success factors for leading media literacy projects and identified ways to embed inclusive media literacy in organisational culture



Summary

This marks the end of the presentation. We have covered:

- What Inclusive Media Literacy is, and why it's important.
- Developing your own media literacy skills
- Media literacy in practice

We have also got some useful 'What to do if...' scenarios, such as 'What to do if your account is hacked'. Click the button below if you'd like to read these.

If you have further queries or would like to provide feedback on this resource, please email jess.mcbeath@ofcom.org.uk or connect@gdaonline.co.uk

[Return to main menu](#)

[Go to 'What to do if...' scenarios](#)

What to do if

.... you receive a scam message or click a dodgy link

.... your account is hacked

.... you want more control of what you see on social media

.... you see harmful content or behaviour online

.... someone you know believes false information online

.... there is harmful content about you being shared online

If you need some media literacy advice, **click one of the links above** for handy tips.

[Return to main menu](#)

What to do if you receive a scam message or click a dodgy link

1. Report

Forward a scam email to report@phishing.gov.uk. You may also be able to report it to your email provider or IT helpdesk at work.

Forward a scam text to 7726 or a scam message to the app (e.g. [WhatsApp](#))

Report a scam phone call to Police Scotland on 101

Report a scam website to the [National Cyber Security Centre](#)

Report a scam advert to the [Advertising Standards Authority](#)

Report a suspicious app to the app store

If you've lost money, contact Police Scotland on 101. Also see [Advice Direct Scotland](#).

2. Delete

Delete dodgy emails, texts, messages, files or apps and block the sender.

3. Secure

If you clicked a dodgy link or downloaded a suspicious file or app, update and run antivirus. If you logged into a website that you now think was a scam, change your password (and if you use the same password anywhere else, change it there too). Set up 2 step verification (where you use an additional code to login, as well as your password). Check your security settings.

4. Share

Tell other people about the scam so they are protected.

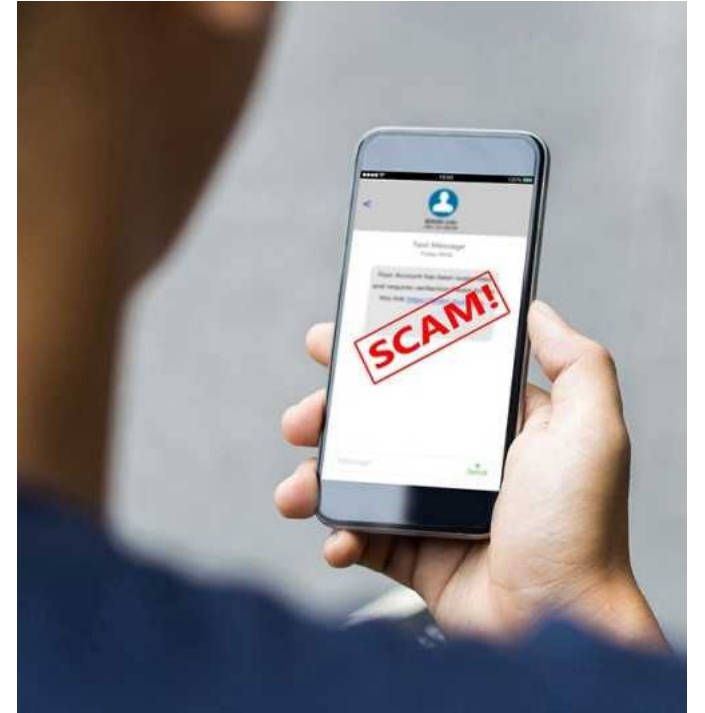
Hear from a GDA member on the next slide

Return to 'What to do if ... menu

What to do if you receive a scam message or click a dodgy link

‘I had a situation last year with an online contact, recommended to me by a relative, so I thought, “It should be ok.” Some weeks down the line later, the contact turned out to be a scammer. A couple of the emails we exchanged, and I thought, “That doesn’t sound right.” It was a request for money, and I thought, “No way.”’

