# MODULE 4

# PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE ONLINE BEHAVIOR AND SOCIO-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

**ERASMEDIAH**
Educational Reinforcement Against the Social Media Hyperconnectivity

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Co-funded by the European Union

**Lesson 4.1**

# Understanding Online Ethics and Social Media Etiquette



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# Lesson 4.1

**Duration: 40 minutes**

**Objectives:**

- To help young people understand the importance of ethical behavior in online spaces.
- To promote awareness of digital rights, responsibilities, and consequences of online actions.
- To encourage respect, empathy, and inclusivity in digital communication.
- To guide navigating ethical dilemmas in digital environments.

**Key Message(s):**

- Ethical behavior online builds trust, respect, and safety within digital communities.
- Online actions have real-world consequences—always consider their impact on yourself and others.
- Acting ethically involves respecting, and protecting privacy, and being accountable for online choices.
- Everyone has a role in creating a positive digital environment through empathy, responsibility, and informed decision-making.

**TYPE OF LESSON**

# Lesson Overview

Today, we will explore the concept of ethical behavior in digital environments and its importance for building a safe, respectful, and responsible online community. Together, we will discuss what it means to act ethically in digital spaces, consider the impact of our online actions, and reflect on how we can make responsible decisions when engaging in digital environments.

**The workshop is organized into 4 steps:**

**1:** Introduction to Online Ethics and First Comments ( 5 Min)

**2:** Understanding Digital Ethics (15 min)

**3:** Ethical Dilemmas  (15 min)

**4:** Reflection and Key Takeaways (5 min)

## Introduction to Online Ethics and First Comments

Let's start with a short video that introduces a topic we often encounter but may not always think about: ethical behavior in digital environments. Every day, we engage with others online-sharing content, expressing opinions, or responding to what we see. But have we ever stopped to consider whether our actions online are ethical and respectful?

This video highlights what digital ethics means, why it matters, and the impact of both positive and negative online behaviors. As you watch, I encourage you to reflect on how these concepts relate to your own experiences.

Let's watch the video and see if anything resonates with or surprises you. Once it's over, we'll discuss your thoughts and any ethical dilemmas you may have faced online.

# Introduction to Online Ethics and First Comments

## How to spot unethical behaviour

<u>Let's watch the video:</u>

- Now that we've watched the video, did anything surprise you?
- Think about the examples of ethical and unethical online behaviors.
- Have you ever faced similar situations or questioned if something was the right thing to do?
- I'd love to hear your thoughts-what stood out to you, and have you experienced any ethical dilemmas online?

Did you know that our behavior in digital environments can shape how others perceive us and even influence the online community as a whole?

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# Introduction to Online Ethics and First Comments

For example, sharing respectful content and engaging thoughtfully can build trust and positive connections, while unethical behavior like spreading harmful comments or violating privacy can have serious consequences.

The way we act online not only affects our own digital reputation but also impacts others. Unethical actions can lead to misunderstandings, harm relationships, or even create conflicts between individuals or groups. By understanding the importance of ethical behavior, we can contribute to a safer, more respectful, and inclusive digital environment for everyone.

## Understanding Digital Ethics

**Scenario 1:** A student shares a classmate's personal photo online without their permission, which leads to the classmate feeling embarrassed and upset.
Is this ethical? Why or why not?

**Scenario 2:** A popular influencer promotes a product online but does not disclose they were paid for the promotion. Followers believe the endorsement is genuine.
Is this ethical? What could have been done differently?

**Scenario 3:** A group of friends creates a fake social media account pretending to be someone they dislike, sharing harmful content.
Is this ethical? What are the consequences of such behavior?

**Scenario 4:** A gaming company uses players' private data, like location and in-game activity, to send targeted advertisements without informing them.
Is this ethical? How can companies respect user privacy?

# Understanding Digital Ethics

**Scenario 5:** A student downloads and submits an essay they found online as their own work for a class assignment.
Is this ethical? How does this impact academic honesty?

**Scenario 6:** A social media platform uses algorithms to promote sensationalized or negative content to increase user engagement.
Is this ethical? How does this affect the online experience?

