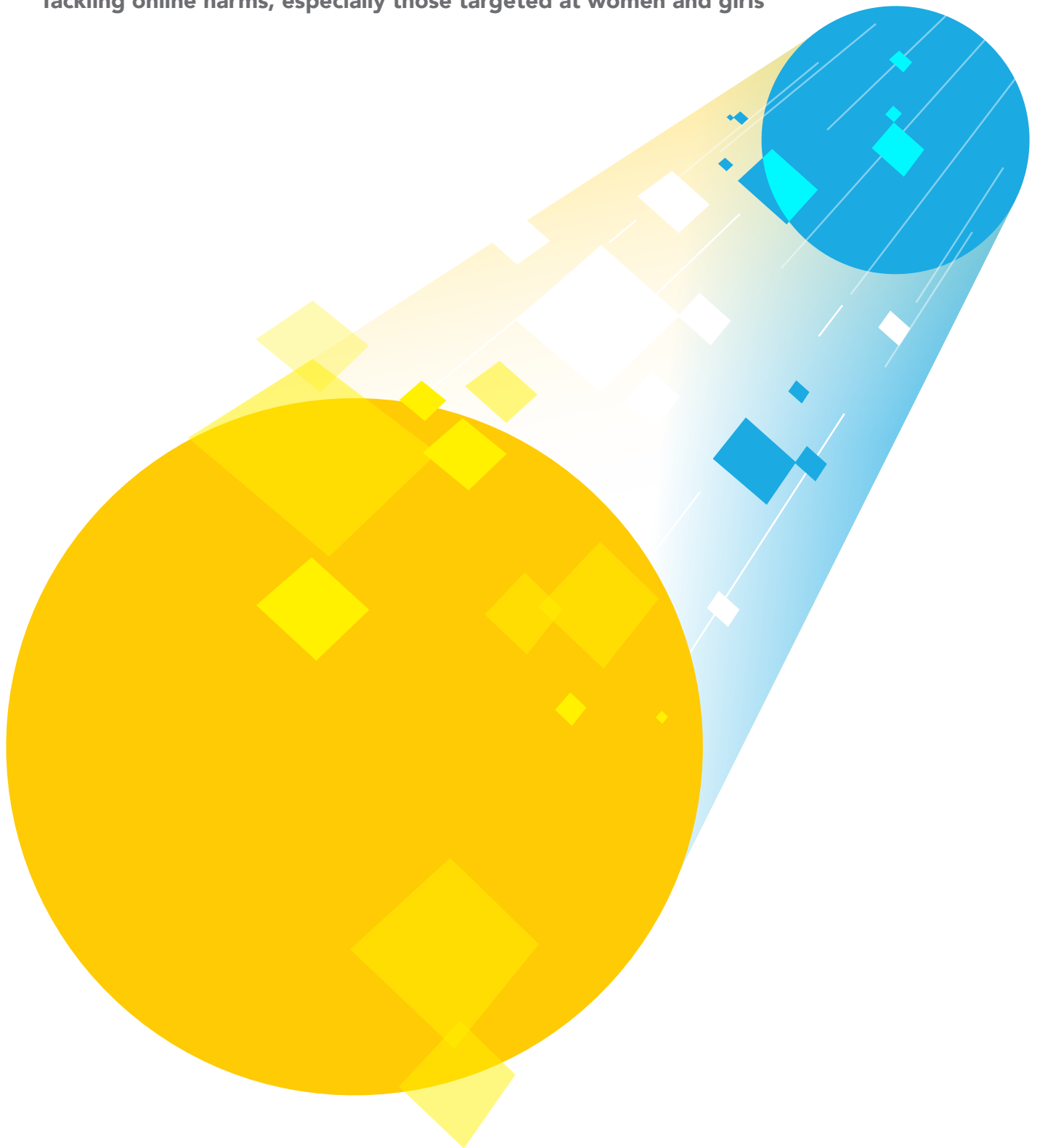


SUNLIGHT

Alliance for Action

Tackling online harms, especially those targeted at women and girls



FOREWORD

The digital landscape presents a double-edged sword. On the one hand, rapidly evolving technology has enabled us to gain new knowledge and make new connections with people. On the other, it has also facilitated the rise of online harms.

Tackling this complex issue will require a whole-of-society effort in co-creating solutions. This was why the Ministry of Communications and Information (MCI) embarked on a series of conversations with close to 300 people in 2021. Through our conversations, and working together with Singaporeans from different sectors of society – parents, youths, researchers, legal, social service and media professionals, and technology companies – we hoped to shine a light on the darker corners of the online space and make it safer for all.

These conversations led to the formation of the Singapore Together Sunlight Alliance for Action (AfA) to tackle online harms, especially those targeted at women and girls. In just a year, the Sunlight AfA engaged Singaporeans from all walks of life to raise awareness about online harms through its initiatives, and developed resources that will support Singapore's progress in tackling online harms, even beyond the AfA's term.

Indeed, the work undertaken by the Sunlight AfA has laid the foundation for future efforts to tackle this scourge of our digital society. The recent announcements by MCI on the proposed Codes of Practice to enhance online safety for users in Singapore, especially young users, is one example of how the Sunlight AfA has contributed towards Singapore's resolve in building a safer online space.

While the end of Sunlight AfA's term marks the closing of a chapter, it also marks a new beginning. Sunlight AfA members have stepped forward to keep the momentum going – partnering the community and industry to continue building a safer and more inclusive digital future for all Singaporeans. These robust partnerships complement the Digital for Life movement to support everyone in embracing digital as a way of life.

We thank all the inspiring Sunlight AfA members for your passion and commitment in this journey to close the digital safety gap for women and girls. It has been a memorable ride with all of them! But the work has only just begun, so let us press on in our pursuit to uplift digital safety for women and girls in Singapore.



