

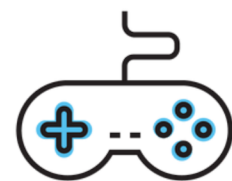
HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE
RECLAIM THE INTERNET

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 – 2027

BRECK FOUNDATION

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1. Foreword

The future is online, and it is the duty of all of us as a society to make sure that our children and young people can safely engage and thrive there.

Breck Foundation was born out of the tragic loss of 14-year-old Breck Bednar, who was groomed online and subsequently murdered, in 2014. Breck's mother, Lorin LaFave, founded our charity in the same year, determined to prevent this from happening to another family.

Since then, we have been at the forefront of efforts to safeguard all children and young people online. We do this by empowering them to develop digital resilience, using Breck's story as a potent education tool, and by working together with policymakers, tech companies and the wider public to put young people's safety first. Our work saves lives.

Since we were founded, we have reached more than **125,000 young people**, **13,000 teachers** and other professionals, and **14,000 parents**.

With nearly all young people now using the internet (99% of children went online in 2021, according to Ofcom) and the ubiquitous nature of the digital and online world increasing their exposure to harms, our work is needed more than ever before.

We believe that this strategy will help us scale up our impact and expand our reach and influence. After consulting internally and externally, including our 'Focusing on the Future' consultation with more than 300 students/pupils, teachers and parents, we have identified things we must do in the next five years to achieve this. These include:

Positioning Breck Foundation as an organisation that is grounded in its founding communities but whose work can have a national and even international impact. We are proud of our roots in Surrey and the wider Southeast of England, and of our track records with schools and other youth establishments and with stakeholders such as police forces and teacher training organisations, but we are also acutely aware that we are custodians of a unique story. Breck's story has a global resonance and relevance, and we are determined to generate as wide-reaching an impact with it as possible.



Removing all barriers to children and young people from all backgrounds benefiting from our work.

We recognise that approaches that rely on schools and other establishments to bear the cost of our delivery to them inadvertently exclude children from some backgrounds. We also know that such children are among some of the most vulnerable people to online grooming and other online harms, and therefore must be prioritised in our work.

Embedding a culture of co-production and co-delivery with children and young people and families of victims of online harms, so that our projects and services reflect their lived experiences, feelings and thoughts. This will lead to better outcomes for all the children and young people we encounter in our work and those who will come across our work.

Establishing strong partnerships with like-minded organisations, including those whose area of work is adjacent to ours but with whom there is measurable value in creating a synergy. We believe that by working better with existing partners and developing partnerships with new ones, together we can achieve more – including having a wider reach.

Using an end-to-end approach in delivering our core educational offerings on online safety. While we have generated great impact with one-off sessions in schools (and we know there continues to be a place for such a model of delivery from our partner schools), we also recognise the value of taking a holistic approach to our engagement with children and young people, to provide sustained engagement and produce a more measurable impact.

Developing our capability to engage in research and policy, advocacy and campaigning, and contributing to policy discourse at the highest levels. We believe that we bring unique insights and perspectives to bear and that there is scope for us to generate useful data that can help shape not only government and tech sector policies and practices, but also contribute to learning in our sector and in wider society, to help shape better online and tech practices and behaviour.

To achieve all these, we will need to be a sustainable organisation committed to implementing the values and beliefs we care about. We will need to employ people with the right skills and passion for what we do, and to create an environment where they feel valued, empowered and included. We will also need to pursue new and sustainable funding pathways. We are committed to all these objectives.

We will regularly review our progress in achieving our strategic objectives, including periodically evaluating our projects and conducting whole-organisational impact assessments. In doing this, we will provide opportunities for our beneficiaries and key stakeholders – including funders, schools and parents – to input into the process and help us identify and implement new learning to further improve our work and approach and achieve our goals.

Finally, we excitedly look forward to working with everyone we can over the next five years to deliver this strategy and do more to help young people reclaim the internet!

Breck's story
has a global
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MICHAEL BURAIMOH
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, BRECK FOUNDATION



EMILY CHERRY
CHAIR, BRECK FOUNDATION



**Our new vision, mission,
aims and values**



2. Our vision and mission

our vision



We believe it is important for us to define clearly who we are, why and how we do the things we do as an organisation, and the values that help shape our internal culture as well as the nature of our engagement with young people and our various supporters and partners.

A world in which children and young people can live, play and learn online safely.

our mission statement

To empower the digital generation to be smart and safe online and advocate for their wellbeing to be at the centre of internet safety policies and practices across government, business and the wider society, by:

1

Educating and empowering children and young people to build digital resilience and protect themselves, and to champion positive online engagement among their peers.

2

Raising awareness and increasing knowledge among adults with safeguarding responsibilities (parents, teachers, police, community leaders and others) and the wider public, and equipping them to take appropriate actions to support and protect children and young people.

3

Engaging government, businesses and other relevant agencies in campaigning for improvement in online safety policies, systems, processes and practices, to better protect children and young people.

3. Organisational aims and our values

At Breck Foundation, our aims are to:

- Eradicate the incidents of online grooming and exploitation of young people and/or their exposure to inappropriate conduct on the internet, which occur through their use of online gaming, social media and other digital platforms; and
- Increase young people's self-confidence and digital resilience, while improving their overall mental health and those of the adults who safeguard them.


our values



Young People First

Our highest priority is for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people as the main beneficiaries of everything we do. This is what dictates the approaches we take, the partnerships we build and the positions we take on issues that affect them. To be effective in doing this, we LISTEN and react and change based on what we learn from them.

By reflecting young people's voice in what we do, we remain agile to the changes and developments in their online habits and digital culture, as well as the new opportunities and potential harms they encounter. This in turn helps to better target our work and place young people's interest at the heart of every one of our efforts.



Honesty

Discussion about online harms can be difficult, embarrassing and potentially frightening. However, it is a crucially important conversation: knowledge is power. We recognise the need to be honest and not to shy away from the awkward conversations, even with younger children. Embedded within this approach, though, is a profound recognition that the conversations need to be age-appropriate and have corresponding duties of care to the young people we work with.

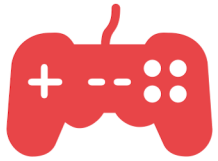
We recognise that discussions with teachers and parents may also be awkward and that we may have to defend our way of delivering and engaging on online safety. Similarly, we pledge to speak truth to power – to government and to those who lead. Staying honest and truthful helps build our reputation as a charity to be relied on.



Inclusivity

All young people are affected by the online world, so we aim to talk to them all, regardless of their ethnicity, socio-economic status, LGBTQ+ or other protected characteristics. Within this, we recognise that some young people are more at risk to online harms than others and we are committed to prioritising these groups above others.

We also recognise that to ensure utmost inclusivity, a range of approaches is necessary to take; there is no one-size-fits-all answer. In our delivery, we endeavour to be sensitive and inclusive with our language to ensure we are not adversely affecting or excluding anyone.



Pro-tech & gaming

Breck Foundation is firmly pro-tech. We don't and will never try to limit or shut down technology in the lives of children and young people. We value and embrace the power it can have to create positive experiences for young people. This value is based on the lived experience of Breck's story and the experience of our founder, Breck's mother, who, on police advice, took away Breck's technology and drove the grooming underground, making it more secretive and dangerous. We prioritise a guiding voice with the children and young people we work with over a critical one.

We follow technological advances to stay current and up to date, and we incorporate new technology into our messaging and engagements with young people.

our values



Co-production

We recognise that young people bring a lot to the table themselves; that they have aptitude and passion and can be supported to positively impact their peers and their wider communities. Involving young people in delivering our aims gives them ownership so that they can feel empowered – the sense that things are being done with them and not just to them.