**Scenario 7:** An online forum participant anonymously spreads false information about a company, causing confusion and harm to the business.
Is this ethical? How can misinformation harm individuals or communities?

**Scenario 8:** A teenager sees someone being cyberbullied in a group chat but decides not to intervene or report it.
Is this ethical? What responsibilities do bystanders have online?

# Understanding Digital Ethics

## Evaluating Online Behavior: Ethical or Not?

What do you think of the scenarios we encounter online? Have you ever seen actions that made you pause and wonder, "Is this the right thing to do?" Whether it's sharing private information without permission, posting hurtful comments, or promoting misleading content, such behaviors raise important ethical questions.

In this step, you'll work as a group to analyze various digital scenarios. Discuss whether the actions are ethical or unethical and explain why. Think carefully about their potential impact-on individuals, communities, or even the broader digital environment.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- **Does this action respect others' rights and privacy?**
- **Who might be affected, and how**
- **What would be a more ethical choice in this situation?**

# Understanding Digital Ethics

## Evaluating Online Behavior: Ethical or Not?

After reviewing real-life digital scenarios in groups, you'll share your thoughts on whether the actions were ethical or not. For example, you might say: "We thought sharing someone's private photo without permission was unethical because it violated their privacy and could cause harm.

Let's identify some key **"red flags"** of unethical behavior: actions that disrespect others' privacy, spread misinformation, or create harm. Think about the impact these choices have on individuals and the wider digital community. By reflecting together, we can better understand what it means to act responsibly and ethically online.

**Step 3** # Ethical Dilemmas

## GROUP ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

In this activity, participants will work in small groups to analyze real-world ethical dilemmas related to digital environments. Each group will discuss scenarios, identify the ethical challenges, and propose appropriate solutions.

1.**Divide into Groups:** Split participants into small groups of 3-5 people.

2.**Assign Scenarios:** Each group receives a scenario card describing a digital ethical dilemma.

3.**Discuss:** Groups will spend 5-7 minutes discussing the following questions:

- Is this action ethical or unethical? Why?
- Who might be affected, and how?
- What would be the most ethical way to handle this situation?

4.**Share and Reflect:** Each group will briefly present their scenario and solutions to the class.

**Step 3**　**Ethical Dilemmas**

What Would You Do? Exploring Digital Ethics

Now that we've discussed the importance of ethical behavior online, let's apply what we've learned through real-world scenarios. Together in groups, you will evaluate a series of ethical dilemmas related to digital environments.

These dilemmas will challenge you to think critically about online actions and their consequences. For each situation, discuss:

- Is this action ethical or unethical?
- Who is impacted, and how?
- What would be the most ethical response in this situation?

**Ethical Dilemmas**

## Evaluate and Decide: What's the Right Choice?

**Identify the Dilemma:** These dilemmas involve scenarios like privacy violations, sharing misinformation, or engaging in harmful behavior online.

**Discuss the Impact:** Work together as a group to answer the following questions for each dilemma:

What makes this action ethical or unethical?

Who is affected, and in what way?

What would be the most responsible and ethical response?

**Reflect and Share:** At the end of the activity, each group will share their analysis and solutions with the class. Together, we'll reflect on how making ethical choices can create safer and more respectful digital spaces for everyone.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Ethical or Not? Analyzing Digital Scenarios

## ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

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- Is this action ethical or unethical? Why?
- Who might be affected, and how?
- What would be the most ethical way to handle this situation?

4.**Share and Reflect:** Each group will briefly present their scenario and solutions to the class.