Sim Ann

Ms Sim Ann

Senior Minister of State
Ministry of Foreign Affairs &
Ministry of National Development



Rahayu Mahzam

Ms Rahayu Mahzam

Senior Parliamentary Secretary
Ministry of Health & Ministry of Law

SHINING A LIGHT ON DARK ONLINE SPACES



Have you heard of online harms? Or maybe even encountered them yourself? Globally, digitalisation across societies has precipitated new forms of harm enabled through digital technologies and facilitated their proliferation through online spaces. From bullying, harassment and stalking to online scams and misinformation, unpleasant and nasty experiences are now unfortunately commonplace when it comes to using the Internet and digital communication technologies. One particularly troubling phenomenon is the prevalence of online harms among women and girls.

A global survey conducted by the World Wide Web Foundation in 2020 found that 52% of young women and girls have experienced online abuse, which includes being on the receiving end of threatening messages, sexual harassment, and non-consensual sharing of private images. Anecdotally, most women have encountered online harms at some point in their lives, ranging from hurtful comments about their appearance on social media platforms to online stalking.



To make the online space a safer place for all, especially women and girls in Singapore, more can and should be done to shine a spotlight on its darker corners and to help those who have been impacted by online harms.

OUR JOURNEY

Engagements with the People, Private, and Public (3P) sectors

Between February to July 2021, the Ministry of Communications and Information (MCI) held engagements on tackling online harms, particularly those targeted at women and girls. These reached more than 300 diverse stakeholders from corporates, technology companies, community organisations, the legal community, academia, the media industry, parents, and youths. The engagements also contributed to the wider Conversations on Singapore Women's Development, a national effort launched in September 2020 to understand Singaporeans' aspirations and gather ideas on how we can further the advancement of women and girls in Singapore.

Through these conversations and engagements with the community, we found that many Singaporeans felt that (i) it was critical to have laws that protect women from harassment and hurt and (ii) more can be done in the area of victim support, public education and research. This laid the foundation for a Singapore Together Alliance for Action (AfA) dedicated to tackling online harms, which created opportunities for Singaporeans to act on issues that they are passionate and care about.

THE SUNLIGHT ALLIANCE FOR ACTION

To close the digital safety gap and ensure that Singapore continues to be a safe place both offline and online, MCI launched the Sunlight AfA to tackle online harms, especially those targeted at women and girls on 21 July 2021. Examples of such technology-facilitated gender-based harms include the non-consensual publication of personal details and images online; unwelcomed one-to-one interactions online; sexual harassment and online grooming.

Drawing from insights gathered during pre-launch engagements, the Sunlight AfA focused on

(i) establishing support mechanisms for victims of online harms and (ii) closing the digital safety gap to empower everyone, especially women and girls, to confidently pursue their aspirations in Singapore's digital future.

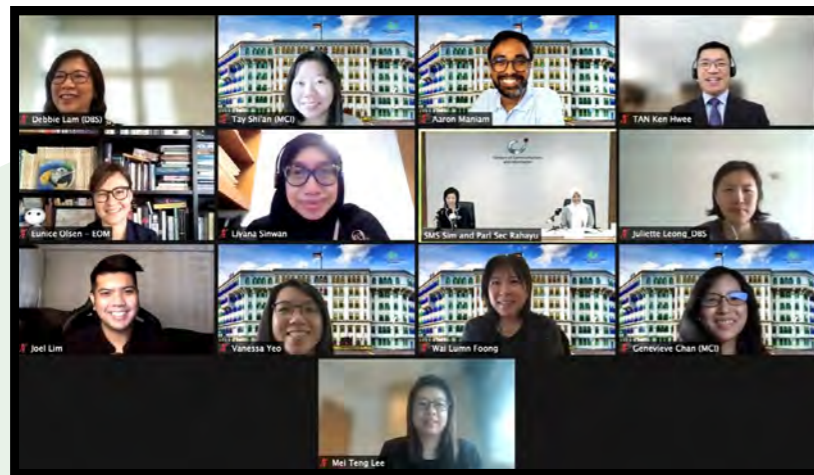
The Sunlight AfA was a whole-of-society effort which encouraged Singaporeans to be a part of the innovative and workable solutions to tackle online harms. The AfA also supported the Digital for Life (DfL) movement.



Digital for Life (DfL) was launched on 8 February 2021 by President Halimah Yacob, its Patron, as a national movement to coalesce and amplify digital inclusion and readiness efforts. Partners across the 3P sectors have collectively driven programmes and projects under the two key pillars of the movement:

- (i) Digital Technology and Inclusion
- (ii) Digital Literacy and Wellness

For more information, check out the Digital for Life website: www.digitalforlife.gov.sg.



WHO WE ARE

Co-chaired by Senior Minister of State (SMS) Sim Ann and Senior Parliamentary Secretary (SPS) Rahayu Mahzam, the AfA comprised 48 members from across the people, public and private (3P) sectors, including researchers, legal and social service professionals, media and content producers, representatives from technology companies, parents, as well as youths.

SUNLIGHT AFA: OUR AREAS OF WORK

Members of the Sunlight AfA were organised into 5 workstreams based on their respective passions and areas of expertise.



THROUGH THESE WORKSTREAMS, WE AIM TO:



Better support victims of online harms



Close the digital safety gap so that online spaces can be safer for everyone, especially women and girls



Empower Singaporeans to embrace the digital future with confidence



THE INSPIRATION BEHIND SUNLIGHT

The AfA's name, Sunlight, was an expression of our commitment to shine a light on the dark corners of the online world, to lead victims of online harms out of darkness and to create a brighter digital future for current and future generations of Singaporeans.



