Making Sense of Media Bulletin

February 2022

Thank you to everyone who shared their updates of initiatives, research, and events for February's Making Sense of Media bulletin. We have provided points of contact wherever possible, for purposes of collaboration between network members.

Submissions are listed alphabetically under the categories below; please click on the quick links if you would like to go directly to specific categories.

A reminder that these updates are provided by our network members and reflect the views of the individual members. Inclusion here does not imply endorsement by Ofcom.

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Ofcom activity

Turning the wheel: Next steps for Ofcom's approach to media literacy Event held on 21st January

The event was an opportunity for Ofcom to share and discuss our online media literacy plans, as set out in our December publication: [Ofcom's approach to online media literacy](#), and to hear feedback from attendees. Over 140 people from a wide range of backgrounds and organisations joined the virtual event.

The event was opened by our Chief Executive, Dame Melanie Dawes, and chaired by Yih-Choung Teh, Ofcom's Group Director for Strategy and Research.

Melanie discussed what it means to be "media literate", how being able to participate effectively and safely online has never been more important, and the role of platforms in creating a safer online world. She said that taking on more responsibilities for online safety is an important moment for Ofcom and emphases three things which will underpin our work: collaboration, evidence-based and working across all four nations.

Ofcom's five priority areas

Yih-Choung set out the five priority areas that constitute Ofcom's new approach to media literacy: initiate, engage, establish, evaluate and research. He recognised these do not form the complete answer to media literacy, but are areas where Ofcom can tangibly contribute, in line with our mission to make communication work for everyone. He highlighted that two of these areas are new: Initiate, where it is our intention to commission pilot media literacy initiative to address underserved communities; and Establish, where we will be working with the platforms, and advocacy groups and other stakeholders to create some best practice design principles for media literacy.

We then broke out into eight separate groups, each discussing a particular theme. This was followed by the discussion leads sharing some of the most compelling thoughts from each group. Notes from the breakout groups will be published on the MSOM section of the Ofcom website.

Yih-Choung closed the event by outlining Ofcom's next steps. He focused on our ambition to create productive and collaborative working groups in each of the priority areas and invited attendees to engage and share their thoughts on how these working groups might be most efficient.

Anyone interested in participating in a working group should contact makingsenseofmedia@ofcom.org.uk.

Safer Internet Day – February 2022

Ofcom is proud to be supporting Safer Internet Day on Tuesday 8 February. Thousands of schools, businesses and communities will be taking part in this national conversation about keeping children safe online.

This year, the theme of the day is ***All fun and games? Exploring respect and relationships online.*** It explores the online entertainment and gaming communities that children are a part of. Safer Internet Day is challenging youngsters to foster supportive relationships and respectful communities, whilst equipping them with the skills they need to keep themselves and others safe in these spaces.

Melanie will be visiting a local school to join a Safer Internet Day-themed assembly and speak to young representatives of the school's council to hear about their online experiences. We are creating bespoke infographics to highlight our findings from our children's media use and attitudes research, to be shared across our social channels. We will also be sharing tips and resources from Safer Internet Day.

Tell us how social video platforms can create a safer space for young people

Student Competition: enter now for the chance to win a £100 voucher and be published by the Financial Times. The competition closes 25 February 2022 (23:59). We'll be announcing the winners later in 2022. Please visit our website for more details.

Keep in touch

If you would like more information on any of Ofcom's Making Sense of Media work or Ofcom's wider activities, please email us at makingsenseofmedia@ofcom.org.uk.

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Events

BBC Young Reporter Festival 7-12 March 2022

Storytelling will be the focus of the annual BBC Young Reporter Festival (7-12 March 2022). To find out more about the week of media skills, news literacy and broadcasting career-related events and outreach activities for secondary schools, colleges and youth groups: youngreporter@bbc.co.uk.

The Day – Entry deadline Friday 29th April 2022

Online news publication for schools, The Day, is launching the Global Young Journalist Awards this term. The Awards aim to inspire future generations of journalists to build a better world through storytelling. The Awards are for under 18's, are free to enter and stories can be entered in any medium including words, photographs, audio, video, graphics and illustration.

For more information please contact: rachelwatson-steward@theday.co.uk.

GirlGuiding

For Safer Internet Day, Girlguiding are holding and event on How can the Online Safety Bill keep girls and young women safe online? (Feb 9, 2022 10:00-10:45am).

Join Girlguiding advocates, violence against women and girls (VAWG) experts, Maria Miller MP and Caroline Nokes MP to discuss what changes Girlguiding want to see in the forthcoming Online Safety Bill. You can register for the event here.

Internet Matters

Internet Matters will be launching several projects in the Vulnerable Children programme of work through a series of online events in the coming weeks:

1. Fostering Digital Skills – a training package for foster carers, developed in partnership with The Fostering Network and the University of East Anglia. (16th Feb 2022).
2. Principles for Social Work – a practice guide for social workers on supporting young people online, developed by the UKCIS Vulnerable Users Working Group.

3. Changing conversations – research exploring whether and how professionals working with vulnerable children are able to support them in their connected lives.

For more information please contact: simone.vibert@internetmatters.org.