Co-production with children and young people enhances and expands the reach of our foundation. It also helps us create a more sustainable impact. We incorporate co-production in our Breck Ambassador programme, our Game Over play, the Breck Buddies scheme, and in regular competitions and creative campaigns and projects.



4. Our theory of change

Our theory of change shows our process of thinking through and documenting how our work creates impact.

It is a description of the needs that we exist to meet, the approaches we take and how they benefit children and young people, ultimately creating the environment for them to thrive online, free from harms.

To develop our theory of change, we sat down with our staff and trustees and consulted with our other key stakeholder groups, including young people, teachers and parents. To make our theory of change easy to understand, we have made it into this graphic form.



The needs our strategy aims to solve



The meteoric rise in children and young people's online and digital engagement and the corresponding increase in online safety concerns.



The need for efforts to strengthen children and young people's digital resilience



The decline of children and young people's mental wellbeing as a consequence of online engagement



Insufficient access for the most vulnerable children and young people and those from minoritised and marginalised backgrounds to online safety education and support.



Lack of or inadequate online safety laws, policies and practices by government and technology companies.

Our Approach



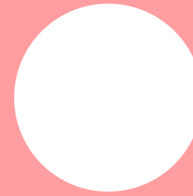
Sharing Breck's story - Breck Foundation's USP



Co-production and co-delivery with children and young people



End to end and sustained approach to educational programmes



A whole-community approach to online safety



Stakeholders from public, private and voluntary sectors mapped and engaged



Expanded geographical reach with Breck Foundation USP - Breck's story



Policy research, advocacy and public engagement

Our Outputs

1. Online safety sessions and other activities

2. Teacher and parent online safety resources

3. Active collaborations with young people

4. Digital/social media online safety campaigns

5. Policy campaigns

Our Outcomes

1. More empowered and educated children and young people who are able to identify, report and avoid online safety issues

2. Better informed/equipped adults (including teachers, parents, safeguarding professionals, police and other adult stakeholders) who can support the online safety of the children and young people around them

3. An enhanced academic/lived-experience knowledgebase regarding online use and online safety issues to support the sector

4. Breck's story is actively reflected in and helps to shape government and technology companies' policies and practices

Safer online experiences for children and young people

our impact



The needs our strategy aims to solve



The meteoric rise in children and young people's online and digital engagement and the corresponding increase in online safety concerns.



The need for efforts to strengthen children and young people's digital resilience



The decline of children and young people's mental wellbeing as a consequence of online engagement

One in six children aged 5 to 16 were identified as having a probable mental health problem in July 2021, a huge increase from one in nine in 2017. That's five children in every classroom

In the year 2000, only 26% of the UK population was using the internet. However, in 2021, 99% of children in the UK went online. This is a meteoric rise.

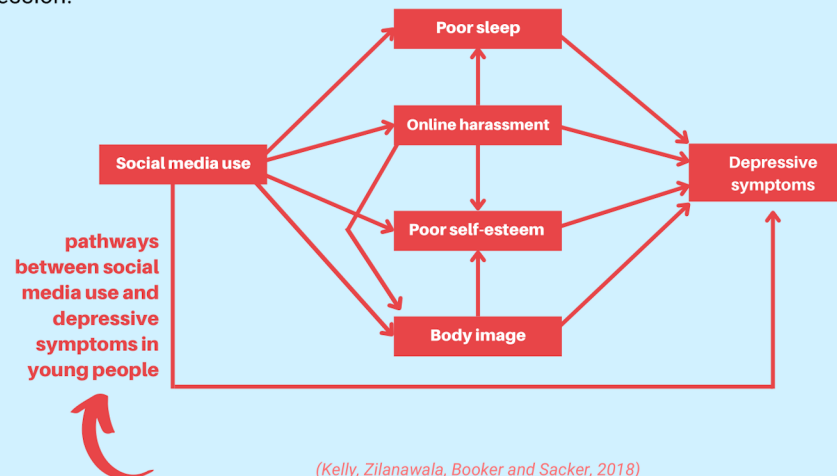
According to Ofcom, most parents with children under the age of 16 are worried about the type of content their child sees online, including violence, bad language, and sexual acts. Due to the ever-evolving digital landscape we are facing an increasing number of unregulated online spaces that predators, groomers, scammers, and anyone seeking to cause harm can use. It is children and young people who, in our shared online world, are most at risk.

A variety of approaches are needed in protecting young people from online harms, so that no one falls through the gaps. From Breck's story, and an increasing number of related high-profile cases (Olly Stephens, Molly Russell and Mia Janin), and from our interactions with young people in schools and other youth spaces, we recognise an urgent and vital need to increase the digital resilience of children and young people. Ultimately this means that when other approaches (for example regulation; using A.I to spot grooming keywords) fall short, young people have the skills and knowledge to keep themselves safe online. **This approach is fundamental and forms the basis for all our educational programmes.**

In 2020, the NSPCC helpline witnessed a 45% increase in calls related to online sexual abuse.



The wellbeing of young people in the UK has been steadily declining. Children and young people in the UK live a large part of their life online, particularly on social media, and this is worsening their mental health. Studies have proven a strong link between higher levels of screen time and young people's increased risk of depression.



Platforms such as Instagram, Twitter and Facebook deliver content to users according to an algorithm that favours increasingly extreme content to retain engagement. For example, once a child or young person has seen content relating to 'self-harm' they will be shown more, again and again, until they are viewing the most extreme and the most dangerous posts. **The internet provides children with an addictive echo chamber of their own anxiety and destructive self-perceptions from which it is incredibly hard to escape**, and which can lead to fatal outcomes.



Insufficient access for the most vulnerable children and young people and those from minoritised and marginalised backgrounds to online safety education and support.



Lack of or inadequate online safety laws, policies and practices by government and technology companies.

Children and young people with protected characteristics are more vulnerable to digital harm. In 2019, 37% of adolescents reported being cyberbullied. However, for LGBTQ+ youth this figure is reported to be closer to 50%. Similar statistics can be cited for children of colour and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

The 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' statutory guidance requires all schools to teach online safety as part of a "broad and balanced curriculum". **We aim to provide our expert teaching free of charge to schools that cannot spare the time or resources to adequately offer it themselves.** We focus our delivery of free sessions to those schools that exist in the lower 50% of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

For years, the internet was self-regulated, which has had disastrous and dangerous consequences for young people. In 2022, the UK Government began constructing a new Online Safety Bill (OSB) it believes will make the UK the safest place in the world to be online, especially on user-generated content platforms.

However, this Bill isn't doing enough to truly protect young people online. We believe that in its proposed state, the new OSB would not have saved Breck Bednar - and the parents of Olly Stephens believe the same about their son. More must be done to pressure the government and technology companies to take child safeguarding seriously and create laws, policies and practices that are holistic and effective.

'I'd been bullied in the past because of my sexuality, so it was just part of my existence. I started getting death threats online after I came out. I told my head of year, but they just told me to come off the internet. It carried on for years.'

Stonewall School Report 2017



Our approach



Sharing Breck's story - Breck Foundation's USP

The lived experience of the online grooming and murder of Breck Bednar has been crafted into a powerful deliverable educational tool – 'Breck's story'.

Our work is centralised around using Breck's story to illustrate to children, parents and others the signs of online grooming and how to effectively respond to suspected cases. The speaker sessions we deliver to schools, parents, organisational groups and corporates have been formulated to use Breck's story in an adaptable, educational and impactful way.

Sharing Breck's story is the bedrock of our work. It informs and helps steer the rest of our organisational approaches, values and outputs. The lived experience we are built on is both our USP and our most powerful tool in helping young people reclaim the internet.

Our founder, Lorin LaFave, believes that if Breck had heard the talk we deliver about grooming he would still be alive today.

A whole-community approach to online safety

We believe in a whole-community approach. We offer internet safety training for children, young people, governors, teachers, carers, front office, caretakers and other organisational staff such as those working in care homes or community groups.