Lin Youyi

Presenter, Mediacorp

I enjoyed the meetings, especially the first meet-up. Though it was held over Zoom, it's inspiring to meet like-minded professionals who are making time to contribute to a meaningful cause.

Social media can be a double-edged sword. I believe young adults deserve to learn about it in a safe, supportive environment, just as they would do for other life skills. Through my participation in the Sunlight AfA, I am glad to know that many media practitioners, educators, and other professionals are passionate about tackling online harms.



Georgette Tan

President, United Women Singapore

The launch of the Sunlight AfA was timely as the issue of online harms is of growing concern, and as a mother of two daughters, I would like to be able to support them if they were to encounter online harms. I was thus honoured to have been invited to contribute to this multi-stakeholder collaboration, which brought together both women and men from different fields of expertise to co-create solutions to tackle online harms. The passion and enthusiasm displayed by many members were very inspiring, and I hope that beyond the AfA's term, more players in the ecosystem will lean forward in support of efforts to make the digital world safer for all.



Jeff Cheong

President, Tribal Worldwide (Asia)

Tech-facilitated harassment destroys lives and it pains me to read the accounts from the victims. As someone who works in the media and content industry, I believe we can create a culture of good and a community of support.

I walk away with hope after every AfA meeting because I know there is a group of passionate people committed to bring light against online harms. I hope to see more organic public-private collaborations to spotlight the need for a kinder internet culture from young children.



Natalie Pang

Senior Lecturer, Department of Communications and New Media and Principal Investigator, Centre for Trusted Internet and Community, National University of Singapore

I have always believed in a multi-stakeholder approach to resolving issues associated with the internet and the Web. Sunlight AfA aligned with my beliefs while also providing an opportunity for me to contribute to the issue of online harms – an issue which I have always believed to be important and felt strongly about.

It was exciting to be part of a diverse group that is united in a common goal of doing something together about online harms against women and girls.

I hope that the conversations and initiatives that have been sparked in Sunlight will continue, and we need to continuously engage the platforms in a collective manner to come to a consensus on online safety standards and practices. While Sunlight AfA has been very focused on online harms against women and girls, we could do more in terms of looking into other aspects on online harms, including towards men and boys, and research that “follows the money” as well as networks of production and distribution to address the roots of the problem.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

ASCERTAINED THE IMPACT OF ONLINE HARMS IN SINGAPORE AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Sensing poll

To deepen our understanding of the prevalence of online harms and Singaporeans' experiences and perceptions about the issue, the AfA commissioned a

sensing poll in January 2022. The poll, which collected responses from more than 1,000 Singaporeans, provided a baseline assessment of the scale and scope of online harms experienced in Singapore. This helped different stakeholders, including public agencies, to identify the issues involved and would facilitate progress in the journey towards a safer and more accountable Internet.



Chew Han Ei

Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Policy Studies, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy and Principal Investigator, Centre for Trusted Internet and Community, National University of Singapore

Serving as a member of the Sunlight AfA was a uniquely uplifting experience. I had the privilege of working with passionate colleagues in the Research workstream to conduct the sensing poll that was cited in parliamentary proceedings for the White Paper on Singapore Women's Development. The findings informed policymakers on gaps and next steps for tackling online harms especially to women and girls in Singapore and were immediately put to use by the Public Education and Youth engagement workstreams of the AfA. It's hard to believe that the research was conceptualised, executed, and findings put into action in less than a year, but it was and the AfA did it as an agile and vested village that came together for a common goal, unencumbered by bureaucratic constraints.

KEY FINDINGS ON ONLINE HARMS IN SINGAPORE

The Sunlight Alliance for Action (AfA) conducted an online poll with more than 1,000 Singaporeans and PRs aged 15 and above in January 2022 on the perceptions, experiences and the prevalence of online harms in Singapore.

WHAT ARE ONLINE HARMS?



The use of the Internet to engage in activities that result in harm or suffering to a person or a group of people online or offline.

Some common types of online harms experienced are receiving friend requests using fake identities or unwanted images and cyberstalking.

WHO IS AFFECTED BY ONLINE HARMS?



47% personally experienced online harms, or nearly 1 in 2 Singaporeans



60.9% Females feel safe from online harms, compared to 72.1% of males. Females aged **25-34** are most likely to experience gender-based online harms



Anxiety & fear for one's safety
Main impact of experiencing online harms

SEEKING HELP



60.9% Females not aware of help seeking avenues, compared to 52.2% of males



~43% Think seeking help would not make a difference or do not know what to do



48.7% Witnesses would advise victims to block the perpetrator

WHAT CAN BE DONE BETTER?



Companies and tech platforms
Stakeholder with the most room for improvement in responding to online harms



Strengthen reporting systems and laws
Measures that would help encourage action from victims facing online harms



Stricter law enforcement & public awareness campaigns
Most effective measures to prevent online harms

SUNLIGHT AFA RESEARCH ROADMAP




Building on the sensing poll findings, the AfA developed a roadmap for Singapore's research community and engaged stakeholders from the academic community as well as the people and public sectors to distill the key research thrusts to inform long-term efforts to tackle online harms. In doing so, the roadmap seeks to guide future research to deepen our understanding of online dynamics, craft potential interventions and assess their effectiveness.