**Scenario 1: Sharing Without Permission**
You find a funny photo of your friend online and decide to share it on social media without asking. The friend later tells you they feel embarrassed and asks you to take it down. **Is this ethical? What would you do differently?**

**Scenario 2: Anonymous Comments**
You see someone post a hurtful comment anonymously on an online forum, and other users respond with similar negative comments. **What should you do as a bystander? Is ignoring the right choice?**

**Scenario 3: Using Someone Else's Work**
A classmate copies artwork from an online artist without credit and submits it as part of their school project. **Is this ethical? Why does giving credit matter?**

**Scenario 4: Misinformation**
A friend shares an article online claiming false health advice. You're unsure if it's accurate but notice it's spreading quickly. **What steps can you take to verify and handle this?**

**Scenario 5: Online Pranks**
A group of students creates a fake social media account pretending to be a teacher and posts jokes that harm the teacher's reputation. **What are the consequences of such behavior? Is this ethical?**

**Scenario 6: Privacy Breach**
An app collects user data without informing users and sells it to advertisers. Users later discover this in the news. **Is this ethical? How should companies handle user privacy?**

## Ethical Dilemmas

**WRAP-UP QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION**
- How do our online actions impact others?
- What role do we play in creating an ethical digital environment?
- How can we encourage responsible online behavior in our communities?

# Reflection and Key Takeaways

To wrap up, let's take a moment to reflect on today's session. Here's a question for everyone:

***"Can you think of a time when you saw or participated in something online that made you question whether it was the right thing to do?"***
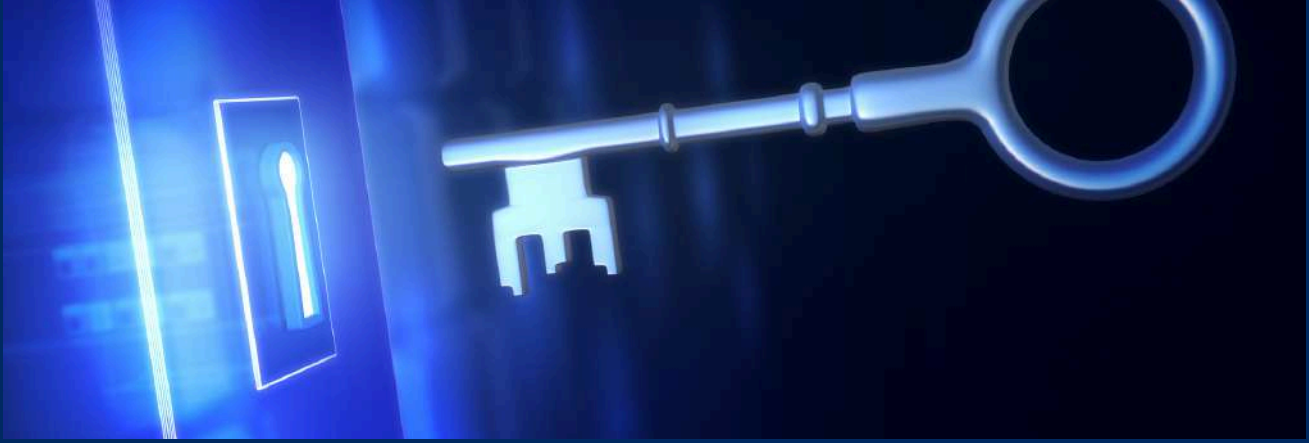
Raise your hand if something comes to mind.

For those who raised your hands, how might the ideas and skills we discussed today change how you behave online in the future? What's one action you'll take to ensure your digital interactions are ethical and respectful?

The goal here is to pause, reflect, and think critically about the choices we make in digital spaces. Even small actions-like respecting privacy, spreading kindness, or questioning our decisions—help create a more ethical and positive online community.

**Thank you for engaging so thoughtfully today!**

# Key Takeaway

**Think Before You Post:** Pause and reflect on how your words, images, or actions online might affect others. Digital actions have real-world consequences.

**Respect Privacy:** Never share personal information, photos, or content about others without permission. Respect boundaries in digital spaces.

**Engage Positively:** Foster kindness and inclusivity in your interactions. Avoid harmful behavior like cyberbullying or spreading negativity.

**Practice Digital Honesty:** Be truthful in what you share, avoid misinformation, and always give credit for others' work.

**Be Accountable:** Recognize that ethical behavior online starts with you. Lead by example to create a respectful and responsible online community.

# Instructions for youth workers, educators, and teachers

**Objective:**

This lesson is designed to help youth workers, educators, and teachers facilitate discussions on ethical behavior in digital spaces. By exploring real-world dilemmas and ethical decision-making, participants will develop a stronger understanding of how their actions online impact themselves and others. Through interactive activities and reflections, they will learn how to act responsibly, promote respect, and navigate digital environments with empathy and integrity.

