Someone opened an Instagram account in my name, where I was called a whore.

Response to open-ended question, girl, 15
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“There’s nothing adults can do.” This is what many children say to Friends when we meet them in schools and conduct education about life online. Degrading treatment online has become so common that it’s almost an accepted thing. Friends Online Report 2017 shows that one in three young persons has been subjected to online bullying or harassment. One out of every five girls has been subject to sexual harassment online. And no one believes anything can be done – it’s just the way of the Internet. This is the way it is in a social-network society.

Some behaviors, such as sexual harassment of young girls, has been so common for so long that it’s the norm. With social media, a new dimension has emerged, where boys send pictures of their sex organs or force girls to share pictures of themselves. The problem is not the Internet or social media as such – it’s society as a whole. We constantly encounter the sexualization of young women and girls in news feeds, images and song lyrics.

These norms teach boys that they need to act and look a certain way. Hetero, strong, sexually powerful. These norms teach young girls that they need to look and act in a certain way. Pretty, thin, submissive. Norms tell young men that they have the right to touch girls inappropriately, and they tell young girls that they must tolerate it. It’s not easy to change this behavior. But we must talk to young people about norms, expectations and rights. These are difficult subjects for adults to tackle. It’s difficult for many schools despite having legal obligations to work to prevent bullying and discrimination and promote equality for all – both in school and online.

The best way to combat degrading treatment and harassment is to never let it pass. It’s vital to emphasize that it’s never okay to call someone a whore. It’s never okay to send an unwanted nude image to someone. It’s never okay to spread rumors. Every time an adult does not act, we contribute to the normalization of harassment and degrading treatment. We must always stand up and draw a line for what is and is not okay. Online and in society at large. This is the most important thing and the highest priority for adults.

Carolina Engström
Interim Secretary-General, Friends
Common social media platforms

An ever-changing landscape

Via Snapchat people can send time-limited images and short films clips, so-called “snaps,” to their friends. You can also draw on the images, add text or use filters. The recipient clicks on the photo or video and has a few moments to see it before it disappears. However, it is possible to save snaps.

YouTube is the world’s largest video website. Earlier, YouTube material was created and uploaded by users, but today YouTube also produces its own content (even if this is a very small part of the total offering). Many YouTube profiles make a living through their videos, and audiences include large numbers of younger viewers.

On Instagram, you build a network with other users, to share your pictures and videos while also viewing others’ images and film clips. One important function is the ability to like and comment on other people’s photos.

On Facebook you create a network by sending friend requests. Then you can then share text, images, video etc. with others in your network and also follow what their friends are sharing. People can interact with others by liking or commenting on their posts or comments. Facebook also has functionality for direct messaging, video chats and event planning, as well as open and closed groups based on different interests or topics.

KiK is an app where people can chat with their friends. It works in a similar way to sending text messages, but instead of being sent from your phone number, you have a user name.

WhatsApp is used to send text messages, images, video and audio messages to other users.

Musical.ly is a video app where users record and share short clips, and add audio from the library inside the app. The most common videos are users performing lip-synch and their own choreography to music, as well as humorous clips.

Ask.fm lets users ask questions to each other anonymously or with a user name as the sender. The questions can be about any subject, and both questions and answers can be read by other users.

Tumblr is a blog platform where users can publish texts, images, videos, links, chats, quotes and audio on their tumblelogs. Users can follow each other and view each other’s posts in their own panel.

On Twitter people write short messages, so-called tweets, of no more than 140 characters. Users can choose to follow friends and people of interest (anyone from celebrities to politicians) and discuss topical issues.
Key Findings

35% of all young people have been subjected to harassment or other acts of intimidation online in the past year.

Seven of 10 young people subjected to degrading treatment online know the aggressor, or at least the identity of the aggressor.

18% of girls and 6% of boys have been sexually harassed online in the past year.

More than half of all young people have seen adults treat others badly online.

70% of parents/guardians are sometimes or often worried that their children will be subjected to degrading treatment online.

Almost 1/10 of all young people have been subjected to harassment or other acts of intimidation online in the past year.