ISSUES

-  Concepts pertaining to online harms: definitions and nomenclature
-  Individuals affected by online harms (e.g. victims, bystanders, accomplices)
-  Factors that influence individuals' susceptibility to online harms, likelihood of perpetrating online harms
-  Factors that influence individuals' resilience in responding to online harms (e.g. family structures and dynamics, class, household composition)
-  Groups and communities (e.g. norms on different online platforms; social resilience)
-  Industry: technology and media (e.g. review of best practices, app design, guidelines, safety features and reporting systems)
-  Policy and advocacy (e.g. role of mainstream education, legislations and enforcement to enhance online safety)
-  Impact assessment and tracking (e.g. periodic assessment of effectiveness of public education, legislation, technology company provisions)

APPROACHES

-  Qualitative, ethnographic research
-  Quantitative, computational research
-  Technological tool development



Lee Mong Li

Professor, Department of Computer Science, and Director, Centre for Trusted Internet and Community, National University of Singapore

The Research workstream had identified important research topics on online harms that will serve as a useful blueprint to guide our research directions in the next few years. The insights would generate evidence and help inform how the research can be translated and applied to different community groups.

We need to bear in mind the evolving nature of online harms and continue to stay on top of the technological advancements and societal trends to develop countermeasures. While we will continue to use cutting edge AI-based methodologies to detect online harmful online content, design new algorithms to ensure users receive a balanced and healthy exposure to digital information, there is an urgent need to increase digital and media literacy so that users can be discerning individuals and be empowered to grow as an active and resilient digital citizen.



Norshahril bin Saat

Senior Fellow, ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute

The Sunlight AfA built on my research interests in gender and sociocultural issues and helped to deepen my understanding about the social impact of technology. As a member of the research workstream, I had the privilege of working with like-minded colleagues from Singapore's academic community to identify areas that required further study to inform efforts to tackle online harms. On a broader level, I also enjoyed learning about policy and legal aspects related to digital safety. I hope the wider academic community will pursue in-depth studies related to online harms, in support of overall efforts to create a safer digital space for all, especially women and girls.

CREATED GREATER AWARENESS ABOUT ONLINE HARMS AND DIGITAL SAFETY

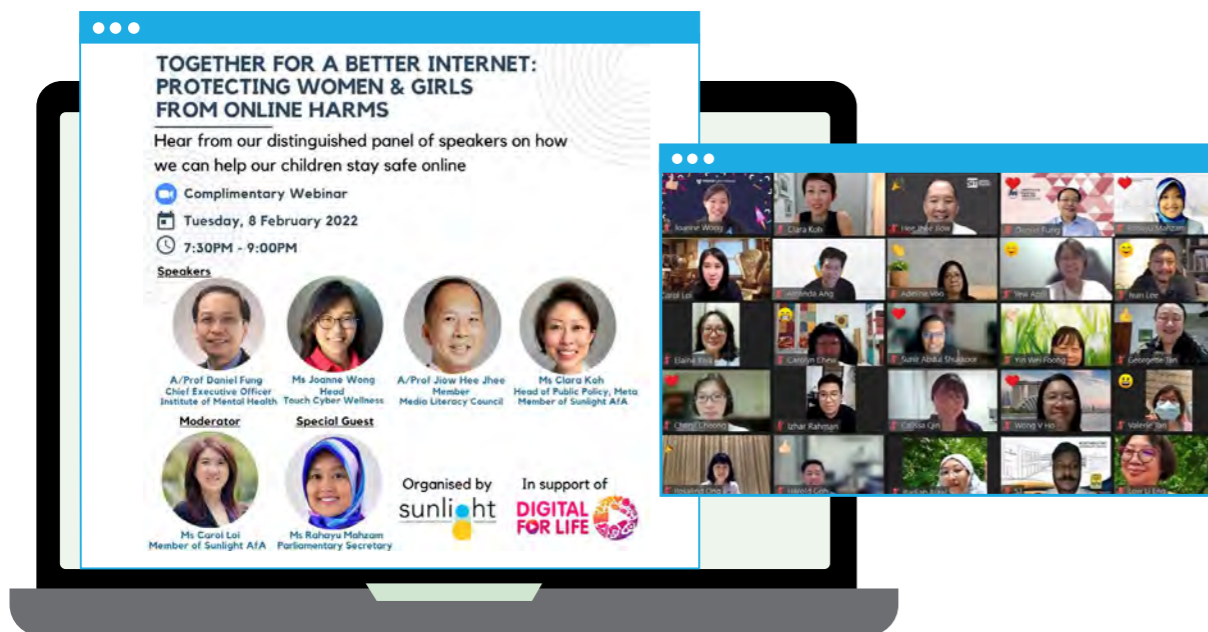
Online harms webinars

To raise awareness about online harms and impart tips on staying safe online to Singaporeans, the AfA organised two webinars to increase awareness about protecting women and girls from online harms. The webinars were well-received by audiences, who found the content relevant and educational.

In conjunction with Safer Internet Day on 8 February 2022, Sunlight AfA organised a webinar themed "Together for a Better Internet: Protecting Women

& Girls from Online Harms" for parents and families. Over 180 participants attended the webinar, where a panel of experts covered:

- The landscape of online harms
- Children's perceptions of their online experiences
- What parents can do to help children navigate online spaces safely
- Efforts by technology companies to create safe online environments for users

