

The role of volunteers in building digital resilience

**Lessons from World Scouting's Safe from Harm
“Online Safety Toolkit”**

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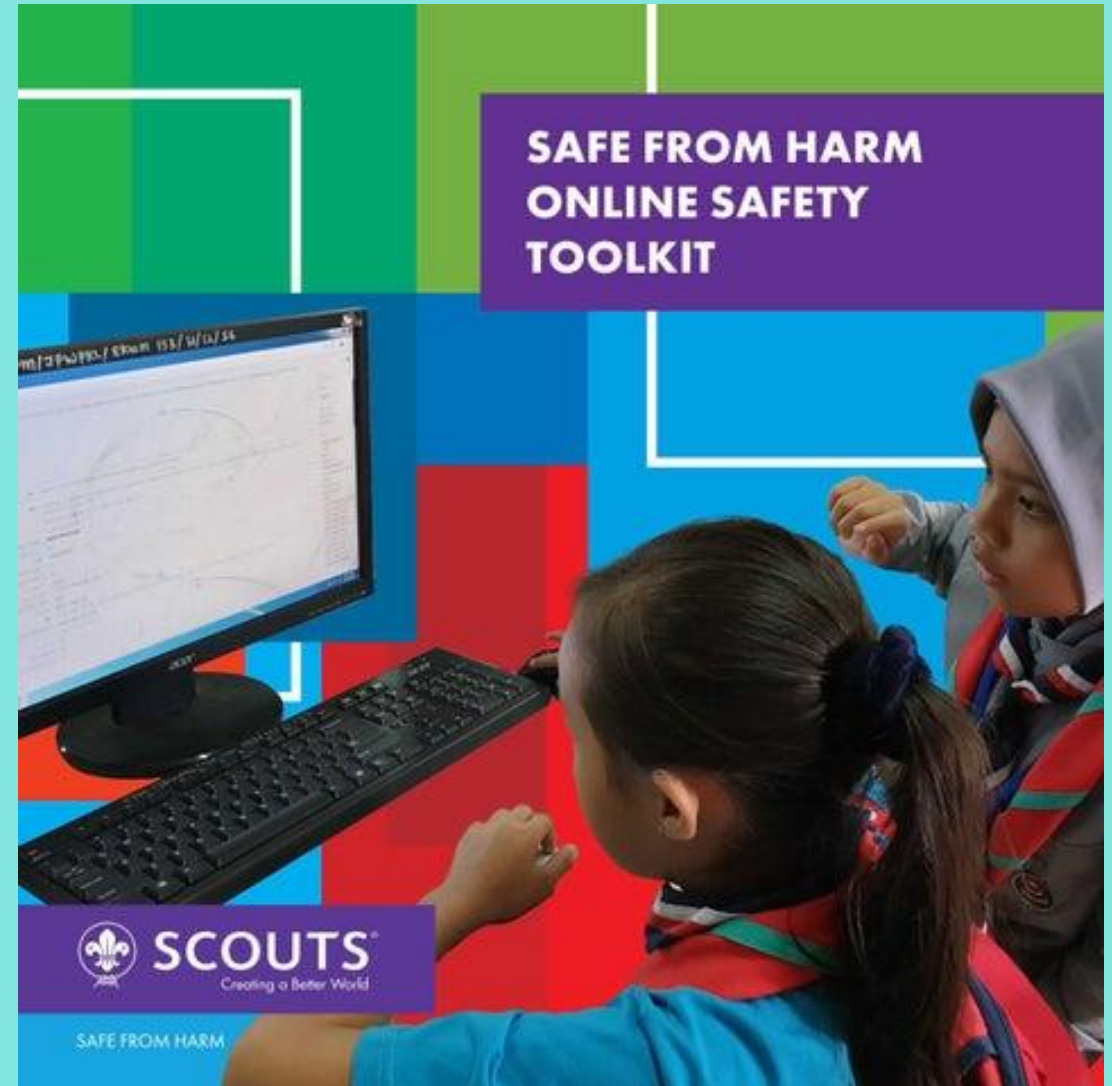
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Rather than focusing only on the risks young people face online, this toolkit focuses on how volunteers can help young people develop the skills, resilience, and confidence needed to navigate an increasingly complex digital world.