**Materials Needed:**

- Projector and screen
- Speakers
- Laptop or device for video playback
- Handouts with ethical scenarios and discussion prompts
- Ethical decision-making checklist
- Markers and flip charts for group activities
- Small cards with real-life ethical dilemmas (for group work)
- Sticky notes for brainstorming solutions
- Access to online tools or fact-checking platforms (optional)

## Step 1: Introduction to Online Ethics and First Comments (5 Min)

### Welcome and Introduction

Warmly welcome the participants and create a supportive environment. Introduce the session's objective: to understand the importance of ethical behavior in digital spaces and how it promotes a respectful and inclusive online community. Briefly outline the workshop structure and emphasize the role of responsibility in our online actions.

### Video Screening

Suggested Video: "What Does It Mean to Be Ethical Online?"

(A short video highlighting examples of positive and negative online behaviors, focusing on respect, responsibility, and empathy).

### Alternative Language Resources (available in 6 languages):

- **Italian:** Digital Ethics: A Guide forYouth.
- **Greek:** Ethical Conduct in Online Communities.
- **Turkish:** Safer Internet Center Türkiye.
- **Spanish:** Digital Responsibility and Respect Resources.
- **Hungarian:** Hungarian Safer Internet Programme.
- **Polish:** Resources from NASK.

## Step 1: Introduction to Online Ethics and First Comments (5 Min)

### Key Discussion Points

- Whatdoes it mean to behave ethically online?
- Why is it important to be respectful and responsible in digital spaces?
- How can unethical behavior, such as spreading negativity or sharing private information, impact individuals and society?

### Reflection Prompt

"Think of a time when you saw or experienced unethical behavior online. How did it make you feel, and what could have been done differently?"

## Step 2:  Understanding Digital Ethics  (15 min)

**Analyzing Online Behavior: Ethical or Unethical?**
In this activity, students will explore real-life scenarios involving digital ethics. The aim is to help participants critically evaluate online actions, discuss the consequences, and reflect on ways to act responsibly in digital spaces.

**Activity Instructions**
**Divide into Groups:** Organize participants into small groups of 3-5 people.
**Assign Scenarios:** Provide each group with a scenario card describing an online behavior.
**Analyze and Discuss:** Groups will spend time analyzing their scenario and answer the followingquestions:

- Is the behavior ethical or unethical? Why?
- Whomight be impacted by this action, andhow?
- Whatwould have been a more ethical choice?

**Share Insights:** Each group will share their analysis and reflections with the class.

**Key Discussion Points**
- Why is ethical behavior essential in digital spaces?
- How do actions like sharing private content or spreading misinformation impact trust and relationships online?
- What steps can individuals take to promote digital ethics and responsibility?

## Step 2: Understanding Digital Ethics (15 min)

## Group Activity – Ethical or Unethical?

## Analyzing Scenarios

Divide participants into small groups and provide each group with one of the following scenarios. Ask them to evaluate whether the situation is ethical or unethical and discuss their reasoning. Encourage groups to reflect on key points such as transparency, honesty, privacy, and responsibility in digital spaces.

Sample Scenarios;

## 1. Sharing a Personal Photo Without Permission

**Evaluation Tips:** Consider the impact of sharing private content without consent. Does it violate personal boundaries or privacy?

**Credibility Notes:** Unethical. Sharing private photos without consent can cause harm and violate privacy.

## 2. Influencer Promotes a Product Without Disclosure

**Evaluation Tips:** Evaluate transparency and honesty in endorsements. Followers deserve to know when content is sponsored.

**Credibility Notes:** *Unethical.* Lack of disclosure misleads followers. Influencers should clearly state sponsored content.

**Step 2: Understanding Digital Ethics (15 min)**

**Group Activity – Ethical or Unethical?**

**3. Creating a Fake Social Media Account**
*Evaluation Tips:* Analyze the intent and harm caused. Fake accounts can damage reputations and create emotional distress.
*Credibility Notes:* *Unethical.* Creating fake accounts to harm others is deceptive and can lead to serious consequences.

