

2019 IMPACT REPORT

ANTI-BULLYING & ONLINE SAFETY PROGRAMME For Post-Primary Schools

September 2020



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



• UNESCO Chair on Tackling Bullying in Schools
• and Cyberspace through a Global Partnership
• for Equality and Wellbeing with Dublin City University



A word of thanks

On behalf of the National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre, DCU and the FUSE team, I would like to express our thanks to the schools who have engaged with the FUSE programme this year.

The past few months have been a challenging time for everyone, but we have built strong connections with schools since the launch of this programme back in September 2019. This year we will work hard to continually develop these connections and support your schools to tackle bullying and online safety in the best way we can.

DCU's mission is to transform lives and societies. Through the FUSE programme, we will, together, have a profound impact on the lives of thousands of students and their families over the coming years.

Our partnerships with Facebook since 2018, the Department of Education and Skills and our more recent success as an awardee of the Rethink Ireland 2019 Children and Youth Funds, allows ABC to extend our work on tackling bullying and online safety into schools across Ireland.

With 65% of bullying victims not telling an adult about their experience, there is clearly a need for such an intervention that focuses on providing training for teachers and parents, who face the growing challenge of supporting students to deal with all the complexities and dangers associated with bullying, cyberbullying, and online safety.

We hope you enjoy reading this report which captures some of the highlights and progress in implementing the FUSE Anti-Bullying and Online Safety Programme this past year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darran Heaney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a stylized flourish at the end.

Darran Heaney

**Project Manager,
FUSE National Anti-Bullying
Research and Resource Centre, DCU**

Addressing bullying and online safety Context

In January 2019, Facebook's Sheryl Sandberg visited DCU to announce a €1 million donation to support the Centre's work on tackling bullying and online safety through the roll out of a nationwide anti-bullying and online safety training programme for teachers and parents of secondary school students.

This generous donation was further supplemented by a €500,000 grant from Rethink Ireland which will enable the Centre to extend its work into primary schools, this coming year.

The initiative, now named the FUSE Anti-Bullying and Online Safety Programme, was developed against a backdrop of a heightened focus on bullying and online safety both in Ireland and around the world.

With research by DCU's National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre (ABC) showing that 1 in 3 Irish teenagers have been bullied offline and 1 in 10 teenagers have been victimised online, national policy has sought to address this pressing issue. Between 2013 and

2018, the Irish Government published a series of policy documents that included Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, an Action Plan for Online Safety and a Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice.

However, research by the DCU's ABC has shown that policy developments need to be matched by resources that support schools to develop adequate responses to tackle bullying and to promote online safety among children and young people. With over 20 years of research on the topic, DCU's ABC was ideally placed to develop the first research-based anti-bullying and online safety programme in Ireland.

FUSE, meaning to join or blend to form a single entity, aims to connect the whole school community as one to empower them to tackle bullying and online safety together.



What is FUSE and how does it work?

As a research-based programme, FUSE incorporates the key components which national and international research have demonstrated are effective in online safety and tackling bullying. At its core is a whole-school / community approach that emerges from a partnership among parents, teachers and young-people.

FUSE is a youth-led programme that empowers students to raise awareness of bullying and online safety. It connects schools, parents and young people in open discussion so that together they will create initiatives in their communities to tackle bullying and promote online safety.

Through a range of activities that involve all the major stakeholders in the school community (students, school staff and parents), FUSE focuses on three main strands:

- » Bullying (all forms, including cyberbullying) - school staff, parents and students come to a collective understanding of what bullying is, how to spot it, how best to prevent it, how to intervene when it happens (reporting).
- » How to use and enjoy online resources, while staying safe online and knowing how to report problems
- » A positive school climate and policy making - FUSE encourages a school climate that promotes diversity and positive relationships amongst everyone in the school community through the development of student lead action plan and project on bullying and online safety.



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Stage 1: Training & Resources for Schools

- » Anti-Bullying Coordinator/leader from each school attended one day training in DCU.
- » Schools were given access to FUSE resources through an online portal (teacher handbook, workshop outlines, presentations and videos).
- » Teachers returned to school and trained others.

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Stage 2: FUSE Workshops

- » Anti-Bullying Coordinator delivered a workshop to all school staff to equip the whole school community with knowledge of how to prevent and intervene in bullying and online safety issues in school.
- » 2nd year students do 6 FUSE workshops, facilitated by the Coordinator.

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Stage 3: Action Plan / Project Development

- » Students work as a whole class, in teams or individually to create a project that shares their voice on bullying and online safety.
- » Students and teachers complete a post-programme survey.