78% of adults think they have sufficient knowledge to talk to their children about relationships, socializing and degrading treatment online.
Adults’ role as supporters and role models online

Adults should be role models

Adults always have a responsibility to prevent children and young people from mistreating each other. Regardless of whether degrading treatment happens on- or offline, it always originates in a social context that adults are involved in creating. We do this through conversation and our own behavior. We know from the 2016 Friends Online Report that parents have the greatest influence on how children and young people treat others online. In this year’s survey, one in 6 children said that they wanted adults to be “good role models when they socialize with others online”.

At the same time, adults are often lacking as role models for online behavior. Half of the respondents have seen adults treat other adults badly online, and one in 10 say they’ve seen this frequently. The older the young person, the more likely that they have witnessed adults behave badly online – 8 of 10 16-year-olds answered “Yes, all the time”, or “Yes, sometimes”, compared to 3 of 10 10-year-olds. This is of course a problem: if adults don’t treat others well online, why should children do so?

Talk about the internet

Being a role model is one way that adults can and should take responsibility for the online safety and security of children and young people. Dialogue is another. In this year’s survey, we asked parents/guardians for the first time if they think they have sufficient knowledge to talk to their children about relationships, socializing and degrading treatment online. 78 % said yes, and the answers look more or less the same regardless of gender or age. Seven of 10 parents/guardians also believe that their children would tell them if they were being subjected to mistreatment online. In terms of children who would talk to an adult at home, somewhat fewer children – 6 out of 10 – said they would do so.

Concerns of parents & guardians

Seven of 10 parents/guardian say they are sometimes or often worried that their children will be subjected to degrading treatment online. Parents/guardians of girls are more concerned; 79 % of them are very concerned, compared with 65 % of parents/guardians of boys. This is in line with the results of other surveys, for example from the National Media Council report “Parents and media” from 2015.

Researchers and psychologists Ann Frisén and Sofia Berne of Gothenburg University say that concern may be broader in general for girls, in terms of the danger of being mistreated, both off- and online. (Frisén, A. & Berne, S. (2016) Nätmobbning – Handbok för skolan, p 36).

80% of 16-year-olds have seen adults treat others badly online.
Have you seen adults mistreat each other in social media or online?

- 44% Yes, sometimes
- 36% No
- 10% Don’t know
- 10% Yes, all the time

What would you want adults at home to do to make it easier to talk with them about degrading treatment online? (Multiple choice question)

- 39% Talk to me about what I can do if I feel I’ve been mistreated online
- 31% Talk about what’s important to remember when socializing online
- 29% Show interest and ask about what I do online
- 17% Try the same things I do online
- 15% Be good role models when they socialize with others online
- 10% Nothing
- 2% Other
- 12% Uncertain/don’t know

FREE ONLINE COURSE
At friends.se/snabbkurs-eng, there is an interactive course for parents/guardians, where adults can learn more about how to support children being subjected to mistreatment. The course is free and takes about 30 minutes to complete.
How common is online harassment?
For many, it’s part of daily life

Every third child exposed to degrading treatment online
Of the children and adults participating in the survey, 35% – more than a third – said that they had been subjected to mistreatment via mobile phone, computer or tablet in the past year. This figure has remained unchanged during the three years that Friends has produced its online report. This means that online degrading treatment among children and young people has neither increased nor decreased in recent years in our study.

Bullying is common online
The mistreatment can consist of isolated events, but if it’s systematic, it can also be part of a bullying situation. Of the participants who were subjected to mistreatment, one in 4 had also been subjected to bullying, which works out to almost one in 10 (9.5%) of all children in the study.

In the survey, bullying is defined as being subjected to harassment or abuse by one or more people on a number of different occasions. This could be either multiple different instances of harassment or intimidation, or when one degrading comment/image/video is broadly shared or disseminated. You may feel as if you are in a position of weakness or find it hard to defend yourself. Just like harassment or mistreatment online, cyberbullying can occur both in and out of school.