**4. Using Players' Private Data Without Informing Them**
*Evaluation Tips:* Reflect on user privacy rights and data transparency. Users should know how their data is used.
*Credibility Notes:* *Unethical.* Using private data without consent breaches trust and invades user privacy.

**5. Submitting a Downloaded Essay as Own Work**
*Evaluation Tips:* Think about academic honesty and integrity. Submitting unoriginal work can undermine trust in education.
*Credibility Notes:* *Unethical.* Plagiarism damages academic integrity and creates unfair advantages.

**Step 2: Understanding Digital Ethics (15 min)**

**Group Activity – Ethical or Unethical?**

## 6. Promoting Sensationalized Content for Engagement
**Evaluation Tips:** Examine the role of algorithms in promoting harmful content. Negative content can influence emotions and opinions.
*Credibility Notes:* Unethical. Promoting harmful content for profit compromises user well-being and trust.

## 7. Spreading False Information Anonymously
*Evaluation Tips:* Assess the harm caused by spreading false information. It can damage businesses and mislead communities.
*Credibility Notes:* Unethical. Spreading false information can create confusion, harm businesses, and mislead others.

## 8. Ignoring Cyberbullying as a Bystander
*Evaluation Tips:* Discuss the responsibilities of bystanders in online spaces. Ignoring cyberbullying can perpetuate harm.
*Credibility Notes:* Unethical. Witnessing harm without action fails to protect others and perpetuates cyberbullying.

*Share and Discuss: Have each group present their evaluation and reasoning. Conclude with a discussion on the importance of ethical behavior, empathy, and responsibility in digital spaces.*

## Step 3: Ethical Dilemmas (15 Min)

## Group Activity

In this activity, participants will explore real-world ethical dilemmas to develop critical thinking and responsible decision-making skills online.

## Instructions

**1. Divide** participants into small groups and assign each group one scenario.

**2. Discuss**

- Is this ethical or unethical? Why?
- What are the possible consequences?
- How could it have been handled differently?

**3.** Each group will **share** their conclusions with the class.

## Scenarios:

**1.** Sharing Without Permission

- Is it respectful to post someone's photo without asking?

**2.** Anonymous Comments

- What can bystanders do when they see harmful comments?

**3.** Using Someone Else's Work

- Why is giving credit important for online creators?

## Step 3: Ethical Dilemmas (15 Min)

**4.** Misinformation

How can you verify if content is true before sharing?

**5.** Online Pranks

What are the consequences of creating fake accounts or harmful jokes?

**6.** Privacy Breach

How can companies ensure transparency with user data?

### Wrap-Up

Groups share their ideas, and emphasize the importance of ethical online behavior to create a respectful digital community.

### Analyzing Ethical Scenarios

Divide participants into small groups and assign each group one of the following scenarios. Ask them to discuss whether the situation is ethical or unethical and share their reasoning. Encourage groups to reflect on core principles such as consent, honesty, privacy, and accountability in online spaces.

**Step 3: Ethical Dilemmas (15 Min)**

**Sample Scenarios**

**1. Sharing Without Permission**

A funny photo of your friend is shared online without asking for permission. The friend feels embarrassed and asks you to take it down.

**Discussion Points**

- Is this ethical? Why or why not?
- How can we ensure we respect others' privacy online?
- What would you do differently in this situation?

**2. Anonymous Comments**

You notice an anonymous user posts hurtful comments on a forum, and others join in with similar negativity.

**Discussion Points**

- What responsibilities do bystanders have in this situation?
- Is ignoring harmful behavior the right choice? Why or why not?
- How can you take constructive action in such scenarios?

**3. Using Someone Else's Work**

A classmate copies artwork from an online artist and submits it as their school project without credit.

## Step 3: Ethical Dilemmas (15 Min)

### Discussion Points

- Is this ethical? Why does giving proper credit matter?
- What impact does this behavior have on creators and artists?
- How can we promote originality and respect for others' work?

## 4. Misinformation

A friend shares an article online claiming false health advice. You're unsure of its accuracy, but it's spreading quickly.