[Listen to the GDA podcast now discuss how disabled people can fall victim to scams!](#)



Google Play
Protect

Tip: Download apps safely. Download mobile apps only from official app stores. Check phone settings to ensure apps are scanned before installing e.g. that 'Google Play Protect' is turned on.

[Return to 'What to do if ... menu](#)

What to do if your account is hacked

1. Report

Contact the app to regain access to your account. If you have to create a new account, make sure any linked accounts use the new details (e.g. a shopping website). Do not pay people who say they can get your account back for you (a scam).

2. Inform

Tell friends, followers and contacts your account was hacked and they should not respond to any unusual messages from that account. Do this even if you have regained access to the account.

3. Secure

Change your password (and if you use the same one elsewhere, change it there too). Set up 2 step verification on all your accounts, where you use an additional code to login. If your email account was hacked, also check the settings to ensure your emails aren't being forwarded elsewhere.

5. Review

Always use a unique, long password (3 random words) for every account, especially email accounts. Try storing passwords in your browser or use a password manager (an app that stores all your passwords). Using 2-step verification *significantly* reduces the risk of account hacking.

Hear from a GDA member on the next slide

Return to 'What to do if ... menu

What to do if your account is hacked

‘Don’t be afraid to use the internet, and don’t be afraid to ask friends, family, other organisations like GDA, etc, for advice and guidance and help, in terms of either getting access to the internet in general and then learning to use those skills. There’s always people willing to help, and there’s never too late a time to start accessing the internet and getting help to do that.’

[Listen to the podcast to hear disabled people talk about how they feel safe online!](#)



Tip: Are your login details for sale on the dark web?

Check your email address at haveibeenpwned.com (and change passwords if needed!)

[Return to 'What to do if ... menu](#)

What to do if you want more control of what you see on online

1. Inform

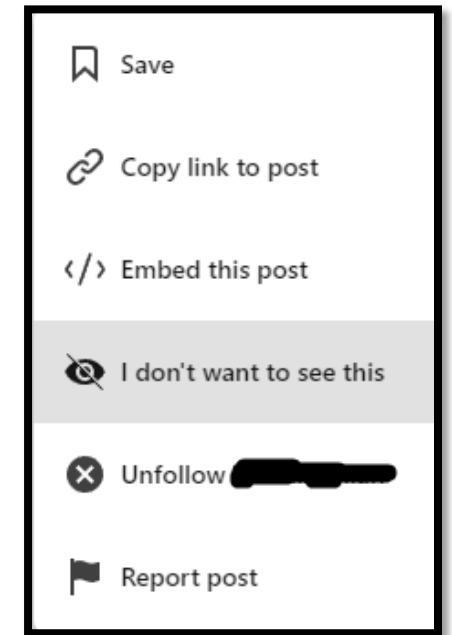
When you see something you don't like online, tell the app! If it's harmful content, you can report it. Some apps have tools for managing your news feed (such as <https://www.facebook.com/help/371675846332829>)

2. Be the change

Apps will recommend some content to you based on what you like and do online. So, the things you share, the posts you like, the amount of time you linger on a post, the videos you watch, the people you send messages to, will all be used to influence the content that is recommended to you. If you want to change the type of content you see, actively search for, watch, like and share that kind of content.

3. Hack back

Apps use persuasive design techniques to keep you engaged for longer or bring you back into the app. Turn off 'autoplay' on social media and streaming apps. Use the digital wellbeing tools on your phone e.g. turn off notifications at night. Some apps enable you to hide the number of likes and shares a post has (e.g. <https://help.instagram.com/113355287252104/>).



Continued on next slide

What to do if you want more control of what you see on online

4. Stop the leak

Tighten up your privacy settings on all apps you use – including social media and search engines. Look for settings such as ‘cookies’ or things like ‘app activity’ or ‘watch history’. This information is collated to create a profile of your interests and it may be shared with other apps. Remove unnecessary ‘friends’. Delete your profile and then uninstall any apps you’re no longer using.