Girls and adolescents exposed more often
Among the survey participants, girls had suffered more bullying – 12.5% of girls had been subjected to bullying, compared to 7% of boys. In terms of degrading treatment, the clearest pattern is that of age. For example, 51% of 16-year-olds had been subjected to degrading treatment, compared to 26% of 10-year-olds. This tendency can also be seen among the participants subjected to bullying, but in that case the correlation to age is weaker.

For age differences, for example, bullying can be related to the fact that 13- to 16-year-olds spend more time online and using social media than 9- to 12-year-olds, as shown by the National Media Council’s study.

Negative vocabulary
It’s important to remember that these questions refer to those who have been subjected to mistreatment. For example, the fact that girls are more exposed to mistreatment does not necessarily mean that more girls subject others to mistreatment. Different students can have different perceptions of how they are expected to react to mistreatment, related for example to the different jargon used in different places online. In environments where a harsh vocabulary is normal, mistreatment may pass as just a normal conversational climate.

27% of those subjected to degrading treatment have been bullied via mobile phone, computer or tablet in the past year. 61% say that they have not and 12% say they don’t know.
Have you been subjected to harassment or intimidation by someone via mobile phone, computer or tablet in the past year? ("Yes, all the time", "Yes, many times", and "Yes, a few times")

By “subjected to harassment or intimidation” we mean that someone has said or done something that made you feel sad, hurt or inferior. This could be if someone has written hurtful or malicious messages or comments, if someone has logged into your profile or used your mobile phone, computer or tablet against your will, or if you have felt alone, ostracized or have been excluded. Online harassment or intimidation can take place both in and out of school.

How were you treated when you felt harassed and/or bullied? (Multiple choice question)

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<th>Boy</th>
<th>Girl</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I received hurtful or mean messages, images or comments, for example on Snapchat, Instagram, in a game or in some other place I mentioned earlier</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>59%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Someone spread mean and/or false rumors about me</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt alone, excluded or was ostracized</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>29%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Someone posted or shared a picture or video of me against my will</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone logged in on or used my mobile phone, computer or tablet against my will</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something else</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>I don’t want to tell what happened</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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Who is mistreating others, and where?

Life offline & online are interconnected

Most know who has mistreated them

When online degrading treatment is discussed, anonymity is usually considered an important factor. However, that doesn’t mean that anonymous mistreatment is most common. Most know who has mistreated them. Seven of 10 young people subjected to degrading treatment online know the aggressor, or at least the identity of the aggressor. In most cases, the aggressor is another child or young person, but adults also mistreat children and young people online.

Where do harassment and acts of intimidation take place?

The location where degrading treatment takes place differs slightly for girls and boys, but social platforms are the most common places where both groups are subjected to mistreatment. Six out of 10 girls who have suffered degrading treatment online were mistreated on social platforms, compared to 4 out of 10 boys.

In gaming, the situation is the opposite and the differences are greater: Four of 10 boys and 1 out of 14 girls were subjected to degrading treatment in a game environment. This is probably because more boys play computer games. The “Young people and the Media” report from the National Media Council shows that 90 % of 13- to 16-year-old boys play computer/TV games on a tablet, compared to 55 % of girls in the same age group.

Most common places for cyberbullying: (Multiple choice question)

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Social media platforms

Games

Other places/ways
In games, I’m often picked on just because I’m a girl. I have to be perfect when I play.
Response to open-ended question, girl, 15

68% of students who said that they had been subjected to degrading treatment online were mistreated by a child/young person whom they knew or knew the identity of. Only 15% said they didn’t know who the aggressor was.
Sexual harassment

Part of everyday conversation

Sexual harassment online is a significant problem for many children and young people. 12% of children and young people and 18% of the girls in our survey said that they had been subjected to this treatment in the past year. The occurrence increases with age. For example, 20% of 16-year-olds had been subjected to this treatment, compared to 5% of 10-year-olds.