Research Findings



ENGAGEMENT WITH FUSE PROGRAMME

385 SCHOOL STAFF

398 PARENTS

1,622 STUDENTS

TACKLING BULLYING

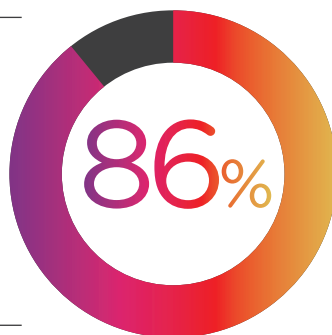
WHEN THEY COMPLETED THE FUSE PROGRAMME, THIS IS WHAT STUDENTS TOLD US ABOUT TACKLING BULLYING:

89%

SAY THAT THEY
WOULD KNOW
WHO TO ASK
FOR HELP

86% SAY THEY ARE MORE
CONFIDENT IN THEIR ABILITY
TO NOTICE IF SOMEONE WAS
TRYING TO BULLY THEM

THEY ALSO SAY THAT THEY
ARE MORE CONFIDENT IN THEIR
ABILITY TO SEE THE NEED TO
TELL SOMEONE AND SPEAK OUT



TACKLING ONLINE SAFETY AND CYBERBULLYING

WHEN STUDENTS COMPLETED THE FUSE PROGRAMME, THIS IS
WHAT THEY TOLD US ABOUT TACKLING ONLINE SAFETY:

86%

SAY THAT THEY WOULD
KNOW WHO TO ASK FOR
HELP TO TACKLE ONLINE
SAFETY/CYBERBULLYING

84%

SAY THEY ARE MORE CONFIDENT
IN THEIR ABILITY TO NOTICE
IF SOMEONE WAS TRYING TO
HARASS/BULLY THEM ONLINE

81%

SAY THAT THEY ARE
MORE CONFIDENT IN THEIR
ABILITY TO SEE THE NEED
TO TELL SOMEONE AND
SPEAK OUT ABOUT ONLINE
SAFETY/BULLYING

Some student feedback on the programme

“

FUSE was a very interesting, fun and different way to learn about bullying.

Because of FUSE, I now know what to do if I witness someone getting bullied online.

The FUSE programme helped me to understand how to report bullying and how to help other people if I see them being bullied.

”



Teacher Feedback

“

Teachers are loving teaching the workshops. They are easy to follow, the powerpoints are well made and students have been engaging with the activities.

- **Teacher**, Donabate, Co Dublin

The programme is easy to follow, the resources are fantastic, especially the videos, the videos really got the students talking.

- **Teacher**, Clonakilty, Cork

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A School's Perspective

Annemarie Dawson Hogan is an Art, SPHE and RE teacher in Knockbeg College in County Carlow, a boys school with over 400 pupils. She has always been interested in using visual and other creative forms of expression to raise awareness of bullying and online safety. Building on her interest in this area, Annemarie was one of the first teachers to participate in FUSE training in September 2019.

With research showing that 1 in 3 children in Ireland today experience offline bullying and 1 in 10 experiencing some form of online bullying, how does this impact on schools today?

Bullying is an issue that can potentially affect any young person or school. As teachers, we are dealing with young lives and it's important that we are vigilant and conscious of trends and issues in this area. In recent years, online safety has received significant focus following a number of high

profile online bullying cases with very tragic consequences in the national media. The prevalence of mobile phones means that if online bullying occurs, it affects all aspects of a young person's life.

There is no longer a separation between home and school life. Even if bullying takes place on a phone while a student is at home, it will be on their mind coming into school the next day, and it can impact on their mental health and academic performance too.

What was your school's existing approach to bullying prevention and awareness? And why did taking part in FUSE appeal to you?

Naturally, like in most schools, our teaching staff would have received general training to be vigilant for bullying and we have policies to prevent and address it. We would also have online safety policies. Teachers also cover issues related to bullying prevention and awareness with students through subjects like Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE), Social

Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) and Religion.

As an art teacher in our school, I would also have been very involved in creating visuals for bullying and online safety awareness campaigns around Safer Internet Day or entering competitions with our students.

When I saw an email about the FUSE programme, I was immediately interested and asked if I could do the training. Luckily for me, our management were also delighted to have the opportunity to access this training for the school.

I hadn't seen an in-depth programme like this before that totally involves the whole school from caretakers, secretaries and canteen staff to teachers and principals. I also thought that by giving our anti-bullying efforts an identity through the FUSE programme, it would create greater energy and engagement around it from students and parents.

How have you found the FUSE Programme so far?

The programme has gone very well so far, although we were lucky to have whole school support and engagement, which really helped our implementation to run smoothly. I was delighted with how all of my colleagues, our students and their parents engaged with the programme and the online surveys. When I gave a presentation to introduce FUSE to our

second year students – they were very interested and engaged. They really want to be educated about how to safely use their devices and apps. I have set up a FUSE team within the school who are doing the workshops with our second year students.