We teach whole communities the signs of grooming and digital danger to create networks of people empowered to take effective action to protect the wellbeing and lives of children and young people.

For the children and young people who hear Breck's story, this approach creates a strong layer of community-based support around them to support long-term digital resilience.



Co-production and co-delivery with children and young people

Our work is powered by cooperation with children and young people. **Co-production and co-delivery help us create well-informed young people who can educate and inspire thousands of their peers**, hugely expanding the reach and impact of Breck Foundation.

This is why we employ this approach on our projects, such as Breck Ambassador (BA) programme and our award-winning Game Over play. In both, young people are trained to become the conduit through which their peers, parents, and teachers are educated and informed on online safety. We also effectively employ the power of co-production in school competitions, peer mentoring schemes, focus groups and other digital projects. The effectiveness of this approach is backed up by much research.



End to end and sustained approach to educational programmes

We recognise that providing one-off engagements with schools, while it works to raise awareness, does not always provide a long-term change in behaviour among students. **Our end-to-end educational programme has Breck's story at its core, but then builds in additional layers of learning delivered over a longer period of time**, to embed and consolidate our messages.

We do this by engaging with the schools over the academic year, offering 'satellite' presentations on related online safety topics, extra resources for classroom learning; quizzes and surveys to measure understanding and progress in understanding throughout the year. Our range of extra presentations allows schools to pick and choose topics that are most relevant to them and therefore target their students most effectively.

Our approach



Stakeholders from public, private and voluntary sectors mapped and engaged

Born out of our belief in the whole-community approach, we think of everyone as a possible stakeholder in our work. The more sectors we engage with the further we can amplify and spread our vital message.

Currently, we have public sector stakeholders through our work with schools, academy chains, councils, police forces and police cadets. As part of our corporate partnership scheme, we have leading global companies and providers that support and benefit from our work. We are always looking for opportunities to engage with other charitable organisations in the children's sector and have previously delivered joint policy work.

Breck Foundation will continue to be open to finding and engaging with a far-reaching field of relevant partners to help grow a network of educated stakeholders to keep children and young people safe online.



Expanded geographical reach with Breck Foundation USP – Breck's story

Breck Foundation is a Southeast-originated and based organisation that has national impact. We recognise the importance of our roots and are committed to enhancing the vital connections we hold in the area. However, due to the universal need for online safety education and the power of Breck's story, we remain open to growing new relationships with schools and organisations across the country. The lived-experience tragedy that prompted the creation of our Foundation is a relatable and emotive story that we believe every child across the UK should get the chance to hear.

Learning from adaptations made during the COVID-19 lockdowns, we now effectively use remote learning tools to deliver virtual sessions with great success. We will utilise digital communication to educate through our website, blogs, newsletters, vlogs and social media.



Policy research, advocacy and public engagement

Our modern technological and digital realms are fast-paced, unpredictable and continuously evolving. Fully understanding the landscape, attitudes and dominant discourses of technology and the digital world is key to our approach.

We will use the power of original research to ensure our work is evidence-led and reactive to the changes in this field. We aim to use our position and unique story to produce research that gives a voice to young people (and their families) who have experienced online exploitation and grooming. The policy events, conferences and advocacy that will follow the production of Breck Foundation research reports will allow us to be a larger player in the sector.



Our outputs

1. Online safety sessions and other activities

2. Teacher and parent online safety resources

3. Active collaborations with young people

4. Digital/social media online safety campaigns

5. Policy campaigns

1.

We deliver online safety educational sessions to share Breck's Story with children of all ages in schools, care settings and community groups.

These include sessions delivered as part of our latest project, RISE e2e, and those we deliver through young people themselves to their peers on the platform of co-produced projects like our Breck Ambassador programme and the 'Game Over' play. Additionally, our original resources like the short film 'Breck's Last Game' enable us to share Breck's story beyond the limits of our geographical reach.

2.

We produce post-presentation resources for schools, children and parents. We offer schools schemes of work, free SEND resources and downloadable resources. These resources are used to continue the online safety conversation once we have left a school.

This is an important **way to support digital resilience long-term** and to encourage more disclosures from children to adults that we have empowered with the knowledge to appropriately and safely handle them.

3.

Through a youth panel, we enable young people to share new ideas and perspectives with us and input into our work. This helps to deepen our understanding of their experiences of the benefits and opportunities, as well as the evolving dangers they encounter in their digital world.

This enables us to keep our knowledge base up-to-date and to better target our work for the greatest impact. A **youth mentoring scheme**, our 'Breck Buddies' research tool and a **child-led safeguarding committee** are also other outputs we realise from our approach.

4.

Our coordinated and impactful campaigns using digital communication through our website, messaging platforms and social media raise awareness of the issues.

Our campaigns provide children, young people and the wider UK public with solutions (preferred through our work and other expert-led bodies of work) as well as providing the platform and tools to take an active part in our efforts to reclaim the internet through our work.

5.

A core output from the way we have positioned ourselves for longer-term impact is by **conducting original research, producing policy reports, and providing parliamentarians with briefing notes**.

These constitute advocacy engagements and year-long strategic campaigns with accompanying events and associated communications to help positively direct decisions of policymakers and tech companies that have serious consequences for young people, and enable us to carry the public along.

The outcomes we will see by 2027



More empowered and educated children and young people who are able to identify, report and avoid online safety issues



Better informed and equipped adults - including teachers, parents, safeguarding professionals, police and other adult stakeholders - who can support the online safety of the children and young people around them



An enhanced academic/lived-experience knowledge base regarding online use and online safety issues to support the sector



Breck's story is actively reflected in and helps to shape government and technology companies' policies and practices



Our strategic objectives and delivery



5. Our strategic objectives

We have identified four strategic objectives we need to pursue to position Breck Foundation for maximum sustainable impact in the next five years.

As we work towards the stated goals, we will develop as an organisation and have a wider reach and greater influence. And by clearly defining the measure of success for each strategic objective, we will be able to evaluate and respond to opportunities and challenges in real-time.

Strategic Objective 1

Become a stronger (including financially), professional, compliant charitable organisation

By the end of 2027, we will have the expertise, infrastructure and financial sustainability to have a sustained national influence and reach, and existing and new stakeholders will recognise us as a prominent organisation working in the area of children and young people's digital resilience and online safety.

Key performance indicators

- Our quality review indicates that we are a well-run and effective organisation in all areas
- By 2027 we consistently break even and are able to reinvest surpluses to strengthen our organisation and grow our impact
- The number of new regions of the country (outside South East England) where we are generating impact.
- Our five-year strategic plan is operationalised and regularly reviewed, with updates on progress provided to our key stakeholders



Strategic Objective 2

Facilitating access to high-quality online safety education/information for all children, young people and adults with safeguarding responsibilities

By the end of 2027, all our educational programmes and campaigns will be tailored and delivered to all the key groups we engage with – from children and young people and parents to all professionals who work with children and young people, and the wider public, and, importantly, our services will by design prioritise accessibility for the most marginalised and hard to reach groups.

Key performance indicators

- The number of people from marginalised groups that have access to our services
- The creation of tailored, flexible programmes to suit the different needs of our users
- Number of children and young people reporting positive changes in their online behaviour and experience
- Number of SEN including SEMH schools that we are working with



Strategic Objective 3

Be influential on policy, advocacy and campaigning

By the end of 2027, we will have enhanced the quality of public knowledge, understanding and practice of positive online engagement, and we will be a recognised leader in our field – a go-to charity for comment, advice and help in shaping national, regional and local policy and practices around children and young people's online safety.