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Why was the toolkit created?

Young people are growing up online

- Digital environments are now part of everyday life.
- Young people learn, socialise, volunteer, and participate online.
- Online spaces create opportunities but also expose young people to new risks.

Emerging threats include:

- Misinformation and disinformation
- Online grooming and exploitation
- Cyberbullying
- Hate speech and radicalisation
- Scams and fraud
- Privacy and data security risks
- Harmful online content

These risks are no longer confined to the digital world. They affect wellbeing, participation, community cohesion, and even democratic processes. The question for volunteer organisations is not whether young people use technology. It is how we equip them to use it safely and responsibly.



Safe from Harm is World Scouting's global safeguarding initiative

World Scouting works with more than 57 million Scouts worldwide (and 2 million of those young people are in Europe). As our programmes increasingly include digital elements, safeguarding must also extend into online environments.

Online safety is therefore an important part of the broader Safe from Harm framework.

It aims to create environments that are:

- Safe
- Inclusive
- Respectful
- Supportive

for children, young people, and adults.

It covers:

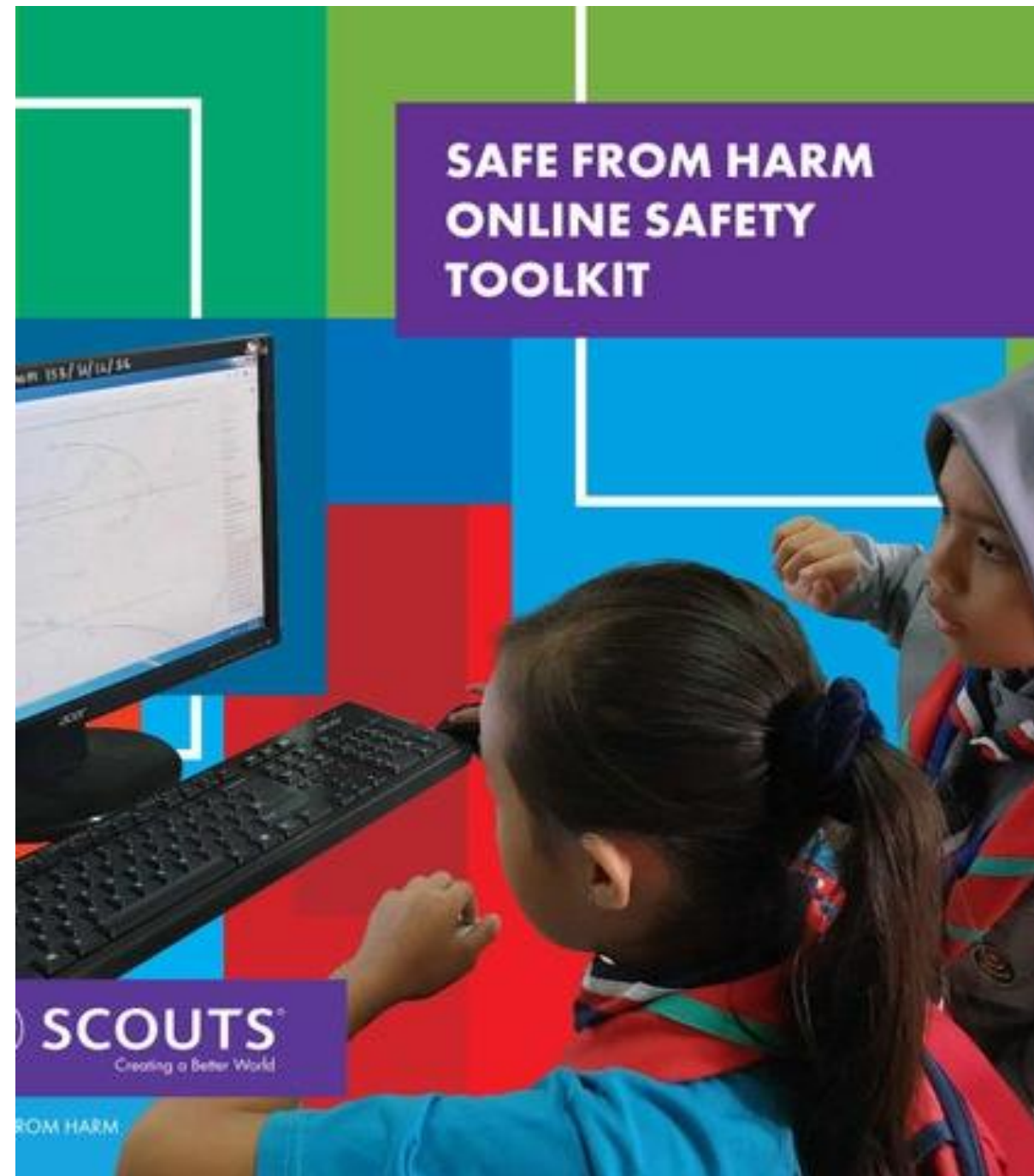
- Child protection
- Safeguarding
- Wellbeing
- Mental health
- Inclusion
- Digital and online safety