Perhaps the figure of 1 in 5 10- to 16-year-old girls being exposed to sexual harassment sounds high, but in truth the figure is probably conservative. For many children and young people, sexual harassment is so common that it is normalized behavior and something they have to “put up with”. We regularly encounter students and school staff who say that sexual harassment is so common that no one in the school reacts anymore. It’s “just how girls and boys act toward each other”. Gender norms play a part here – notions of how girls and boys “are” and “ought to be”. In addition, the results of the survey regarding sexual harassment are influenced by how the question is asked and its context. In this survey, students have answered general questions about sexual harassment, based on the definition given above. Sexual harassment becomes a way to clarify one’s gender identity based on gender norms, but also to position oneself and increase status, both between and within genders. Expectations about how boys and girls “are” and “ought to be” are what increase the risk that sexual harassment will be considered the norm.

“Gotten lots of hand-job videos and pictures of penises on social media, from different people.

Response to open-ended question, girl, 16

“Got weird questions in a chat for kids, and it made me uncomfortable.”

Response to open-ended question, girl, 13
Think about being online on your mobile phone, computer or tablet. In the past year, have you been subjected unwillingly to expressions of sexual harassment and unwelcome sexual advances, that is, that haven’t been okay for you? For example, it can be others commenting on your appearance in a sexual way, or someone spreading sex rumors about you. It’s also sexual harassment if someone shares pictures of you against your will, with sexual comments or insinuations. It can also be when someone sends you sexual comments or sexual suggestions to you against your will.

6% YES

18% YES

Boy

Girl
Strategies to deal with harassment and bullying

Where can children and adolescents turn for help?

Young people subjected to online harassment and bullying have different strategies for handling and dealing with what has happened. In this year’s study, we asked participants what they would do if they were to be subjected to degrading treatment. Seven of 10 said that they would talk to an adult at home, so this is the most common strategy. 6 of 10 would block or remove the person who mistreated them and 3 of 10 would talk to a friend. Many more would talk to an adult at home (70 %) than an adult at school (13 %). Here, it’s important to remember that the school is obligated to investigate and take action when a student has been exposed to mistreatment, even if it takes place online (read more about this on p 20).

There are some differences between the responses from girls and boys. The girls are more inclined to talk to a friend (42 % of girls, compared to 23 % of boys) and report the occurrence to the website in question (21 % of girls and 13 % of boys). On the other hand, more boys (6 %) than girls (2 %) said that they would write something hurtful or mean back to the person. These patterns correspond to the experience of Friends in its encounters with students. We often find norms dictating that boys must be “strong” and this results in boys being less able to admit when they’ve been subjected to mistreatment. The same norms can explain why boys in the study are more inclined to take revenge by writing something hurtful to the person.
Bullied mostly in school, but also online.
Response to open-ended question, 13-year-old boy

The most common strategies when young people are subjected to degrading treatment online: (Multiple choice question)

- Talk to an adult at home: 70%
- Block or remove the person who mistreated me: 61%
- Talk to a friend: 32%
FRIENDS’ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Adults at home

GAIN A FUNDAMENTAL UNDERSTANDING
Even if harassment and intimidation are basically about social relationships, having a fundamental understanding of the environments in which children and adolescents socialize online makes it easier to help them. Learn by asking your child, trying things out for yourself or searching for more information online about the websites, games or apps your child uses.

TALK ABOUT THE INTERNET
Try to show that you understand that what has happened to your child online is just as real as things that happen anywhere else. Let the internet be part of your everyday conversations and talk about both the positive and negative things that happen there.
If you as an adult are involved and show a genuine interest in what children and adolescents are doing online, they will be more willing to listen to your advice and more likely to tell you if something happens.

OFFER YOUR SUPPORT
It is important that children and adolescents feel safe and know that they have an adult close by whom they can turn to for help and support. Show in word and deed that you are there for them if something happens!

LISTEN & SUPPORT
Listen and let your children describe their feelings and experiences. Be clear and tell them that bullying and harassments are never OK. Emphasize that the situation can be remedied. If your child has been subjected to degrading treatment, be clear that you are on their side and that the mistreatment is not their fault. If your child has subjected others to degrading treatment, it’s a good idea to talk about what you both can do so it won’t happen again.