### Discussion Points

- What steps can you take to verify the article's information?
- Why is it important to stop the spread of misinformation?
- How can you encourage others to check facts before sharing?

## 5. Online Pranks

A group of students creates a fake social media account pretending to be a teacher, sharing jokes that harm the teacher's reputation.

### Discussion Points

- What are the consequences of such behavior for the teacher and students?
- Is this ethical? Why or why not?
- How does online behavior impact real-world relationships and trust?

## Step 3: Ethical Dilemmas (15 Min)

### 6. Privacy Breach

An app collects user data without informing its users and sells the data to advertisers. Users discover this later in the news.

### Discussion Points

- Is this ethical? How should companies handle user data and privacy?
- Why is transparency important in data collection?
- How can users better protect their privacy online?

### Group Sharing and Reflection

After the discussions, have each group share their scenario, key points, and conclusions with the class. Wrap up with a group reflection on the importance of ethical decision-making in digital environments and the impact of online behavior on individuals and communities.

**Step 4: Reflection and Key Takeaways (5 minutes)**

**Group Reflection**

**Reflection Questions:**
- Can you think of a time when you saw or participated in something online that made you question whether it was the right thing to do?
- How might the ideas and skills we discussed today change how you behave online in the future?
- Raise your hand if something comes to mind, and share how you might approach similar situations differently moving forward.

**Key Takeaways:**
- **Think Before You Post:** Pause and consider how your words, images, or actions might impact others. Digital actions have real-world consequences.
- **Respect Privacy:** Always ask for permission before sharing someone else's personal information, photos, or content.
- **Engage Positively:** Foster kindness and inclusivity. Avoid harmful behaviors like cyberbullying or spreading negativity.
- **Practice Digital Honesty:** Share truthful content, verify information before sharing, and give credit where it's due.
- **Be Accountable:** Ethical online behavior starts with you. Lead by example to create a more respectful and responsible online community.

**Follow-Up and At-Home Activities**

**1.Reality Check on Social Media**: Challenge participants to analyze a trending post or headline each day and decide if the information shared is ethical, accurate, and respectful.

**2.Teach and Fact-Check Together**: Encourage students to discuss digital ethics with family or friends and fact-check an online story using methods learned in class.

**Tips for Teachers:**
- **Time Management:** Keep discussions focused and ensure all steps stay on track.
- **Encourage Engagement:** Prompt quieter students to share thoughts through group or pair work.
- **Flexible Approach:** Be prepared with both online tools and physical materials for various learning settings.

# QUIZ

1.Why is ethical behavior important in digital environments?
 A) To build trust and respect in online communities
 B) To gain more followers
 C) To only fulfill legal obligations
 D) To share everything freely

2. What ethical principle is violated when you share a friend's personal photo on social media without their permission?
 A) Privacy
 B) Accountability
 C) Honesty
 D) Empathy

3. Why is it ethically wrong for an influencer to promote sponsored content without disclosing it?
 A) Because it violates privacy
 B) Because it misleads followers
 C) Because it's a good strategy to sell more products
 D) Because it infringes on others' rights

# QUIZ

4. What ethical issue arises when social media platforms use users' data for advertising without informing them?
 A) Lack of transparency
 B) Lack of empathy
 C) Lack of respect
 D) Academic dishonesty

5. What is the potential impact of spreading false information in digital environments?
 A) It only creates a fun debate
 B) It misleads people and harms society
 C) It drives more user engagement
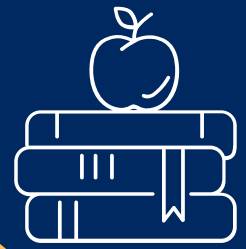 D) It starts a good discussion

# ANSWERS

Question 1: A

Question 2: A

Question 3: B

Question 4: A

Question 5: B

# Tools

## The European Digital Media Observatory

The European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO) supports collaboration among fact-checkers, media literacy experts, and researchers to tackle online disinformation. It works with media organizations, platforms, and practitioners to analyze and address disinformation. EDMO relies on 14 national or multinational Hubs across 28 EU and EEA countries, offering insights into local digital media challenges.

