

# 1. What is misogyny?

Misogyny does not have one single definition, but it is generally understood as hatred, contempt, or deeply rooted prejudice toward women and girls. It can appear as discrimination, sexist language, prejudice, harassment, or violence, and is based on the belief that women and girls are inferior. Even behaviours framed as jokes, stereotypes or 'banter' should be challenged early, as they can escalate and reinforce harmful attitudes and distorted beliefs.

# 2. Why is matters?

At least one in every twelve women experiences Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) each year, although the true figure is likely to be much higher. Rising misogynistic attitudes are a significant contributing factor. Increasingly, harmful online content is shaping children's beliefs before they are able to interpret information critically.

Children are exposed to misogyny through online influencers and social media, as well as the normalisation of harmful attitudes in music, television, films, and environments where such views go unchallenged.

# 3. What might Misogyny look like?

Examples include sexist banter, online abuse, sharing intimate images, excluding girls, harmful sexual behaviour, and physical aggression. Misogynistic language and behaviour are not limited to children. Adults also need to ensure we are not modelling or reinforcing gender stereotypes through our language, actions, or the expectations we place on boys and girls. These behaviours can make women and girls feel unsafe and can distort young people's understanding of what healthy relationships look like.

# 4. What can we do?

The increasing normalisation and the popularisation of misogynistic views has an impact on the views and behaviours of men and boys both online and offline. While online content may be legal and or deemed 'harmless' it can lead to harmful or illegal behaviours that threaten the safety of women and girls. Addressing misogyny needs a co-ordinated cross-government action, promoting education on healthy relationships and media literacy, whilst regulating online platforms, to limit access to harmful ideologies to prevent the normalisation of gender-based violence among future generations.

# 5. What can we do?

Adopt a zero-tolerance approach; focus on inclusivity, equality and respectful attitudes; and begin early digital literacy (recognising trusted sources and harmful influences). Teach all young people about healthy relationships, introducing gender stereotypes. Recognise early signs (which could include coded language and emojis); strengthen practice and engage parents. Utilise training and resources when needed.

# 7. For further Information visit:

[Aberdeenshirechildprotection.org](http://Aberdeenshirechildprotection.org)



# 6. Resources

- [Talking to children and teens about misogyny | Parent Club](#)
- [Information for Young People | Aberdeenshire Child Protection](#)
- [Mind website](#)
- [Online harms: protecting children and young people | NSPCC Learning](#)