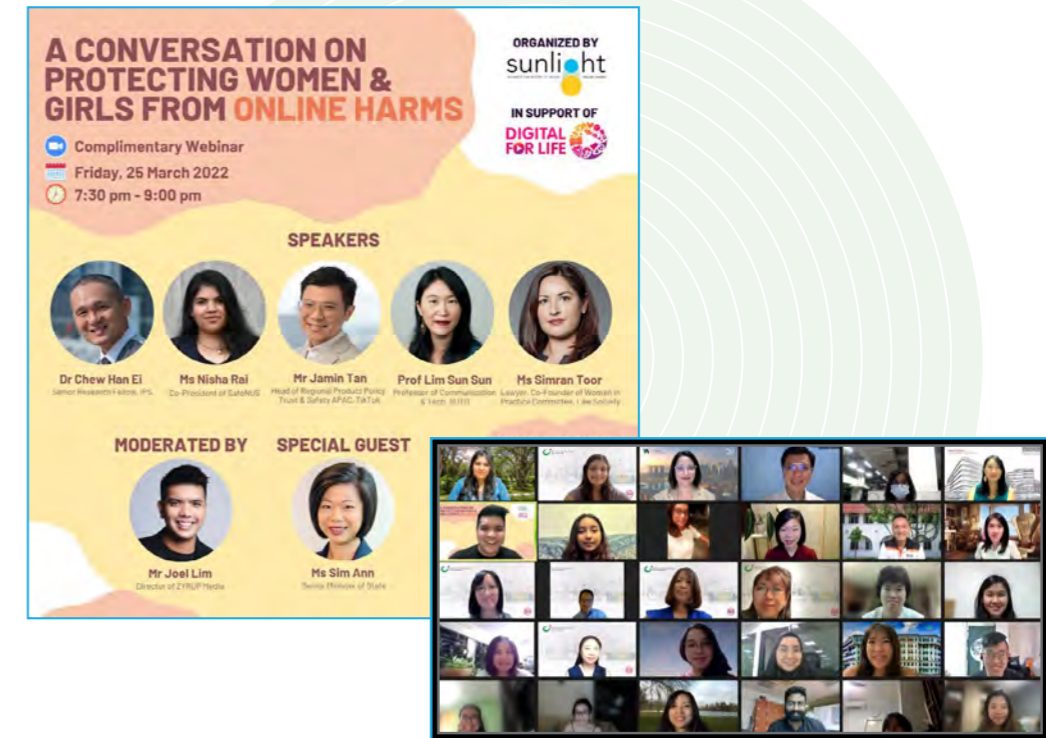


Carol Loi

Founder and Principal Consultant, Village Consultancy

There is much more to be done to support parents & families, as well as youths. Beyond providing information through the two webinars which I worked with the AfA on, hearing the participants' views reminded me to continue creating safe spaces for them to share their experiences with peers, have healthy communities to turn to in times of need, and to be able to extend help to others in need.

The coming together of a community with various expertise and experience to tackle a common issue is very precious; we are better able to consolidate and synergise our efforts, get to know a bigger picture of who is doing what to protect girls and women. I hope that the collaboration will continue after the term of AfA ends.



Following the success of the first webinar, a second webinar, "A Conversation on Protecting Women & Girls from Online Harms", was held on 25 March 2022 for youths. Key findings from the sensing poll were shared at the webinar, and an all-AfA panel discussed how youths and their peers can stay safe online. In addition, the Sunlight AfA website (<https://www.sunlightafa.org>) was launched at the webinar.

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

“Great panellists, very knowledgeable.”

“The experts are very insightful.”

“It was really informative and smooth running.”





Trisha Suresh

Head of Southeast Asia, Public Policy & Economic Graph, LinkedIn

LinkedIn is proud to be a member of Sunlight AfA. We joined the AfA because we are deeply committed to protecting women against online harms.

LinkedIn's vision to create economic opportunity for every member of the global workforce is what drives us to create an equitable platform for our members. As a professional network, our members rightly expect their experience on LinkedIn to be professional in nature and any form of harassment or unwanted romantic advances are not tolerated. In creating a safe experience for everyone in our community, we want women to feel safe on our platform, to thrive in their professional lives and to build their networks.

According to LinkedIn's Economic Graph data, women comprise of approximately 50% of entry-level roles in Singapore. However, only 33% of C-suite professionals are women. So, addressing online safety for professional women is one way to level the playing field in the workplace.

Fighting harassment is a top priority for LinkedIn and we are working every day to evolve our technology and build a safe online community for our members. We will continue to work with Sunlight AfA members and the broader community to create an equitable world of work.



Ridhwan Basor

Content Policy Specialist

I am passionate about working towards making the internet safer for our community. One of the key approaches to keeping the internet safe is through educating online users on potential online harms and how one can play a part in making the internet safer for everyone, particularly in the context of this project — to raise awareness of online harms against women and how we can foster positive interactions online.

The conversations on the topic of online harms need to continue and more public engagements are needed. We need to continue our public education efforts in building a community that is resilient and working together to tackle online harms.

Online safety resources

The Sunlight AfA website (<https://www.sunlightafa.org>) consolidated online safety resources in a single space, including information on safety features and tools across different social media platforms. This enabled users keen to learn more about online safety to easily locate what they need and where they can go to for help.

What should I do if I encounter harmful online content?

Have you encountered any of the following situations on social media or messaging platforms?

- You see or receive harmful, illegal or offensive content
- Your personal details have been shared without your consent
- Your image/video has been used inappropriately (e.g. photoshopped/edited on other content)
- Your image/video has been uploaded without your consent

If you or someone you know has, you can make a report.

With the help of our AfA members from technology companies, we have compiled a list of reporting channels on various platforms where inappropriate or offensive content will be reviewed and may be removed.

There are also safety features and programmes by platforms to enable a safer online experience for our young.

Please see [HERE](#) for the reporting channels and [HERE](#) for the safety features and programmes.

The Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO) has also put together resources and support materials [HERE](#).



Irene Ang

Founder, Fly Entertainment

Social media shouldn't define who you are, but I have witnessed youths competing for views and likes, and cyberbullying is a problem, so it's important to stand up for what's right. We need to inject positivity into social media platforms and online content and focus on the good, so there is less of the bad.

I hope to raise awareness of what needs to be done and do more to inculcate the right approach for communicating online among youths.