Key performance indicators

- The policy outputs we generate – reports, events, government engagements, media engagement etc.
- Engagement figures on our digital platforms relating to our policy work and the issues.
- Number of stakeholder meetings we are invited to take part in and rate of attendance by key sector players at Breck Foundation events.

Strategic Objective 4

Have successful stakeholder engagement and constructive partnerships

By the end of 2027, we will have developed several high-value partnerships/relationships and be playing leading roles in high-impact synergies with organisations across private, public and voluntary sectors.

Key performance indicators

- The number of schools and other educational establishments and youth spaces we work with.
- The number of sector partners we share our learning with and new active partnerships and coalitions we work with in a specific and time-defined way.
- The number of private sector partnerships we have secured and their value (financial and in-kind).
- The number of engagements we carry out involving government officials at all levels and senior civil servants.

6. Delivering our strategic objectives

Our organisation engages in an area of work that is highly topical. The rapidly changing nature of technology and the internet, and how people (particularly young people) use these means that our work will only become more important.

It is vital, therefore, that the Breck Foundation strategy enables us to play this role effectively and sustainably.

It is important that the people, systems, processes and relationships behind everything we do are always able to deliver at their utmost capacity and capability. This strategy will enable us to make the best use of existing, albeit limited, resources, towards this, but also to increasingly attain new levels of growth, development and achievement that will enhance our capacity to do more, to reach more, to change more.

We are committed to being flexible in our approach to delivering this strategy. We will be responsive to the changing needs of young people as well as receptive to changes in the political, social, economic and technological environments that have bearings on our organisation and work.



Strategic Objective 1

Become a stronger (including financially), professional, compliant charitable organisation

Why this matters to us

Our organisation has developed organically through the vision and hard work of our Founder and supportive volunteers, and later, a dedicated team of staff. The organic nature of our development has ensured that the two of the most fundamental ingredients we need to be an impactful organisation – a fundamentally unique purpose and a passion for it – are embedded within our core.

However, with online and digital life becoming ubiquitous and increasing and ever-changing threats to generations of digital natives, our organisation and the work we do is needed now more than ever. This makes it imperative that we pursue sustainable strategic development.

Since we were founded, we have developed a niche approach to tackling the issues around online safety. Our use of 'Breck's story' – the real-life story of the grooming and murder of Breck Bednar – to engage and empower children and young people is unique, and the impact it generates is well recognised by the hundreds of schools and institutions that engage with us every year. Hundreds more institutions would like to engage with us, but we have been lacking in the capacity to work with them.

There is a fundamental need for us to reposition our organisation to be able to meet the scale of the problems, to expand our reach nationally, and to be agile and resilient enough to be able to do these for as long as is needed.

Our goal

By the end of 2027, we will have the expertise, infrastructure and financial sustainability to have a sustained national influence and reach, and existing and new stakeholders will recognise us as a prominent organisation working in the area of children and young people's digital resilience and online safety.

How we will reach it

Diversifying our income and becoming more financially sustainable

- Redesign our projects to make sure that they meet the standard funders require to award large multi-year grants, including to make sure that projects deliver added value and sustainable and measurable outcomes.
- Create a membership programme to engage members of the public and businesses in our work and to generate regular financial income through membership fees and personal fundraising.
- Look to reduce our core costs without impacting on our performance and operations.
- Continue to build our reputation and attract statutory, private sector and public support outside Surrey, where we were founded and continue to have and cherish our strong roots.
- Generate more unrestricted income by developing our private sector offer. We will engage businesses and private schools in a way that allows us to both fulfil our charitable objectives and also generate income to reinvest so that we can offer our services free of charge to children and young people from the most disadvantaged and vulnerable backgrounds
- Pursue opportunities with funders we have not previously engaged with. For example: public sector contracts and corporates.
- Insofar as possible, complete projects without seeking extensions, and ensure a coordinated and planned approach to project continuity – how we prepare for the ending of funded projects, including evaluations and using learning for improvement, and seeking either continuation funding from the existing funder or alternatives sources.
- Discontinue projects that do not fully recover their costs.
- Investigate the potential for fundraising in the digital sphere (e.g., gaming, YouTube, Games Aid, NFTs etc)

Set and maintain the highest quality standards across the organisation

- Complete a full quality review across all areas of our organisation – planning, money management, governance etc and implement action plans. We will periodically review this and implement necessary improvement actions.
- Recruit high-calibre people to the team and provide a high level of training, support and an enabling environment for our people to thrive and be innovative.
- Strive to gain 'expert status' for relevant frontline staff by facilitating access to accredited training and/or memberships of professional bodies.
- Engage systematically with national and regional infrastructure organisations and supportive professional bodies for the organisation as well as for our individual colleagues.
- Embed evaluation (including flexibility for real-time evaluation; reviewing project delivery plans and implementing improvement actions) into our approach to project delivery.
- Ensure that we always take a business case approach to developing new projects and initiatives and testing new ideas for quality and impact before investing fully into them.





Use technology to maximise our effectiveness and expand our reach

- Use technology better to enhance internal and external collaboration, stakeholder engagement and in project delivery.
- Design and use CRM to manage and monitor data in accordance with good information management practice.
- Further develop our founding background of embracing and promoting safe online gaming as a way of remaining relevant to young people's online experiences and achieving receivableness for our messaging.
- Build social media engagement into future communications strategies.
- Introduce regular collaboration with young social media influencers in getting our core messaging out to the public.
- Use interactivity on our website and communications and digital assets for children and young people as well as for other users of our services, to use in furtherance of our work.

Embracing and promoting safe online gaming as a way of remaining relevant to young people's online experiences

Effectively communicating our mission, impact and values

- Embed the practice of regularly evaluating and reporting our impact through various means so that all key stakeholders are fully aware of our impact and gain from opportunities to learn from our work and work with us to replicate it in other areas, geographical and otherwise.
- Be clearer in our website and publicity materials about who we are, our full array of services and topics of focus, the impact we are making through our activities etc.
- Develop and share evaluation reports and learning from our individual projects and programmes as well as from our organisation-wide impact reviews.
- Demonstrate how our approaches are true to our values and ethics as an organisation in all external communications.

Strategic Objective 2

Facilitate access to high-quality online safety education/information for all children, young people and adults with safeguarding responsibilities

Why this matters to us

We believe and are committed to making sure that it becomes part of our charity's DNA that all children and young people learn how to keep themselves safe and smart online, no matter their background, ethnicity, geographical location or socio-economic status. It is key to connect in particular with those groups that have been traditionally marginalised (e.g., SEN, BAME, care-experienced) because many of these groups experience more vulnerability to online harms (see chart on following page).

Over the years, however, our heavy reliance on paid-for delivery to schools for income generation has inadvertently excluded many children and young people from poorer socio-economic backgrounds, since the schools that can afford to pay are mostly in well-off parts of the country. We are driven, therefore, by the determination to make sure that **our services are accessible and reach every child and young person who needs them, without any barrier whatsoever.**