The feedback from the teachers doing the workshops is that the students are really enjoying them and engaging in very honest conversation around their activity sheets. For me, this is a very positive sign as we know that boys can find it difficult to express themselves at times. I think the workshops have increased their understanding, awareness and confidence to know what constitutes being bullied online and what they need to watch out for. I would definitely recommend FUSE to other schools and I hope that we will run it again next year.

A centre of anti-bullying expertise

The National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre (ABC) is a university-designated research centre located in DCU's Institute of Education.

Researchers at ABC were the first in Ireland to undertake research on school bullying, workplace bullying, homophobic bullying and cyberbullying. ABC leads the field of research, resource

development and training in bullying in Ireland and is an internationally recognised centre of excellence in bullying research.

The Centre hosts the International Journal of Bullying Prevention, the UNESCO Chair on Tackling Bullying in Schools and Cyberspace and, in 2019, it was chosen to host the World Anti-Bullying Forum.



James O'Higgins Norman

Director/UNESCO Chair

James O'Higgins Norman is a clinical sociologist with interests in school bullying, cyberbullying and online safety. He is a Professor of Sociology and holds the prestigious UNESCO Chair on Tackling Bullying in Schools and Cyberspace at Dublin City University, where he is also Director of the National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre.

James is a co-founding Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal on Bullying Prevention and in 2019 he was Chair of the World Anti-Bullying Forum. He is widely consulted by the media and Government on educational and social issues and in 2018 he was appointed as a member of the Government of Ireland's National Advisory Council on Online Safety. He has also led a number of large scale national and international funded research projects on bullying, cyberbullying, and migration.

Darran Heaney

Project Manager

Darran is the Project Manager with the National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre, leading on FUSE. Prior to joining ABC, Darran gained significant experience working with post-primary schools through DCU's Access Programme, where he was responsible for developing education and engagement programmes to assist transition year students from areas of socio-economic disadvantage to progress to University. He is a graduate of DCU, with a Masters in Education and Training Management, specialising in eLearning, and qualified as an Executive & Life Coach in 2016.



Aikaterini Sargioti

Research Assistant, FUSE

Aikaterini Sargioti is a Research Assistant for FUSE, in the National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre, DCU. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Primary Education (BEd) and a Master of Science (MSc) in Educational Sciences with a specialism in natural sciences in education. Aikaterini's field of expertise is research methodology and quantitative data analysis.

Paloma Viejo Otero

Post-Doctoral Researcher

Paloma joined FUSE in March 2020, but had a history of collaboration with ABC since 2015 whilst researching hate speech in social media at DCU. She completed a PhD for DCU, where she has researched Hate Speech in Social Media. She obtained her MPhil in Race, Ethnicity and Conflict from Trinity College Dublin, and holds a MA in Culture Studies and Arts Management from the Instituto de Investigación Ortega y Spain.

Paloma also has extensive professional experience in the public and not-for-profit sector such as; the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sudan and Guatemala; UNESCO in Paris, Migrants Right Center Dublin; Council of Europe, the Peter McVerry Trust, Dublin and provides evaluation and statistical support to the FUSE programme.



David Swaine

Education Project Coordinator

David Swaine is Education Project Coordinator for the FUSE. David comes from a teaching background, and also previously worked as Education and Training Manager in Pieta House; where he developed successful training programmes for learners at second and third-level, delivering these around Ireland.

He has also guest-lectured on the suicide and self-harm module of the MSc Rehabilitation and Disability Studies in University College Dublin. David is a graduate of DCU; with a first-class honours degree in Humanities (English and History). He also holds a H.Dip in Adult and Further Education from Maynooth University and an M.Phil. in Irish Writing from Trinity College Dublin.



Colm Canning

Education Project Coordinator

Colm Canning is an Education Project Coordinator for FUSE. Colm's background is in project management having worked for GAA Tipperary County Board for two years to develop education and training for coaches and TY students through the GAA's future leaders programme and has also worked on developing programmes to maximise GAA participation within his area for the purpose of inclusiveness.

Colm is a double graduate of the University of Limerick where he obtained a Bachelor of Science in Sport and Exercise Sciences and a Masters in Work & Organisational Behaviour Psychology

Covid-19 Impact

The pandemic hit in March this year at the same time as the project submission phase of FUSE. Many schools had already completed projects and teachers continued to encourage students to submit their work online.

Response rates to our research survey were lower than originally anticipated. To ensure a larger response rate this coming year, we have adapted our programme delivery and surveys to allow for both face-to-face and home/online schooling should schools need to close again.

For schools who wish to participate in FUSE this coming year, log onto **www.antibullyingcentre.ie/fuse**



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