CONTACT THE SCHOOL
Often, online degrading treatment involved students from the same class or school; therefore, the law says that the school must investigate and act. It is therefore important for the school to know about what is going on. Start by contacting your child’s class teacher or mentor. Explain what has happened, who is involved and how long you have known about it. Try to work together to find a solution.

REPORT & REMOVE
If damaging content has been published online or in social media, it’s a good idea to help your child remove the content (but take a screen shot first, to use as proof later). Report the occurrence to the website in question. If your child is the victim of a crime, such as slander, unlawful threats or incitement of hatred towards population groups, it is important to report the incident to the police.
Friends’ recommendations for action

Children and young people

SPREAD POSITIVE MESSAGES
The positive atmosphere starts with you. When you write and say nice things or encourage and help others, you are helping to create a friendly atmosphere. The things you write, say and do influence others. Use that power to change things for the better!

THINK BEFORE YOU ACT
There are many options for communication, debate or expressing emotions and opinions online. But think first before you write or share something. Who is responsible for the information you are sharing? Could what you write be perceived as degrading or offensive by someone else? Is there a risk that what I want to write or share could be misinterpreted, and in that case, how can I reduce that risk?

INCLUDE OTHERS
The Internet is a place for everyone! Regardless of roles in groups of friends, gender, age, religion, functional abilities, transgender identity, ethnicity or sexual orientation, everyone is equally welcome to express themselves, learn new things, have fun and socialize online.

REMEMBER THAT IT’S NOT YOUR FAULT
In the case of degrading treatment, it’s common for the mistreated persons to blame themselves. Don’t do it. The person who is bullying or harassing you is at fault. Anyone can be subjected to bullying or harassment and the situation can be changed.

TALK TO SOMEONE
First turn to an adult that you trust to get help and support. This could be an adult at home, a teacher, coach or perhaps a friend’s parent. If there is no adult you can talk to, ask a friend, sibling or someone else you trust for help. It’s important not to be alone in the situation. Together you can find a solution!

REPORT, BLOCK AND REVIEW SETTINGS
Report degrading content immediately to the website/app/game and save messages and/or screen shots as evidence. Also make sure to block users who have behaved badly, and check your settings to ensure that you control who sees your content. Certain types of degrading treatment online are crimes, and you can report them to the police. This includes, for example, unlawful threats or incitement of hatred towards population groups.

If you are a child or teenager who has been mistreated

Children and young people
Friends’ work online

From education to shaping public opinion

Our work to prevent cyberbullying on friends.se
Friends’ work to prevent bullying and degrading treatment online has a multi-level approach. Our opinion-forming efforts, include the report you are now reading, are just one part. The core of our work is our training program. In addition to the training for prevention/preventive work against bullying and efforts to promote equality for all, we also offer specific training courses about handling life online. Our training is directed to school staff, students and parents/guardians, because it’s vital for these groups to cooperate to ensure that we can create a safer online environment for children and young people.

The training courses are intended to increase knowledge in schools about promoting safety and security online. The work involves monitoring student’s online habits and the kinds of online degrading treatment they are subjected to, so schools can work to prevent mistreatment in an effective way. We also hold a discourse on social relations, popular apps, criticism of sources, and the importance of including prevention work in the school’s regular efforts to promote safety and security.

In our work directed toward the internet, we consider the Internet to be a place or arena. This means that the Internet as such is merely a tool, and that the people using this tool determine how it will be used. If a student mistreats another student on social media, we believe that the adult environment must look first to the social relations between and around the students involved – just as schools do when mistreatment takes place in a changing room or school cafeteria.

What legal obligations does the school have?
Friends’ work to promote a safer online life for children and young people is based on the responsibility of adults to carry out this work. Of course, this is largely a moral duty – no adult should stand by while a child is mistreated – but the school is also obligated legally to act.