What is the Online Safety Toolkit?

The toolkit is designed to be:

- Practical
- Flexible
- Youth-centred
- Easy to adapt to different cultures and contexts



The Four Pillars of the toolkit

Developing critical thinking and responding effectively to challenges



Being prepared online

Being safe online

Understanding risks and protecting yourself



Promoting respectful behaviour and positive communities



Being kind online

Being responsible online

Understanding actions, consequences, and digital citizenship



Unpacking "Be Safe Online"

This section Is all about understanding and managing risks.

Being safe
online

The topics include:

The topics include:

- Privacy settings
- Personal information
- Password security
- Recognising scams
- Safe communication
- Online exploitation

The volunteer's role is to help young people:

- Recognise risks
- Practise safer behaviours
- Build confidence to seek support

The toolkit provides practical activities and discussion prompts that volunteers can use immediately within their programmes.



Unpacking "Be Responsible Online"

Is all about developing Digital Citizenship.

The topics include:

- Digital footprints
- Responsible sharing
- Media literacy
- Online reputation
- Ethical behaviour

The volunteer's role is to help young people understand:

- The impact of their actions
- Their responsibilities within online communities
- How digital behaviour affects others

Being
responsible
online

This section is particularly relevant when discussing preparedness because it builds informed and responsible citizens.



Unpacking "Be Kind Online"

Is all about building positive online communities.

Being kind
online

The topics include:

- Respectful communication
- Cyberbullying
- Inclusion
- Empathy
- Supporting peers

The volunteer's role is to create environments where young people can:

- Discuss difficult situations
- Learn conflict resolution
- Support one another

Volunteers often become trusted adults who can guide young people through challenging online experiences before those situations escalate into something more harmful and serious.



Unpacking "Be Prepared Online"

It is all about preparing for future challenges

The topics include:

- Critical thinking
- Verifying information
- Misinformation and disinformation
- Responding to online incidents
- Seeking help

The volunteer's role is to support young people to:

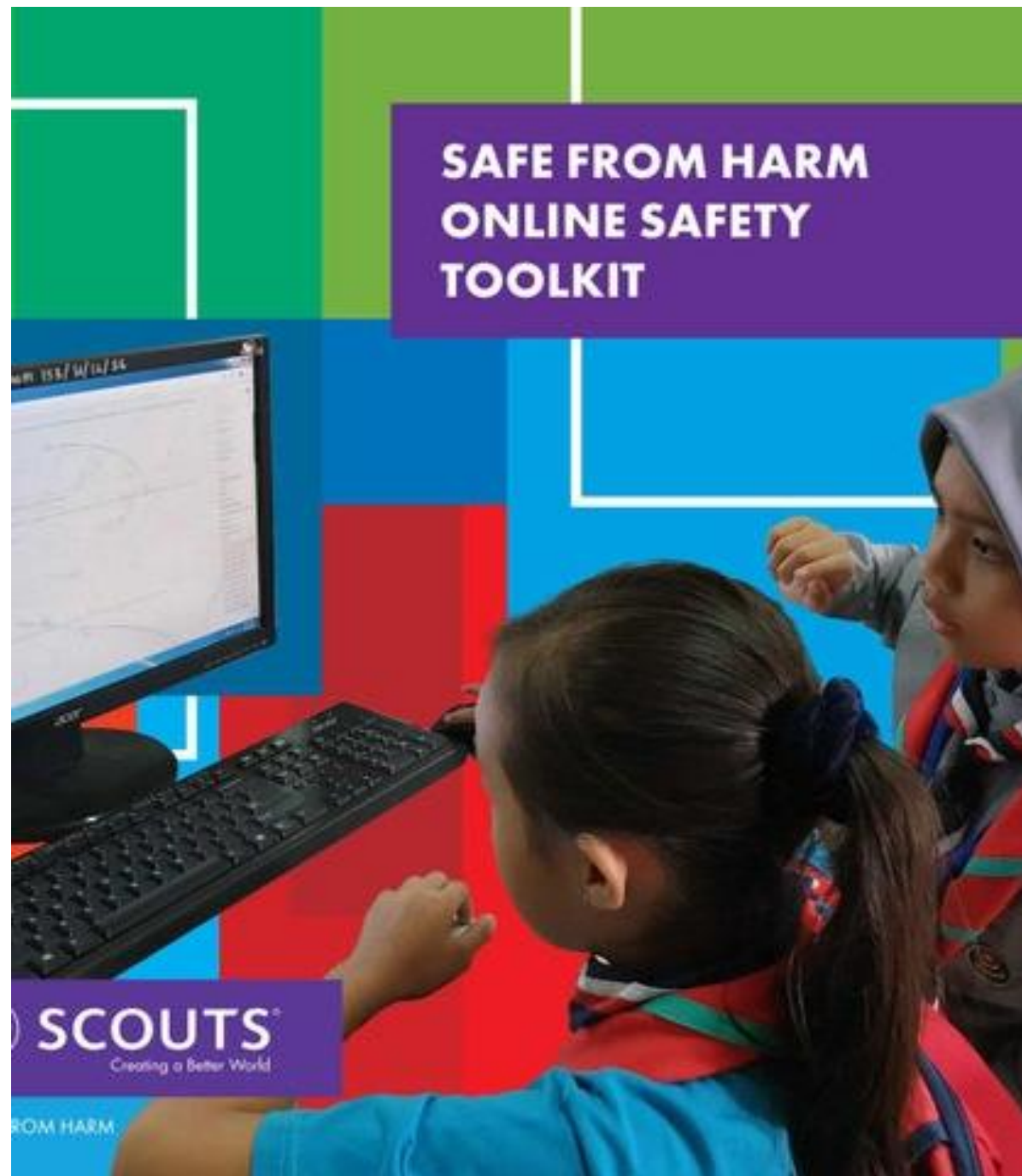
- Question information sources
- Make informed decisions
- Respond calmly during uncertainty

Being
prepared
online

This section connects most directly to today's theme of preparedness, because the skills developed here help young people navigate not only online threats but wider societal challenges.