5. Anonymise

‘Personalised advertising’ means advertisers can use your personal data to show you relevant adverts. This can be incredibly helpful as you’ll see adverts that may be useful! But if it feels intrusive you may be able to switch it off. Look for settings such as ‘personalisation’ and ‘ad choices’.



What to do if you see harmful online content or behaviour

1. Report illegal

Report illegal online content to the relevant authority e.g. report fraud, scams, harassment and hate crime to Police Scotland. Child sexual abuse content (including fake abuse content), can be reported to the [Internet Watch Foundation](#). If you see child sexual exploitation or grooming online, report it to [CEOP](#). You should also report all illegal content to the platform hosting it. This includes content such as that promoting self-harm or suicide, selling drugs or weapons, controlling or coercive behaviour, non-consensual sharing of intimate images and sharing false information that could cause ‘non-trivial psychological or physical harm to users’.

2. Report harmful

You can report harmful-but-legal online content to the platform hosting it, but note that they will only take action if it breaches their terms of use. See [ReportHarmfulContent.com](#) for support on issues such as impersonation, bullying, pornography and unwanted sexual advances.

3. Reset

Think about why you saw this harmful content. Did someone send it to you? Was it in your social media news feed? You can take control of your online experience – see ‘What to do if you want more control of what you see online’

[Return to ‘What to do if ... menu](#)

What to do if someone believes online info that is false and harmful

1. Prebunk

If you're worried someone may be tricked online, you can try 'prebunking' i.e. warning them before it happens. For example, tell them about common scam techniques, the kinds of disinformation that we can expect in an upcoming election or where they can get trustworthy health information online. Check out this short video about the tactics used in disinformation campaigns: Can you outsmart a troll (by thinking like one)? <https://youtu.be/lu4OdhjnN4I>.

2. Debunk

If someone already believes something harmful, simply providing facts may not be enough. Avoid being judgemental. Be open to considering their opinions but also ask probing questions such as 'where did you hear that?'. Help them to consider motivations e.g. is someone making money from sharing this information? And the implications of their beliefs e.g. is this harmful for society? Tell them the information you have and where it came from. Ask what it would take for them to trust what you trust. Realise that someone's identity may be closely tied to these beliefs, so they may strongly defend them. What is the need that this belief is fulfilling, and how else can that need be met? Is there someone else that they trust, who could help?

3. Support

Is the person at risk from the false information they believe, such as a scam? Are other people at risk e.g. is this person sharing hate speech online? Consider whether this person needs further support from your organisation or partner organisations. Do not put yourself at risk – get help if needed.

You've reached the end of the 'What to do if ...' scenarios.

[Return to 'What to do if ... menu](#)

What to do if there is harmful content about you being shared online

1. Delete

Delete the content if you can. You may also want to ask the poster/sharer of the content to delete it – but consider your own safety. Where content could damage your professional reputation or your organisation, get support and advice from your organisation about how to respond.

2. Report

If you can't delete it, you can report it to the platform – but they will only take action if it is illegal content or if it breaches their terms of use. See ReportHarmfulContent.com for support on issues such as impersonation, bullying and unwanted sexual advances. Report illegal content to the relevant authorities.

3. Control

If you are worried someone may share intimate imagery of you online, contact the [Revenge Porn Helpline](https://RevengePornHelpline.org). You can use StopNCII.org to prevent pictures or videos of you being shared with participating platforms. Beware scammers who may pretend they can sort it out for you. There are also things you can do to reclaim your online reputation, such as posting more content online to push negative content down in search results or news feed.

3. Secure

Check privacy settings. Who can see your information online? Who are you friends with? Search for your name online (use speech marks, e.g. “George Sutherland”). Also remember that **anything** created electronically can get outwith your control. For example, if your phone was stolen and someone was able to unlock it. If your account has been hacked, see 'What to do if your account is hacked'.

Tip: Set up a Google Alert. Register your name at <https://google.co.uk/alerts>. You'll be alerted if your name is mentioned online.

[Return to 'What to do if ... menu](#)

[Return to main menu](#)