Chapter 6 of the Education Act states that a school is obligated to investigate and act when a student feels he or she has been mistreated. This means that the school must act in a timely manner and take action to ensure the mistreatment stops. Degrading treatment is the term used in the Education Act, defined as “behavior that is not discrimination according to the Discrimination Act, but which... violates a child’s or student’s dignity”. The law also states that the mistreated student has the right to determine what he or she considers is or is not mistreatment.

These obligations and rights apply whenever there is a connection to the school’s operations. If a student at the school subjects another student to online degrading treatment, the school has the same obligation as if the event occurred on school premises. This interpretation is supported by the Ombudsman for Children and Pupils (BEO), who issues warnings to schools that fail to investigate and act. Ombudsman for Children and Pupils (BEO) Caroline Dyrefors Gruftman interpreted the law in Dagens Nyheter newspaper on August 23, 2015, “Some parents are told that cyberbullying is not the school’s responsibility, because it takes place outside school. Enough is enough. The law is very clear.”

The Discrimination Act states that schools have the same obligation to investigate and act when a student has been subjected to harassment or sexual harassment.
From spring 2017, Friends is offering a survey for students to study their experiences of safety and harm online. In this way, schools can get help by determining their own students’ situation online, and use this information to create more specific and effective measures to ensure more online security for students.
Friends’ recommendations for action, schools

Important to include the Internet

Integrate the Internet in everyday efforts to create a safe and secure environment
The Internet is well integrated in the social lives of children and young people. Events in school influence how children socialize online, and vice versa. For this reason, schools need to combine the work of prevention for both online and offline environments. Include the Internet in the efforts and planning carried out by the school.

Monitor, analyze & evaluate
Monitor pupils’ safety and wellbeing online! Schools will be able to identify the best actions to take to prevent degrading treatment, harassment and discrimination, and to promote equality for all. Follow up and evaluate any measures implemented, and suggest new ones as needed.

Involve the students
In the work to prevent online harassment, it is important for the students to participate and add their input and suggestions. This makes the actions more relevant for students, and makes the actions more effective. Regularly discuss matters of safety and security with students, and mutually agree on measures based on the challenges that exist at the school. Remember to involve all the students at the school!

Cooperation with parents & guardians
Aim to achieve a shared understanding with parents/guardians and work together to teach young children and adolescents to form positive social relationships online. Let the atmosphere online, as well as in the classroom, be a recurring item on the agenda of parent-teacher meetings.

Cooperation among school staff
Make sure that all school personnel take joint responsibility for the safety of students at school and online. Use each other’s competence, and support each other!
Legal matters online

Many similarities with legislation outside Internet

In meetings with young people and adults we often encounter uncertainty about which laws apply to the internet. One simple rule of thumb is that the same things that are illegal outside the internet are also illegal online. Not all online harassment is a crime, but many cases of defamation, insults and threats are never reported to the police. In order to solve an online crime, it is important to report it. It’s good to be aware that it’s often easier to provide proof about something that has happened online, so remember to save any evidence in the form of screen shots, images or messages.

OFFENSIVE (DEGRADING) PHOTOGRAPHY
CH. 4 SECTION 6 A OF THE PENAL CODE
Offensive photography means illicitly or covertly taking a photo or filming someone who is inside a home, a public toilet, a changing room or a similar space.

UNLAWFUL THREAT, CH. 4 SECTION 5 OF THE PENAL CODE
An unlawful threat means threatening to commit a criminal act against another person; for example, threatening to assault, rape or kill someone. For the threat to be unlawful, it must be meant seriously and posed in a manner that evokes serious fear in the threatened person.

DEFAMATION, CH. 5 SECTION 1 OF THE PENAL CODE
Defamation means claiming that someone is a criminal or reprehensible in their way of living, or providing information that serves to expose the person to the contempt of others.

MOLESTATION, CH. 4 SECTION 7 OF THE PENAL CODE
Molestation means acting recklessly toward another person, such as by repeatedly posting degrading comments about someone online.

PERSONAL DATA ACT
The purpose of the Personal Data Act (PuL) is to protect people against violation of their personal integrity. For example, it is illegal to disclose information about a person’s ethnicity, political opinions, religious convictions, or membership in a trade union. There are some exceptions to the prohibition, however.

