

12 Ways to Champion Equality Online

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

12 Ways to Champion EQUALITY ONLINE

In terms of the esteem it's held in, women's football has made impressive progress in a short space of time. That's a bit like the online world: it's come a long way, but that doesn't mean we should stop trying to make it even better. The Women's European Football Championships are underway, and that's a timely reminder of how important it is to give everyone the respect they deserve online – regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, religion or anything else. In partnership with the Global Equality Commission, we've produced a special guide to help young fans kick online discrimination into touch!

- 1. KNOW IT WHEN YOU SEE IT**
Expressing views based on prejudice about a part of someone's identity – their race, gender or a disability, say – counts as online hate.
- 2. WHEN "BANTER" ISN'T FUNNY**
Discrimination is sometimes disguised as humour: some memes, clips or gifs that certain people try to pass off as "funny" might actually be offensive.
- 3. BE YOUR OWN PERSON**
Set a good example through your own online communication. Think whether you'd say a thing in real life before posting or sharing it online for the world to see.
- 4. SEEING SHOULDN'T EQUAL BELIEVING**
Sneakier, less obvious types of online abuse can stay on the internet for longer, so don't assume that something's OK just because it's not been taken down yet.
- 5. SEXISM CAN BE ILLEGAL**
As well as being extremely hurtful to a person or a group, online sexism and prejudice against women (known as misogyny) can be recorded as a hate crime in some cases.
- 6. ONLINE HATE, USED AS BAIT**
Sadly, it's not just that being exposed to prejudice online is upsetting – some extreme organisations even try to recruit young people to their cause.
- 7. GET SOME DISTANCE**
If you see messages online that upset you, it's probably time to give yourself some space from that site or app. Talk to a trusted adult about how you're feeling.
- 8. TURN OFF THE HATERS**
If someone you follow on social media is posting sexist content, you could always mute them or block them – or unfollow them altogether.
- 9. PLAY IT BY THE BOOK**
If you see someone discriminating online, you don't have to challenge them yourself. Screenshot their post and report them to the app or site you saw it on.
- 10. EXPLOITING 'PACK MENTALITY'**
Sexist messages aren't always sent to a target directly: sometimes, they're posts designed to provoke misogyny among other people.
- 11. POSITIVITY ALWAYS WINS**
Go the extra mile and spread some positive vibes! Instead of just reacting to a post and scrolling past, you could add a message of support and encouragement, too.
- 12. CREATE THE WORLD YOU WANT**
Remember, you're the boss of your online world. Engage with posts or accounts that celebrate equality and understanding: block or unfollow the ones that don't.

GLOBAL EQUALITY COLLECTIVE

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#WakeUpWednesday

FURTHER SUPPORT
If you've been affected by any of the issues mentioned in this guide, there are some excellent resources that can offer further help and support.
NOS Mental Health Guides: nationalonlinesafety.com/guides
Mind: www.youngminds.org.uk
Stop Hate UK: stophateuk.org
Ditch the Label: www.ditchthelabel.org
Childline: www.childline.org.uk

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Footballers are used to harsh treatment from opposing crowds during the heat of battle over 90 minutes – it goes with the territory. But comments made about them from the world at large, over the internet, based on something other than their footballing ability? It shouldn't happen. Not in 2022. Regrettably, however, discrimination is still very much alive and kicking.

With record attendances, plentiful TV coverage, some thrilling matches and – dare we say it? – a more evident sense of fair play than the men's game, the Women's European Football Championships is one of the sporting showpieces of the summer so far. Our #WakeUpWednesday guide suggests how we can all help to keep it that way with some tips for championing equality online.

Football thrives on passionate opinions and debates. "Never a penalty!" ... "Should've passed it!" ... "That's offside!" Regardless of where their loyalties lie, though, one area where virtually all fans agree is that discrimination based on someone's religious belief, sexuality, race or gender is simply unacceptable. How can football truly be 'the beautiful game' without equality?

Note that we said "virtually all" fans. Unfortunately, the likes of Pernille Harder, Wendie Renard and Vivianne Miedema often have as many online comments about their gender, skin colour or LGBTQ+ status as their footballing finesse. Our #WakeUpWednesday guide has some top tips for spreading positivity, not prejudice, during this summer's Euro Championships.

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