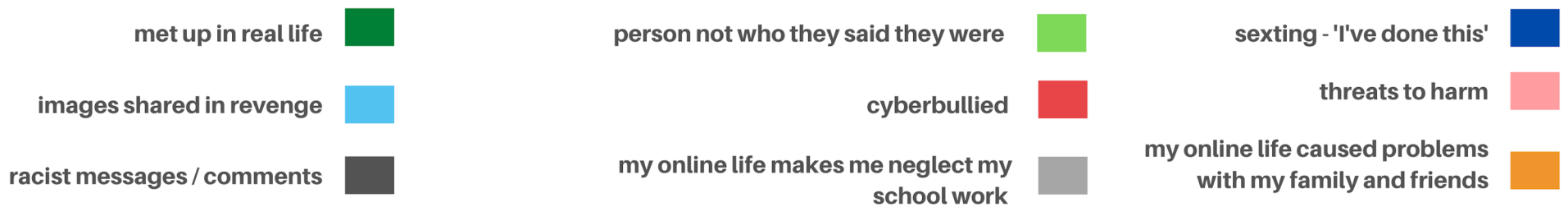
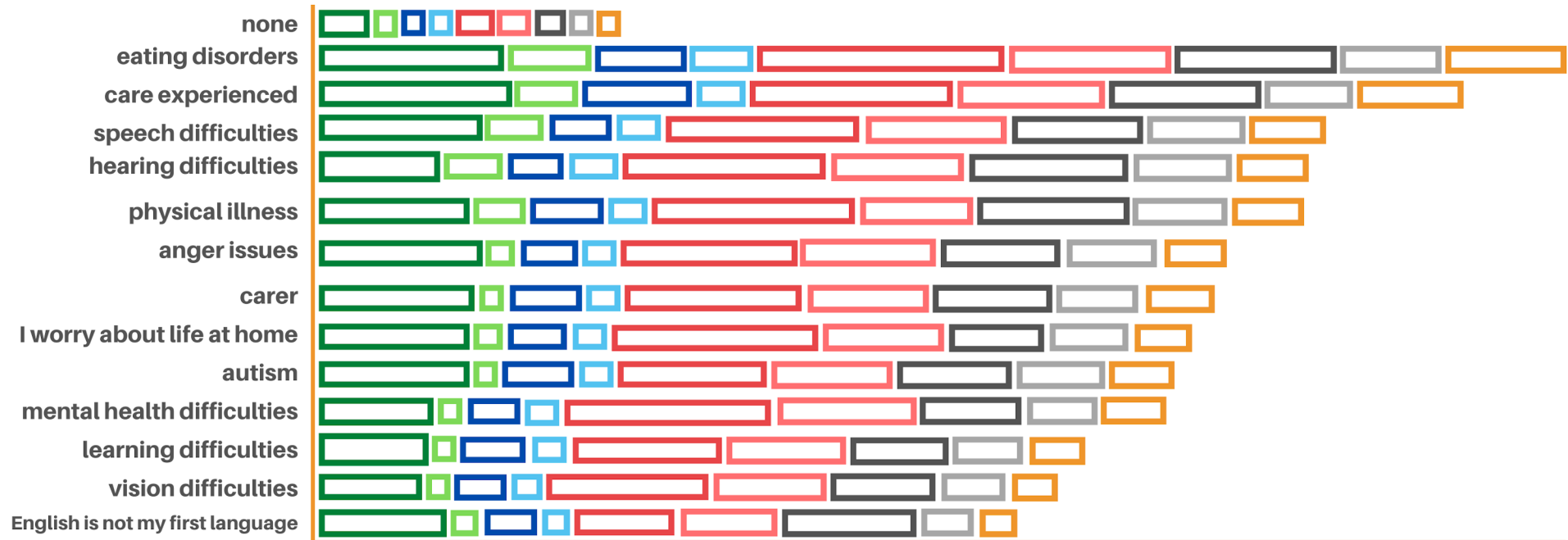
Moreover, the better we tailor our programmes, the more impact we can have on key audiences. By ensuring that we are also educating parents, all professionals working with children, and the wider public with the most up-to-date, targeted material, we will **create the strongest safety net** to cast around young people, increasing the possibility that they will experience a harm-free digital life.

By engaging widely, including through co-production with children and young people, we are also able to increase our own learning, from a diverse range of people, which keeps our understanding of the issues fresh and deep, and enables ownership from our key stakeholder groups.



Risk vulnerability comparator

% of young people in each vulnerable group who experienced these risks

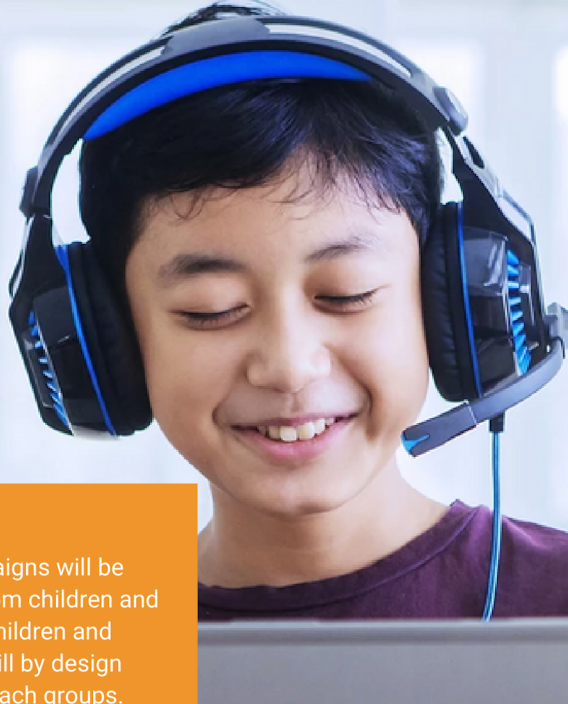


Internet Matters - (Katz and El Asam, n.d.)

Strategic Objective 2

Our goal

By the end of 2027, all our educational programmes and campaigns will be tailored and delivered to all the key groups we engage with - from children and young people and parents to all professionals who work with children and young people, and the wider public. Importantly, our services will by design prioritise accessibility for the most marginalised and hard-to-reach groups.



How we will reach it

Create tailored programmes and resources that are easily accessible for our stakeholders

- Review the effectiveness of our current educational and media literacy offerings and methods and plug gaps to create a more comprehensive service.
- Align our resources with the latest thinking, youth trends and technology so that we are relevant to our stakeholders, including through co-production with children and young people.
- Deliver our core educational offering through an end-to-end approach that provides sustained engagement with- and support for our target schools and other youth spaces and facilitates onwards referrals for interventions in instances where harms have occurred.
- Continue to provide schools and other youth institutions with the option for one-off talks to address specific areas of need as they arise in line with our mission statement.
- Embed more peer-to-peer learning (co-delivery) in our schemes to engage young people from a relevant, fresh perspective.
- Review curriculum and PSHE offerings to understand and respond to where the gaps are.

Be intentional about including traditionally marginalised and hard-to-reach groups

- Map schools and other youth spaces within areas in the lower 50% of the Index of Multiple Deprivation and carry out targeted engagements with them.
- Take an approach to our engagement with- and delivery in- schools and other educational establishments that is inclusive of children and young people with SEND.
- Use expert input to diversify our reach.
- Make inroads within the local communities to build up a profile and 'be seen' on the ground.
- Explore the possibility of translating our resources into other languages to connect with diverse and marginalised groups such as Polish, Punjabi/Urdu.
- Make stronger connections within SEN/SEMH schools and embed our SEN resources.



Use technology to engage a wider, more diverse audience and effectively expand our reach

- Increase the use of video platforms, webinars and social media to promote original thought and content.
- Use social media campaigns and marketing to target different sections of our audience by age, interest, ethnicity, background etc.
- Explore and increase our presence on online platforms where young people are engaged, such as YouTube and Tik Tok, and be early adopters of new platforms as they arise.
- Reflect our current aims and priorities on all our online platforms.
- Focus also on providing children and young people with information and support that will enable them to benefit from the best of the positives of the internet and technology.
- Engage young people in our digital peer-to-peer education drive and to increase our visibility among households and communities.

Create measurable change in young people's experience of the internet

- Embed the practice of consulting with children and young people, teachers and parents to ensure we are always connecting on the issues that matter.
- Enable the tracking of user engagement and measure progress of children and young people over time through interactivity.
- Create effective ways to measure the impact of our work on children and young people's online attitude and behaviour over time.
- Enable an empowering environment for children and young people around online issues through co-production with them in schools.
- Collect and report powerful case studies of success stories from our work.

