Digital Harms (One:Many)
Yr 7-8 Activities

Theme – Practise empathy in online spaces and think critically about safe ways to respond to one:many digital harms like shipping, ship or dip, confessions pages, and mugging.

Target age group – Years 7-8

Lesson duration – 30 minutes (flexible)

Resources – Sticky notes, markers, ball of string,

Outcomes

At the end of this discussion, students will be able to:

- Outline the social and emotional impact of digital harm.
- Consider how group behaviour can escalate harm.
- Describe positive actions they can take to shape a safer digital culture.

Preparation before you deliver

Read through Netsafe's guidance on one:many digital harms your students may have experienced (e.g. shipping, ship or dip, confessions pages, mugging, intimate image abuse, cyberbullying).

Remind yourself of your school's digital safety policies.

Define one-to-many digital harm for your students: when one person shares something online that hurts someone, and it quickly spreads to lots of other people. Because it reaches a big group, the harm can grow faster and feel worse for the person targeted.

Prepare a safe classroom environment – set ground rules at the start (e.g. listen respectfully, don't name or shame others, focus on learning).

When teaching about one-to-many digital harms, keep the focus on general behaviours and patterns rather than personal experiences to ensure students feel safe. Frame activities with fictional or anonymised scenarios so learners can explore ideas without needing to share their own stories.

If a student does begin disclosing a personal incident, listen respectfully, thank them for sharing, and gently redirect the discussion back to the scenario or task. Follow up with the student per your school's digital safety, pastoral care and safeguarding policies.

Activities (multi-step)

1. **What does online harm mean to you?** Ask students to discuss in small groups, then share highlights as a class. Or try a sticky note wall: Each student contributes a one-word sticky note for you to cluster into themes.

   Prompt if needed: e.g. being embarrassed, bullied, pressured, or having private things shared without your consent. Reinforce that online harm can happen to anyone - what matters most is how we respond.

2. **Explore the impact**. Ask groups to come up with a short, anonymous scenario or share examples e.g. a 'confessions page', a 'ship or dip' post etc.) One group shares, the others reflect on impact. You could assign roles (target, poster, bystander, friend, whānau) to each group, let them each discuss how their role would feel and then report back.

   Prompt if needed:
   - "How might the person who was targeted feel?"
   - "What might happen if lots of people join in?"
   - "How could this affect them in the future?"

   Record student responses in two columns: emotions (e.g. embarrassed, sad, angry, isolated) and consequences (e.g. rumours spreading, trust broken, friendships damaged).

3. **Focus on group behaviour.** Take a quick poll of students: "Who thinks liking a post is harmless?" Who thinks it adds harm? Students move to different corners of the room and explain their stance.

   Chain reaction activity. Use a ball of string - first student represents the post, each new student who reacts or shares it holds the string and passes it on. The resulting 'web' shows how quickly we can spread harm online.

   Tip: Stress the idea of digital bystanders - people who don't create the harm, but contribute to its impact.

4. **Introduce personal responsibility**. Transition with a comment like "We've talked about the harm, now let's talk about what we can do to change it."

   Ask small groups to draw a simple ladder with four rungs. Explain to your class that the rungs represent different ways we can respond if we see online harm. Easy actions go at the bottom of the ladder, while bolder actions go at the top. Ask them to come up with some suggestions and decide which rung each belongs on.

   Gallery walk: Each group posts their ladder on the wall. Students walk around and add ticks or sticky dots to actions they feel they'd realistically try.

   (Model example on next page)

Activities (continued)

Model example:
Rung 1 (numbered from bottom to top): Do nothing harmful (don't like/share/react with emojis)
Rung 2: Show quiet support (message the person, check in with them face-toface at school, let them know you don't agree with the harm).
Rung 3: Speak up (post something kind in the group, change the topic in a group chat, tell friends 'this isn't funny').
Rung 4: Take action (report to the platform, ask the poster to remove the post, get help from a trusted adult, contact Netsafe for advice)

Tip: Emphasise that every rung matters. Some are quieter, some are bigger actions - but all of them help make our online spaces safer.

5. **Wrap-up**. Ask students to turn to a partner and share one upstander action they'd commit to.

Teachers can collect a few actions for the whole class. Reinforce that support is always available - at school, at home, and through Netsafe.

Reminder: If students disclose they are directly experiencing online harm, follow your school's pastoral care and safeguarding procedures. You can also contact Netsafe for advice.

Optional extensions

Co-create a class charter of acceptable online behaviour, including safe actions to take to respond to online harm. Give ownership by letting students write the rules in their own words, then vote on the top 3-4 to go on a classroom poster.

Assign one or more Netsafe student microlearns for independent study (20-30 minutes):

- Digital footprint - thinking critically to protect the digital footprint of 'future you' https://education.netsafe.org.nz/resources/digital-footprint

- Keep your side of the street clean - how to spot bullying online and what to do about it https://education.netsafe.org.nz/resources/keep-your-side-of-the-street-clean