Susanna Kulatissa

Creative Director, So Drama! Entertainment

The Sunlight AfA journey was heartening and inspiring as the project's aspirations to fight online harms had steadily translated into exciting initiatives and programmes. The protection of our young especially, was what motivated me to join the group. In the sophisticated terrain of online harms where even adults fall prey so easily, our youths are especially vulnerable. This journey was a wonderful reminder of what can be achieved when the like-minded bring their willing hands, heads and hearts to a cause. Moving forward, I hope more can be done to protect children as early as in upper-primary against such harms. In this treacherous space, it takes a village to keep a child safe. Thanks to the Sunlight AfA, we now have one.

Education roadmap for online safety programmes

The Sunlight AfA partnered TOUCH Community Services to conduct focus group discussions (FGDs) with different target segments, such as students, young adults, parents, and educators to understand their views on online safety, gaps in existing educational efforts related to online harms, and how these gaps can be addressed. Conducted in June 2022, the FGDs found that while there was basic safety awareness among respondents across different profiles, more could be done to help these segments internalise the impact of online harms, especially for younger students, as well

as to equip schools and parents through partnerships with subject matter experts. In addition, the FGDs revealed that there were opportunities for greater consolidation of practical resources, alignment in terminology on online harms, and promoting empathy towards survivors.

The FGD findings will inform the development of an education roadmap outlining recommendations on tailored education programmes, to equip programme attendees with media discernment skills and guide them on how to deal with inappropriate content.



Anita Low-Lim

Senior Director, TOUCH Community Services

TOUCH Community Services has been working on cyber wellness risks among youths since 2001. The focus on online harms by the Sunlight AfA was a signal that not only more needed to be done, but it also has to be done in a more organised manner to achieve impact for the community.

TOUCH is grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the Education Roadmap project through our Impact & Research team. We were keen to work with like-minded agencies to investigate the gaps for educational efforts in the community, and experienced a fruitful and impactful partnership.

Many cooks don't necessarily spoil the broth. Seeing how the different workstreams dovetailed their discussions and efforts to address and strengthen measures against online harms really helped me to see the dynamics in policy work. It was very satisfying!

Sustainability is the greatest challenge in any movement. I really hope to see more social service agencies being equipped to manage such cases effectively as we serve as the connectors in the community. This way, the movement will maintain a momentum and hopefully, help will be accessible and timely for all who need it.

MOBILISED AND EQUIPPED INDIVIDUALS TO SUPPORT VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF ONLINE HARMS

PILOT ONLINE HARMS WORKSHOP

Members from the AfA's Youth Engagement workstream, with the support of the Victim Support workstream, conducted a pilot online harms workshop for tertiary students to equip them with basic knowledge to recognise online harms and support their peers. The pilot workshop held on 29 June 2022 at Republic Polytechnic (RP) was attended by around 30 students from RP and the Singapore University of Social Sciences. Following the workshop, the percentage of attendees who were aware of safety features on online platforms increased from 68% to 100%.



FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

“ I have learnt the different ways I can help my peers facing issues regarding online harms, as well as the different ways to protect myself online and report unwanted content.”

“ This workshop has been beneficial as it helps us understand how as peer supporters, if there are online harms challenges faced by ourselves or other people we know, we are able to take action.”



Nisha Rai

Undergraduate and Founder, Closed Doors, Open Hearts

My most memorable experience in Sunlight AfA would be planning and leading the Online Harms Workshop for youths. When I proposed this idea to the Youth Engagement workstream and MCI team, their support drove me to put in my level-best for the project. Planning this workshop allowed me to tie in what I do in my personal capacity to the work of Sunlight AfA, which to me was extremely crucial since everyone deserves to possess the relevant skills and knowledge on how they can support their peers who may have been (or currently are) victims of online harms. Not only should we provide support to victim-survivors and hold perpetrators accountable, we should ideally also enable the wider population to be better responders or supporters.

Collective action is essential to ensure change. One individual or organisation will not have the capacity to enact large-scale change. When stakeholders come about together with their strengths to voice, discuss and solve issues, it is only then that improvements can be made.



Ganesh s/o R. Kalyanam

Director, Office of Student and Graduate Affairs, Republic Polytechnic

I found my participation in the Sunlight AfA truly meaningful as it addressed an important concern in our society. With more of our time being online, we are exposed to the harm as well as the good. Women and children are especially vulnerable.

It is an issue that needs the attention of many agencies. Public, private and people sectors need to collectively address this issue through legislation, education, advocacy, and institutional support mechanisms.

It was especially notable that as we embarked on one of our strategies to raise awareness and advocacy around our youth to this challenge, many stepped forward to assist, not just from the AfA members but also from a growing group of volunteers.

I hope that the pilot Online Harms Workshop will be scaled up to reach more youth and find champions who will continue to strengthen our social fabric against these online harms.

PLEDGE TO TACKLE ONLINE HARMS

The AfA's Victim Support workstream, with input from other AfA members, crafted a pledge to express commitment to tackle online harms, provide help for those in need and make the online space safer for all:

"I pledge to take a stand when I witness incidents related to online harms faced by the people I know and care about. I will be mindful of the impact and consequences of my behaviour on social media platforms and make every effort to be responsible in the digital space. I will share my efforts to take a stand in supporting victims of online harms with others and in my community to inspire people to create a safe online environment for future generations."