Providing children and young people with information and support that will enable them to benefit from the best of the positives of the internet



Strategic Objective 2

In addition to our one-off engagements with schools and other youth spaces as well as workspaces, which all continue to be in high demand, we have designed dedicated projects through which we educate young people and the wider public.

These are:

RISE e2e

(Resilience Internet Safety Education End-to-End project)

RISE e2e is a new long-term educational project that we offer to schools to create embedded thorough online safety understanding in young people over the course of an academic year. With RISE e2e we can reach large numbers of children, teachers and parents in a way that changes the culture of each school to be more resilient and understanding of online harms.



The projects we use for online safety education for all

Breck Ambassadors

The Breck Ambassadors (BAs) are young people aged 11 to 16 that we train to deliver our 'Breck's story' presentation to their peers in their local schools and other community groups that they may be involved with (such as Police, Army or Air Cadets, religious groups and youth centres). Through peer-to-peer education, one BA can reach a whole school of children, hugely expanding our reach and relatability.



Game Over

Game Over is a dramatisation of Breck's story written by the award-winning playwright Mark Wheeler. It is written for older secondary pupils (around GCSE level). Alongside the play we offer workshops designed to enhance and cement the messages learnt from the script. The play is co-produced with students from the schools, who perform it in front of audiences of their peers, teachers and parents.



100%

of the audience surveyed at a 'Game Over' production said that the play would inspire them to talk to their children about grooming and internet safety.

Strategic Objective 3

Be influential on policy, advocacy and campaigning

Why this matters to us

Since we were founded in 2015, we have been committed to educating children and young people across the country. With our new strategy, we are working hard to expand our reach and impact, particularly among harder-to-reach communities.

Nevertheless, we also recognise that our efforts and those of other organisations like us are ultimately limited in their effectiveness to create fundamental behavioural change – in individuals, corporations, and the wider society – without the systematic and systemic/structural change that is only possible through effective policy legislation. As such, we also recognise our role in helping improve knowledge and understanding of policy issues that affect children and young people's online safety; we are committed to developing our capacity and capability to do this effectively.

We welcome the Government's effort to tackle this problem through the Online Safety Bill (OSB). If enacted properly, we believe the Bill will not just regulate companies, but also bring about a change in people's behaviour, and help keep vulnerable tech users safer online.

However, the measures most emphasised in the bill, important and much needed as they are, would not have been enough to save Breck Bednar – nor are they sufficient to protect children and young people from various online harms today. We, therefore, believe there is an important role for us to play by bringing our unique perspectives to bear on this and other online policy matters today and in the future.

the measures most emphasised in the Online Safety Bill, important and much needed as they are, would not have been enough to save Breck Bednar



Our goal

By the end of 2027, we will have the expertise, infrastructure and financial sustainability to have a sustained national influence and reach, and existing and new stakeholders will recognise us as a prominent organisation working in the area of children and young people's digital resilience and online safety.

How we will reach it

Develop our in-house policy, advocacy and campaigning function

- Bring in-house the resources we need for a sustained impact on policy research, advocacy and campaigning.
- Carry out bespoke research and produce and circulate high-impact, evidence-led policy reports.
- Engage government, civil service, tech companies, other voluntary sector organisations within our sector, and the wider UK public on policy issues, including to make calls to action
- Build or join synergies and coalitions to advance policy matters
- Engage in long-term policy campaigns but also be sufficiently reactive to new developing policy matters.

Engage constructively on the Online Safety Bill

- Join or facilitate coalitions and coalition efforts to research, report and advocate for ways to strengthen the OSB.
- Engage OFCOM in its new regulatory role relating to the OSB.
- Create campaigns to highlight specific serious instances of breaches of the OSB and advocate for appropriate remedial actions
- Champion deliverable parts of the OSB, such as the concept of 'super complaint', on behalf of children and young people and their families.
- Pursue high-significance partnerships with tech companies around realising the media literacy objectives of the OSB.
- Use communications to provide families, schools and other youth establishments as well as the wider public with clarity and information around key protections for children and young people in the OSB.

Amplify children and young people's voice in online safety policy development

- Actively seek to understand the issues of online safety from children and young people's perspectives and use it to help shape our positions on key issues.
- Facilitate youth-led peer-to-peer engagement to create awareness of important policy matters and generate participation in our campaigns affecting children and young people, through co-production.
- Create new platforms and facilitate pathways for children and young people's voice to be heard and listened to on important online safety issues affecting them.
- Work with families and/or representatives of children and young people affected by child online safety harms to co-campaign/advocate for new policy development or change.
- Engage other important advocates for children and young people's safety – parents, family members, carers, teachers or agencies – in our campaigning efforts.

Strategic Objective 4

Have successful stakeholder engagement and constructive partnerships

Why this matters to us

We are an organisation that fully recognises the power of partnerships. The rate at which the internet is becoming ubiquitous and the scale of the known and potential problems that come with it are impossible to deal with by any one organisation or sector alone.

By working effectively with others, we can deliver at optimal quality and have a significantly wider reach, including geographically, and a stronger voice. The partnerships we have identified to be important to realise our vision and mission include those with organisations/agencies/departments across all sectors, as well as with groups of individuals among the wider public.

Partnerships with organisations/agencies /departments and other corporate entities help us to be more effective in our work, by either facilitating direct and sustained access to children and young people or by providing us with influence and a platform through which our voice can be heard and we can create change.

Partnerships with groups of individuals help us to secure wide support for our work but also because it allows us to take a 'whole community' approach to our work, where not only children but also every adult is equipped with the knowledge and skills to help keep children and young people in their homes and communities safe from online harms. These adults are our digital online safety champions.

not only children but also every adult is equipped with the knowledge and skills to help keep children safe

Our goal

By the end of 2027, we will have developed several high-value partnerships/relationships and be playing leading roles in high-impact synergies with organisations across private, public and voluntary sectors.

How we will reach it

Create sustained, long-term engagements with educators and academics as well as schools and other educational establishments and informal learning groups to promote cultural shift and generate evidence to drive mutual interests

- Strengthen our existing relationships with trusts, academy chains and other educational groups and develop new ones with a view to facilitating sustainable partnerships with individual establishments.
- Actively seek buy-in at the most senior levels of educational establishments.
- Create strong links with teacher training establishments and teacher unions, with a view to enlisting trainee teachers in our work as a key stakeholder group from early in their teaching careers and throughout.
- Develop a stronger package of engagements for parents and actively use a variety of mediums, including corporate organisations and women and men's groups, to build a network of parent digital champions.
- Embed the practice of 'whole school' approach to make sure that we equip all adults working within educational establishments to be effective stakeholders for children's online safety.
- Standardise and manage our long-term partnerships through developing and agreeing joint working protocols, with clear lines of responsibilities and accountabilities, including for safeguarding.
- Build delivery partnerships with more Volunteer Police Cadet units across the country and work with them to expand our Breck Ambassador programme.
- Foster strong and active links with academics and universities to share knowledge and work together to produce new research.

Foster strong and active links with academics and universities to share knowledge and work together to produce new research

Give our work visibility and a voice with governments at all levels, government agencies and other important statutory bodies to be able to influence policy and decisions at the highest levels and secure buy-in for our work

- Build influential relationships with key members of government, members of Parliament, parliamentary groups, and senior civil servants.
- Engage and build relationships with local education authorities (LEA) with a view to enlist them in raising our profile among schools in their districts.
- Build strong connections with key officials within Ofcom and proactively engage and partner with them on the agency's new powers relating to the Online Safety Bill, including in becoming a prospective partner in actioning it.
- Engage police and crime commissioners (PCC) and senior police officers in our efforts to roll out the Breck Ambassador programme nationally and to develop mutually beneficial relationships with police forces to enable a two-way learning in the area of our work in general.
- Create stronger ties with other children's online safety charities, to amplify our young people's voice through synergies.