### edmo.eu

## European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services

Safer Internet Centres are centers established by national regulators across Europe and funded by the European Commission. These centers run various projects aimed at protecting children from online threats, promoting media literacy, and providing training on online safety.

### erga-online.eu

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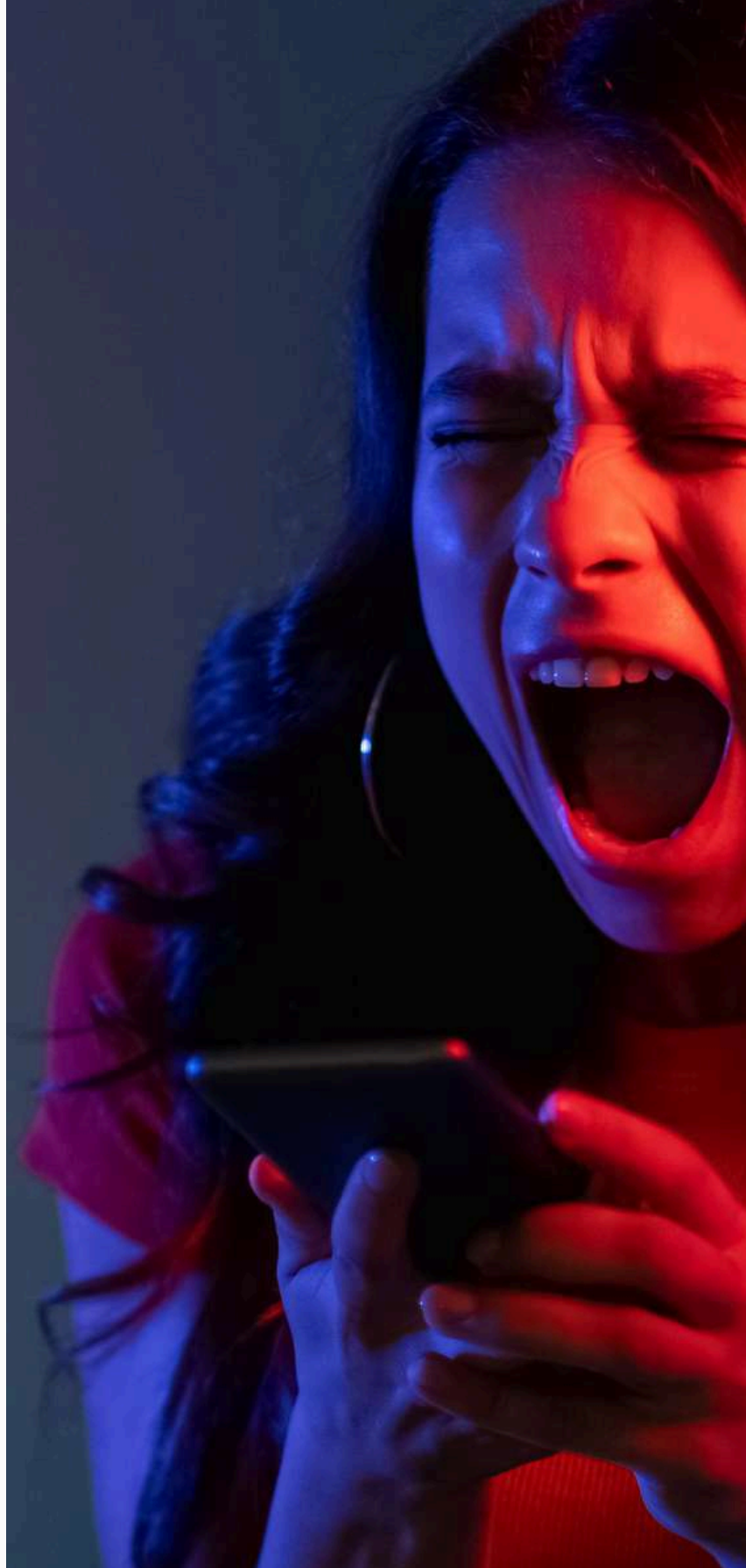AdM
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Centrum Wspierania
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ASSERTED KNOWLEDGE
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