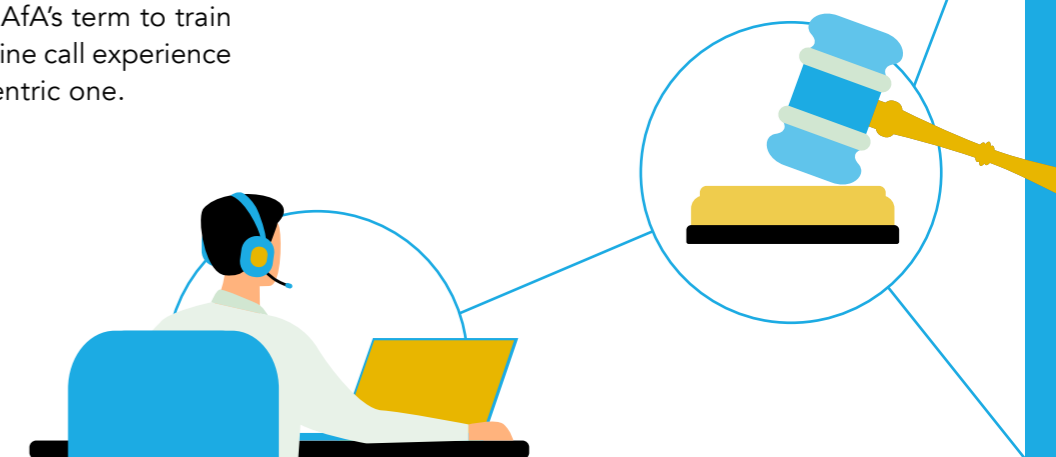
The pledge was recited by members of Sunlight AfA at its closing event on 27 July 2022, as a demonstration of commitment to Sunlight's objectives.

HELPLINES

Given the challenges faced by helpline personnel in identifying and communicating with victims of online harms, the Victim Support workstream developed a list of online harms identifiers, which enumerates various commonly-experienced online harms, laying the foundation for a future helpline. These identifiers would also be used to aid the training of helpline personnel after the AfA's term. The workstream also connected with the Samaritans of Singapore to explore possible collaborations after the AfA's term to train volunteers and structure the helpline call experience to be an effective and survivor-centric one.

PRO BONO LEGAL CLINICS

The workstream connected with the Law Society Pro Bono Services, which has committed a pool of approximately 100 volunteer lawyers to provide pro bono legal assistance through legal clinics. In doing so, the workstream hopes to make legal support more accessible to victims of online harms and help them better navigate the array of possible recourse they may have when faced with online harms.





Hazlina Abd Halim

President, Persatuan Pemudi Islam Singapura

With the rapid advancement of technology, youths of today have to deal with a whole new world. Given that online and mental harms can be just as significant as physical harms, it was heartening to realise that there are so many players who share the same interest in making the online space as safe as the physical one.

For the generations to come, a commitment to tackling online harms and acknowledging them is something that all of us should accept. We need to take seriously the responsibility, the possibility and the reality of the online world.



Junie Foo

President, Singapore Council of Women's Organisations and CEO, Methodist Welfare Services

I am most grateful for the opportunity to be part of Sunlight AfA's Victim Support workstream. The AfA had raised up an army of like-minded warriors to fight to call out the perpetrators, empower the victims and give them validation that they are not alone. Yet, I had also seen that some things, like accusations of cyber bullying, are not what they seem. The naming of Sunlight AfA is absolutely apt and resonated with me as the group sought to bring light to the dark web and look at ways to intervene and journey with the victims and how to shine a light and uncover the hard truths of the issues at hand. We cannot stop and it is an ongoing, all-hands-on-deck effort if we want to protect our young and the not-so young from online harms.

STRENGTHENED THE ECOSYSTEM AND ITS CAPABILITIES TO TACKLE ONLINE HARMS

ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW CHARITY

Inspired by the conversations and work started by the AfA, several members from the AfA's workstreams on Victim Support and Volunteerism and partnerships decided to establish a new charity, SG Her Empowerment Limited (SHE), to sustain efforts to tackle online harms in the longer term. This charity was announced on 12 April 2022 at the

Singapore Police Force's Sexual Assault Awareness Seminar and will work with the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO) to roll out support services for victims of online harms. In doing so, members hoped to provide the infrastructural support necessary for more victims of online harms to come forward and embark on the journey towards healing and survivorship.



Stefanie Yuen-Thio

Joint Managing Partner, TSMP Law Corporation

As a lawyer also involved in the women's development space, joining the Sunlight AfA gave me the opportunity to contribute to overall efforts to create a safer digital world for women and girls. I was particularly inspired by the passion and commitment of AfA members to tackle online harms, and how we leveraged one another's strengths to collectively develop solutions to address this issue. Given that the digital space is rapidly evolving, it is important that ground-up efforts to enhance digital safety and promote responsible online behaviours continue to gain momentum so that we as a society can empower all Singaporeans to navigate the digital space with confidence.

ENGAGEMENTS WITH TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES ON SIMPLIFYING REPORTING OF HARMFUL ONLINE CONTENT

To complement efforts to support victims of online harms, the Sunlight AfA engaged technology companies to discuss approaches to simplify the reporting of online harms. Through these engagements, the team aims to establish partnerships between SHE and technology platforms to facilitate the swift take-down of harmful online content.



Clara Koh

*Head of Public Policy,
Singapore & ASEAN, Meta*

At Meta, making sure that people using our services are safe is a priority, and we also know that working with partners is so critical to this end. The Sunlight AfA, which brought together people, experts, industry players and organisations passionate about the safety of women and girls online, is a natural place where we want to be and contribute. The issue of online safety is one that is necessarily an ongoing effort, and the AfA has catalysed a community of action that I am hopeful will endure long beyond the AfA's term.



Rachel Teo

*Head, Government Affairs & Public Policy,
Singapore, Google*

It was a privilege meeting and working with women and men who share a common goal of keeping our online space safer, together. I cherished the in-person conversations — usually at the MCI hallways — to connect in person, share our stories, and be inspired by each others' work. It was the individual stories of motivation and drive that I've learned from the most. I look forward to us continuing the important work together, and forging new connections and stories in the months ahead.

FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING MANUAL

To build up first responders' capabilities to support victims and survivors of online harms, the AfA partnered the Law Society Pro Bono Services to include chapters with case studies on online harms as well as information on police and court processes as part of an overall training manual. This manual would be used to facilitate training sessions for first responders, which would take place after the AfA's term.

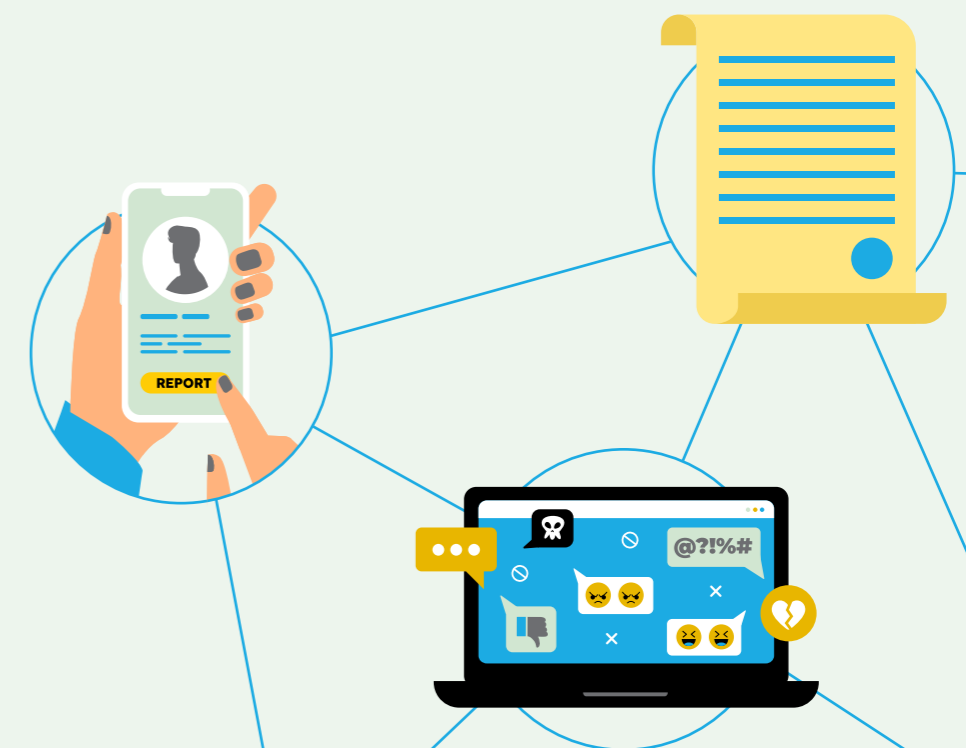


Simran Toor

CEO, SG Her Empowerment Limited

Participating in the Sunlight AfA not only allowed me the opportunity to contribute in a tangible way by working on manuals for first-responders; it also gave me the chance to connect with people and stakeholders who are committed to addressing the issue of online harms against women/girls.

Overall, the Sunlight AfA's work moved the needle firmly in the right direction. I hope that in its future activities, SG Her Empowerment Limited (SHE) would build on this excellent foundation, starting first by setting up the one-stop victim support centre for victims of online harms.



AMPLIFIED THE CAUSE OF TACKLING ONLINE HARMS



HACKATHON for a better world
A private-public collaboration involving
DBS, SG Judiciary & MCI

PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE COMMUNITY

The second edition of “Hackathon for a Better World” took place from July to October 2021 in partnership with DBS and Singapore Judiciary. This community hackathon challenged participants to generate innovative solutions for safer and kinder online spaces. At the end of the hackathon, four winning teams out of 28 participating teams were selected for “Most Innovative”, “Most Feasible”, “Most Life-Changing” and “Most Human-Centred” award. In conjunction with the hackathon, a resource package containing 28 ideas that the community can implement to foster safer and kinder online spaces was also launched.

The Youth Action Challenge Season 3 ran from October 2021 to January 2022, where youths were encouraged to ideate and develop projects that can make a difference, especially amongst their peers in

Singapore. These youths were given mentorship and guidance during their journey and members from the AfA also supported a team on the mental well-being track, which featured sub-themes concerning digital well-being, cyber wellness and online harms.



Monrawee Ampolpittayanant

Head of Public Policy, Government and Philanthropy, Southeast Asia, Twitter

Gender-based abuse, harassment and hateful conduct have no place on Twitter and we have taken strong steps to proactively address the health of the conversation on our service. Close collaboration and open dialogue between government, the private sector and communities is key to tackling online harms. We recognise the important role we play and are committed to working closely with the Singapore government and the broader community here to combat online risks and strengthen digital literacy, especially in the area of online safety.



Shailey Hingorani

Head of Advocacy and Research, AWARE

Working with the Research workstream to develop a survey on online harms was a memorable experience for me. The survey is the first project of its kind in Singapore to understand internet users’ experiences of online harms. It was drafted with considerable care and thought, and the project also moved from conceptualisation to implementation quickly.

My biggest takeaway from participating in the Sunlight AfA is that public-private partnership is absolutely essential to tackling online harms. One way for regulatory developments to keep pace with changing technologies and their uses to perpetuate harm is for big tech to proactively share information from their platforms with the government and other regulatory agencies. Sunlight AfA will hopefully make this kind of collaboration possible.



Wang Shuyang

Digital Content Editor, NewsHub, Chinese Media Group, Singapore Press Holdings

During the past one year as a member of the Public Education workstream, what I found most valuable was hearing the thoughts and observations other members brought to the table. When it comes to media portrayal of women and girls, it was humbling to realise the impact a seemingly harmless click-bait headline or lazy choice of words could have.

While continuing to work on a better gender representation in the content we do, which will have a far-reaching impact, it is paramount for us to translate our ideals into real whole-of-society actions.

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