INCITEMENT OF HATRED TOWARDS POPULATION GROUPS CH. 16 SECTION 8 OF THE PENAL CODE
Hate speech means threatening or expressing contempt for a group with allusion to the race, ethnicity, belief system or sexual orientation of the members of a group.

EDUCATION ACT
According to the Education Act, schools have a responsibility to act against online harassment and intimidation if such treatment is impacting the pupil’s school life. Read more under the heading “What are the obligations of the school?”, p 20).
About the Report

New & revised questions

The Friends Online Report is designed to capture the voices of children and young people on the subject of bullying and degrading treatment online – via mobile phones, tablets and computers. This is the fifth consecutive year that the Friends Online Report is being published. The report is based on a survey in which 1,001 children and adolescents aged 10 to 16 in Sweden, along with one parent/guardian per respondent, participated. The survey was conducted by TNS SIFO and was commissioned by Friends. This year’s survey has a different design, with fewer and reformulated questions.

Survey method
The data was collected through web-based surveys conducted February 3–12, 2017. The survey respondents are children of members of TNS SIFO’s web panel; these parents/guardians are recruited to reflect the nation at large, by telephone and mail. An invitation to participate in the survey was sent out at random by e-mail to panel members with children aged 10–16. Parents filled in details regarding their child’s gender and age, and gave their consent for their child’s participation in the survey. They were also asked to answer a few questions themselves regarding children and online life. The young respondents then answered all remaining questions themselves or together with their parent. In order for the respondents to have an option not to answer certain questions that they may find sensitive, response options such as “Uncertain”, “Don’t want to answer” or “Don’t know” were included. The one exception was the question “Have you been subjected to harassment or intimidation by someone via mobile phone, computer or tablet in the past year?”, where these alternatives were not possible.

A total of 1,001 young people participated in the survey: 408 aged 10–12 and 593 aged 13–16. The share for girls was 49 % and 51 % for boys. The participating respondents are anonymous. The results were analyzed based on age groups and gender. The quotes included in the report are a selection of the respondents’ responses to open-ended questions.

About gender
The survey asked about the participant’s gender identity, in order to measure any differences in the online treatment experienced by boys and girls. In addition to the alternatives of “Girl” and “Boy”; the respondents could choose “Other/Don’t want to answer”, for those who did not wish to identify themselves as either girl or boy. The reason that we only show the differences for boys and girls’ responses in the survey is that there were too few “Other/Don’t want to answer” to provide a statistically valid basis.

For more information about how the survey was conducted, see www.tns-sifo.se
DEFINITIONS

HARASSMENT AND OTHER ACTS OF INTIMIDATION is an overarching term that includes bullying, harassment and other forms of degrading treatment. It covers all forms of mistreatment that make a person feel sad, hurt or inferior.

DEGRADING TREATMENT is the term used in the Education Act to prohibit harassment or intimidation that is linked to the grounds of discrimination. Degrading treatment is defined as behavior that violates a student’s dignity.

BULLYING is where a person has been subjected to harassment or abuse by one or more people on a number of occasions. A victim of bullying may feel like they are in a position of weakness and find it hard to defend themselves. In this survey, we have decided to emphasize the repetition criterion, because the conditions for bullying via mobile phone, tablet or computer differ from those in other arenas. We have therefore added: This could be either multiple different instances of harassment or intimidation, or when one degrading comment/image/video is broadly shared or disseminated.

DISCRIMINATION is when an adult in school, such as a teacher, treats one pupil unfairly or worse than another one based on one of the seven grounds of discrimination: gender, gender identity or gender expression, ethnic affiliation, religion or other belief system, functional abilities, sexual orientation or age.

HARASSMENT is when a person is harassed based on one of the seven grounds of discrimination. One incident is sufficient for a person to be guilty of harassment.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT is behavior of a sexual nature that violates a person’s dignity. Examples of sexual harassment could be if someone sends messages, writes comments or spreads rumors relating to sex or the body that make the person who is targeted feel uncomfortable.