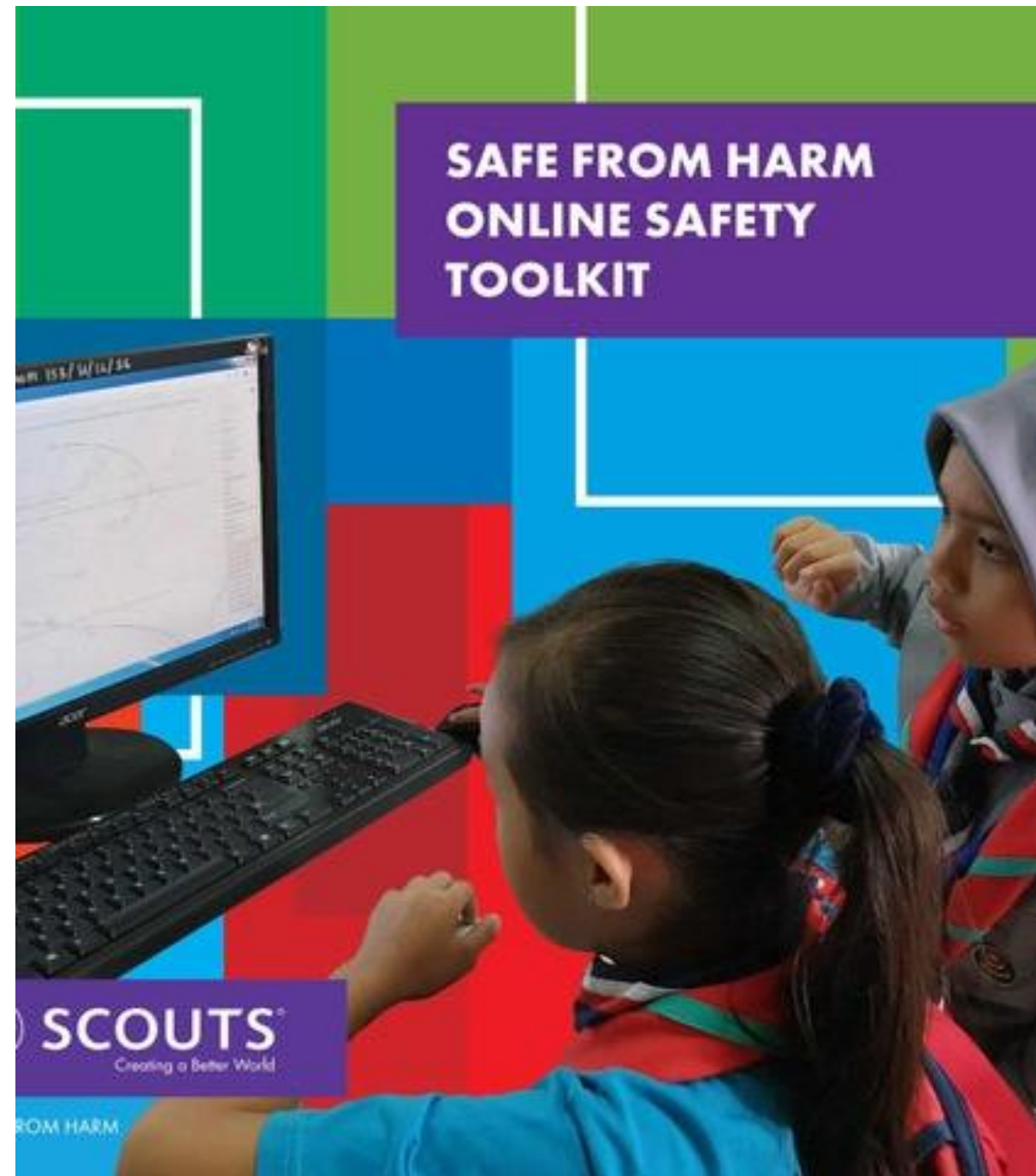


The Online Safety Toolkit



How other can use this model

- The toolkit is most effective when delivered through trusted volunteers who bring it to life.
- Volunteers create safe spaces where young people can build confidence and resilience.
- Resilience is built through conversations, practical activities, and supportive relationships.
- This approach can be used by any youth or community organisation, not just Scouting.
- The model is simple: train volunteers, encourage discussion, and empower young people.
- Together, these principles help young people develop the skills to navigate online risks and future challenges.



Success looks like young people who can:



Manage online risks



Think critically and
recognise misinformation



Support their peers



Seek help when needed



Participate responsibly
online