Become a corporate-friendly organisation that offers businesses a unique, value-based, and mutually beneficial partnership

- Take active steps to increase our visibility within the tech/digital section of the private sector.
- Actively enlist private sector organisations as partners in our pursuit of our mission, including:
 - to reach their staff and equip them as online safety champions for children and young people;
 - work with tech companies to align key messaging on online safety and target key demographics.

Build impactful relationships with key entities in the UK media – traditional and new media, to broaden and diversify our audiences

- Engage traditional media groups and named contacts within them on new pieces of work we carry out and to be in pole position to be invited to give our positions on relevant news stories.
- Build strong links with children's media entities so that they have confidence in what we offer and provide a regular platform for our messaging.
- Engage various media in publishing our contents on their platforms, including through opinion pieces and open letters.
- Actively build relationships with and engage popular online and tech influencers in promoting and generating support for our work and messaging.



A photograph of two women sitting on a grey couch, playing video games. The woman on the left is wearing a grey hoodie and has her hair in a braid. She is holding a black game controller and looking intently at the screen. The woman on the right is wearing a light green top and has her hair pulled back. She is also holding a black game controller and smiling at the camera. A large red banner with white text is overlaid on the image. In the bottom right corner, there is a green circular icon with two vertical bars, resembling a pause button.

7. our new thematic areas



Thematic areas

As an organisation committed to children and young people's online safety, but one with limited resources, we have historically focused our efforts on tackling online grooming through Breck's story, making only brief mentions of related topics in our materials.

However, through our consultations with young people, teachers and parents, we have identified other areas of online safety that they believe we should be more intentional about. Accordingly, for the next five years we will aim to develop and deliver our work within the following four thematic areas:

Online grooming, through Breck's story

Fake news and mis/disinformation

Online bullying/digital citizenship

Digital wellbeing and mental health



thematic area 1



Online grooming, through Breck's story

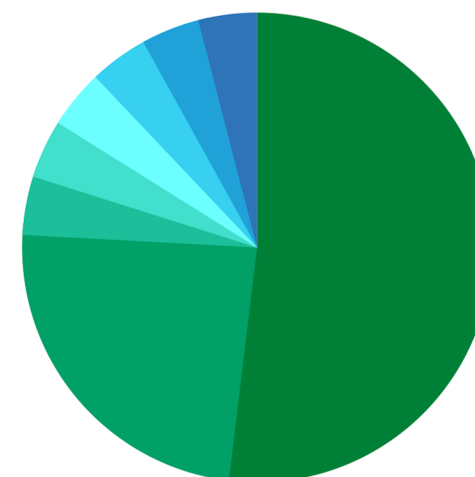
However, through our consultations with young people, teachers and parents, we have identified other areas of online safety that they believe we should be more intentional about. Accordingly, for the next five years we will aim to develop and deliver our work within the following four thematic areas: Breck's story is our USP. Through its relatability and stereotype-smashing narrative we have strongly engaged more than 125,000 young people and children since 2015. Online grooming is an insidious crime to which young people are vulnerable simply through their lack of emotional and social maturity, no matter how tech-savvy they may be. It is our speciality to show them how even an aware person can be caught out unless they know the signs to look for.

Neuroscience backs up what we already know from our sessions – that **the telling of the story of Breck is a uniquely powerful tool**. When we listen to stories, neural activity increases fivefold. Neuroscientists have reported that emotionally resonant stories make us remember and react. It is this unique angle that means we can deliver the most powerful messages and get the type of response from attendees that generic sessions rarely get.



Answers to the question:

What do you remember best about our presentation?



- Breck's Story
- Grooming
- "Don't talk to strangers online"
- Signs of grooming
- Facts & information
- Digital Safety
- Where to get help
- Breck's Last Game

From 'Focusing on the Future' - Breck Foundation

thematic area 2



Fake news and mis/disinformation

Fake news and misinformation is the great challenge for the next generation. Simply put – if we cannot discern what is true online, how can we do anything with any surety?

Every minute sees 500 hours of content uploaded to YouTube, 5,000 videos viewed on TikTok and 695,000 stories shared on Instagram. Having the right critical skills and understanding how to decipher fact from fiction has never been more important. An Ofcom study from March 2022 found that both adults and children overestimate their ability spot fake information online.

Misinformation and disinformation not only prevent young people leading a purposeful and effective digital life, it can also lead to **a wide range of online harms: radicalisation, bullying, abuse, self-harm and worse**. Our presentations will target children from the youngest ages to be critically aware of what they are watching and consuming and teach them how to spot and avoid fake news. Using this knowledge feeds directly into them becoming engaged and digitally literate online citizens, a critical skill for 21st century life.

74% of children were confident they could spot fake news online, but in a test only 11% were able



thematic area 3



Online bullying/digital citizenship

In arming our children and young people with the tools they will need for 21st-century online life, it is vitally important to remember the significance of their own actions and conduct. Digital citizenship is the ability to safely and responsibly access digital technologies, as well as being an active and respectful member of society, both online and offline.

The relative anonymity afforded by the internet means that discourse and interactions can quickly escalate into bullying, harassment, trolling and worse. We aim to ensure that young people understand the consequences of their actions online, and develop the skills to be engaged, proactive and responsible digital citizens. This includes supporting those being bullied or harassed by reporting, speaking up and being proactive role models for their peers. In this way, **we can contribute to the next generation becoming digital champions**.



60% of young people have witnessed online bullying. Most do not intervene.

thematic area 4



Digital wellbeing and mental health

For the next generation, speaking about and acting on mental health concerns will become routine. The pandemic threw the subject of young people's wellbeing and mental health into sharp focus. The digital world was both a lifeline, connecting young people with friends and family, but also a danger, with longer periods of time spent online, much unsupervised, and many young people in this time were groomed, radicalised, abused and exploited.

The interplay of mental health issues and the digital world is key – from the very basics of learning how to balance time on and offline, to the serious and pervasive issues found across social media around body image, self-harm, suicide and more, not to mention the trauma caused by (for example) being duped into sending nude selfies to a predator or being targeted by bullies or trolls on social media. We will make sure **our work is trauma-informed** and takes into consideration the huge emotional and mental toll that the pandemic has wrought on our young people. However, we will also focus on the positives that the digital world can offer in this area – including help and support that is available, and ways to **improve mental and emotional resilience**.





**8. what and who have
informed our thinking?**

8. What and who have informed our thinking?

Our 'Focusing on the Future Report'

This report was conducted in the first quarter of 2022 by Breck Foundation. We talked to more than 300 of our stakeholders, including pupils (both primary and secondary), teachers and parents, about the work we do and what more they would like to see from us.

Overwhelmingly they told us how much they valued the real-life story, and it was clear that their recall of the facts around the case was strong. We canvassed their opinion on other online issues that their schools were experiencing. They also told us that fake news/disinformation, bullying, appropriate device use/behaviour (including sharing nude images) and mental health were high on the agenda. We had a strong response from secondary students, who told us that the vast majority of them had discussed Breck's story afterwards with friends. The vast majority were also now confident in how to report a serious online issue. The workshops they were most keen to have more information on were those concerning mental health and self-image.

