



CASE STUDY

ConnectFutures, Fake News: Challenging Hateful Ideas & Misinformation to Build Healthy Relationships

 Email

 Website

ABOUT

Fake News is a schools-based digital and media literacy and counter-narratives project working with students (aged 15–18) in alternative provision (AP), Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) settings. The project delivers a multi-session course of discussion-based workshops led by experienced youth facilitators. The course explores how online narratives, misinformation and conspiracies related to gender, race and extremism can be used to manipulate and exploit. Employing real-life scenarios and open dialogue, the sessions build beneficiaries' critical thinking skills, digital literacy and resistance to harmful online content, while promoting positive behaviours both on- and offline.

THEMES

Types of prejudice/discrimination: General; Racism; Anti-Muslim hate; Extreme misogyny.

Extremist ideologies: General; Misogynist extremism, incl. Incels; Mixed, unstable or unclear extremism.

Prevention topics: Understanding extremism; Media/digital literacy; Counter-narratives; Hate crime/hate reporting.

BENEFICIARIES

391 AP, PRU and SEND students

5 schools

4 boroughs



PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Digital Resilience to Hate Course – This course consists of four two-hour workshops delivered weekly to classes of around 25 students. The course focuses on teaching established digital and media literacy skills as well as challenging and prebunking common hateful ideologies and narratives that young people are encountering online, such as anti-institution, antisemitic, anti-Muslim and manosphere conspiracies. The workshops are interactive and prioritise real-life scenario- and discussion-based activities.

PROJECT RESULTS

34%

increase in beneficiaries' awareness and concern about online hate, conspiracies and misinformation, and their effects on individuals and society

TESTIMONIAL

There was a girl in one of the college settings, B, who was initially quiet and didn't want to speak to the facilitators. In the second workshop, B began to open up, sharing that she often sees stereotypes about Muslim women online that upset her. The facilitator used critical thinking questions to consider different identity-based stereotypes and in the final session, B spoke up about how the example videos shown in the workshop use generalisations and manipulative language to make people scared and divided. After the programme, B came to one of the facilitators and told them she had reported an Instagram account for the first time because of the Islamophobic content it had on it.