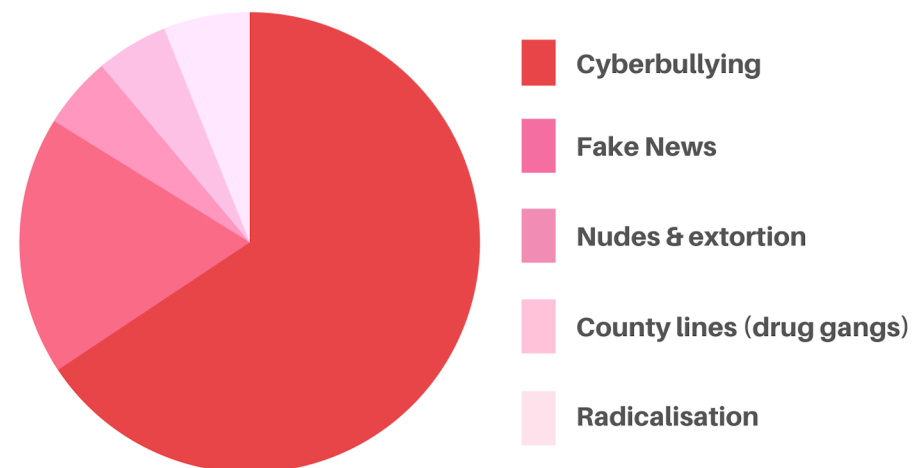
Parents wanted more practical information about talking to their children and setting controls to keep them safe. Teachers noted that it was hard to access the right information when they needed it.

Peer mentoring programmes and repeat visits from the foundation on other topics were also welcomed by the teachers.

Listening to the feedback we have received from hundreds of schools and others accessing our services

Breck Foundation has been canvassing feedback from schools, pupils and partners since 2015, but more proactively since 2019. Our feedback from parents canvassed at the end of Zoom presentations is overwhelmingly positive, but many mentioned wanting more advice on a wider range of online subjects. We also have noted a rise in concerned emails from parents since the pandemic, believing their children are being groomed/targeted online. Teachers too have strong views on what else is needed. Many mention the need to educate parents as well as children about online safety and online behaviour.

Parent responses to what further information they wanted from Breck Foundation



"It would be good to have some conversation starters to be able to engage in the topic with children over time - they were so interested and affected by it after the session but trying to keep those conversations going isn't always easy."

Suggestion from a parent which led to the creation of our 'conversation starters' resource sheets.

Verified data from reliable sources indicating urgency of our work and best practice

Our work is urgent and topical. In 2022 the NSPCC reported an 84% increase in online grooming crimes since 2017. Abusers use well-established grooming pathways, such as contacting children on social media and gaming sites and coercing them to produce self-generated child abuse images.

The Government's online media literacy strategy as published in 2021 seeks to 'support organisations to undertake media literacy activity in a more coordinated, wide-reaching, and high-quality way' in recognition of the multiple issues facing the digital generation. The report recognises barriers to media literacy including 'lack of access to technology', users who are 'vulnerable to disproportionate abuse' and 'inability to critically evaluate information'. This aligns with our strategy to target those most vulnerable to harms through their protected characteristics and hard-to-reach status.

We have used the CO:RE Classification to help identify the areas where our work should focus – this is an accepted sector classification of the online risks to children, based on work done by Professor Sonia Livingstone at LSE.

We are further informed by the work of our colleagues in related organisations including NSPCC, Childnet, Internet Matters and the SWGFL. Ofcom's regular reports on digital and media literacy also help shape our work.

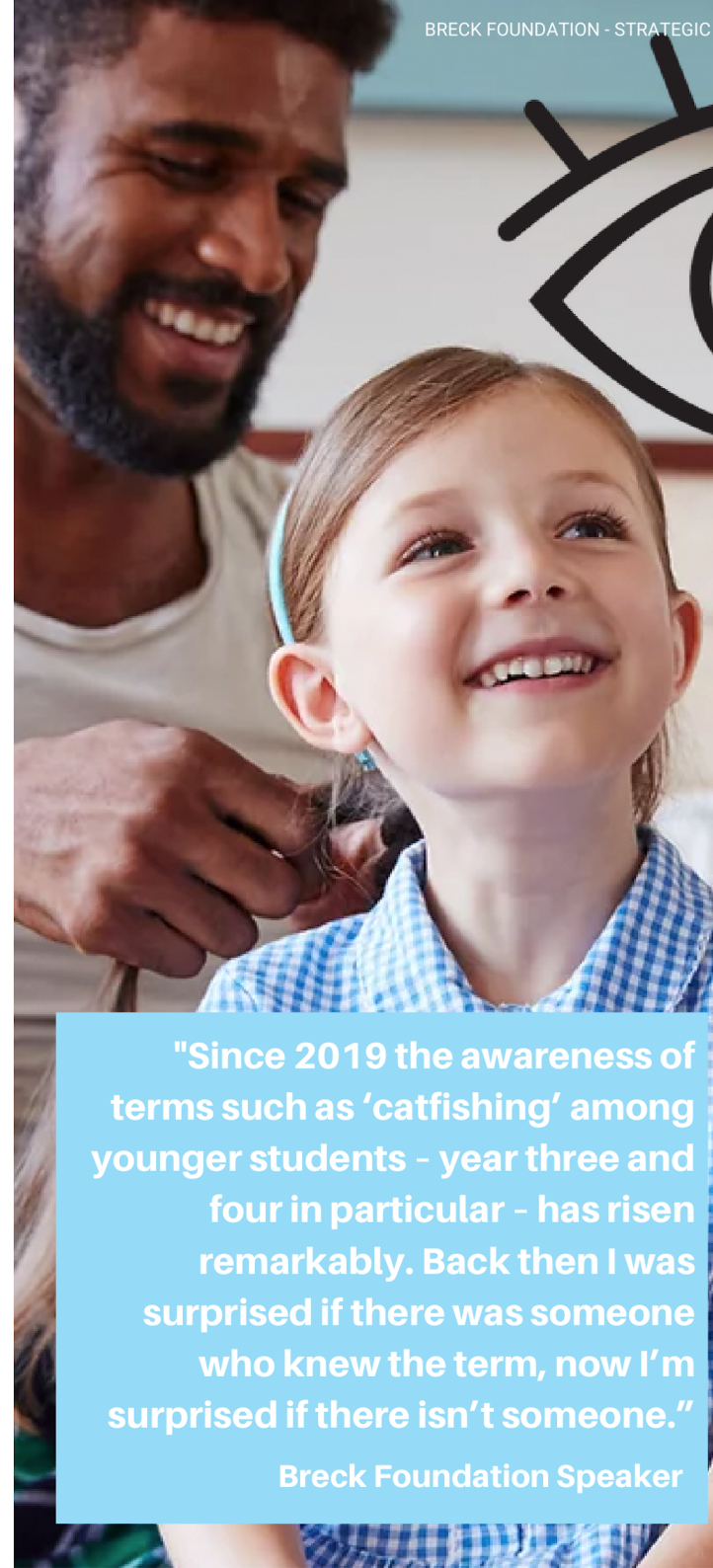
Field learning and expertise gained by our colleagues over the years

Since 2014 our speakers have presented to more than 130,000 people, with more than 125,000 of those being children and young people. A large part of our sessions with schools are taken up with discussions and Q&As with children and young people to gauge their internet skills. As such we are uniquely placed to spot emerging trends (such as the rise in the sharing of nude images) and the issues that concern young people (such as WhatsApp bullying, being excluded from group chats, being scammed when gaming).

This grass-roots work means we can respond quickly when adaptations need to be made to meet the needs of young people (for example, temporarily removing Breck's story from year 3 and 4 presentations to allow for the increased anxiety and emotional health issues we witnessed in this age group as a result of the pandemic). Maintaining regular lines of communication from speakers and volunteers to SMT ensures that our presentations and resources are up to date and relevant for the young people who use them.

"Since 2019 the awareness of terms such as 'catfishing' among younger students - year three and four in particular - has risen remarkably. Back then I was surprised if there was someone who knew the term, now I'm surprised if there isn't someone."

Breck Foundation Speaker



Since 2014, so far, we've reached

14,000
parents

125,000
**children &
young people**

13,000
teachers

**...with this new strategy, we can't
wait to reach so many more.**

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022 – 2027



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
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Registered charity number: 1168384