Projects and initiatives

BBC

The BBC is inviting young people in UK to tell their original stories across programmes and platforms. This year's BBC Young Reporter Competition is an opportunity for 11-18 year olds to directly shape the editorial agenda more significantly than ever before, with the broadcaster showcasing 100 original reports by young people as it marks it's centenary.

For full competition details go to our website or for the full press release.

Centre for Excellence in Media Practice, Bournemouth University

Published an article about Media Literacy in the Time of Covid.

For more information please contact: jmcdougall@bournemouth.ac.uk.

The Economist

The Economist Educational Foundation continues to publish weekly classroom activities to help students discuss the news. Recent resources explore stories about politics, conflict and technology as well as many more big issues. Students can also join our online discussion forum to connect with peers and experts. Watch out for our special Global Conversation beginning on February 18th! Teachers can sign up at talk.economistfoundation.org.

For more information please contact: foundationteam@economist.com.

IMPRESS

On the 21st of February IMPRESS will be launching a public consultation on proposed changes to its Standards Code and Guidance for news publishers. IMPRESS welcomes feedback and submissions to the consultation from individuals and organisations across the media sector and civic society on whether the updated Code is fit for purpose for the future of journalism and continues to serve the needs of publishers and the public. The consultation will close on 1 April 2022.

For more information please visit impress.press/standards or contact alexandra@impressreg.org.uk.

Internet Matters

Internet Matters launched 'My Family's Digital Toolkit' in October, which allows parents/carers to answer a few simple questions about their family and receive personalised online safety and wellbeing advice – age specific support, information about popular apps and platforms, and more.

For more information please contact: simone.vibert@internetmatters.org.

ISD Global

The _Be Internet Citizens_ (BIC) programme is offering an opportunity for schools to partner with ISD and YouTube on its evaluation in 2022 (more information can be found here). The programme also offers **free teacher training** equipping educators with the context, tools and materials to deliver the PSHE Association-accredited curriculum to students aged 13+.

For more information, please contact hbe@isdglobal.org (evaluation) or kate@psheeducation.co.uk (teacher training).

Guardian Foundation - Behind the Headlines

During the autumn term the Behind the Headlines team delivered 53 virtual workshops and teacher training sessions for 1101 young people and 155 teachers and educators across the UK. In addition to our free Fake or for real, news and feature writing workshops our new session on the Future of news is now available for secondary schools to book. We continue to produce media literacy teacher webinars, resources and guidance of young people interested in media careers.

For more information please contact: behindtheheadlines@theguardianfoundation.org.

Google

YouTube launched YouTube Reframe, a new content series for young people breaking down the skills needed for life online on 28th January.

Building on YouTube's 'Be Internet Citizens' media literacy initiative for 13-15 year olds, YouTube Reframe offers a complementary out-of-school programme that presents the curriculum designed by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue through the stories of creators who have lived experience of the important and urgent topics confronting young people online today.

Media Smart

In October last year, off the back of research conducted by Livity with young people, parents and teachers, Media Smart created an educational resource with TikTok called - Adverts, Creators and You. This film-based educational resource, featuring TikTok Creators, equips 13-17 year olds with the tools they need to navigate TikTok's commercial side, ensuring they have the most positive online experience possible. It has already had 1000 downloads in just three months and Media Smart has been awarded a grant from the DCMS Media Literacy Strategy team to adapt the resource for a SEND audience (this will be launched at the end of March 2022).

For more information please contact: mediasmart@adassoc.org.uk.

Our Version Media CIC

Our Version Media® CIC is using online media to counteract the negative press portrayal of black and other communities. The Hampshire-based community media enterprise teaches digital media and journalism skills to empower people to tell their own, authentic stories. It is building a digital home on YouTube to share these grassroots, made-by-mobile videos.

SWGfL

Report Harmful Content Button is a new and ground-breaking process of helping users report legal but harmful content wherever they go online. Any organisation including schools and universities who want to help stop the spread of harmful online content can install the report button on their website for free!

University of the Arts London (UAL)

Prof. Jonathan Hardy, UAL has published 'Sponsored Editorial Content in Digital Journalism: Mapping the Merging of Media and Marketing' in *Digital Journalism*, Branded Content Research Hub has a programme of talks and events from February 2022 including a stakeholder symposium on influencer marketing governance, 9 March.

For more information please contact: Jonathan.hardy@lcc.arts.ac.uk.

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Research

Anthropology of Smartphones and Smart Ageing (ASSA), UCL AnthopologyASSA This collaborative five-year project is based on a comparative ethnographic analysis of the impact of the smartphone on the experience of mid-life (people who do not consider themselves either young or elderly) around the world and considers the implications for the use of smartphones in the field of health. The findings from the project are available in a variety of jargon-free, open-access formats, including: an E-book available, short YouTube videos and blogs

For more information please contact: alex.clegg@ucl.ac.uk.

The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC)

The BBFC released new research findings in December looking into the classification of racism and discrimination in films and TV. Findings showed that people don't think that older films and TV

shows necessarily need higher age ratings if they contain outdated behaviour or language, but want to be warned about potentially offensive words or portrayals.

For more information please contact: megan.sutherland@bbfc.co.uk.

Cardiff University

Identifying informational opportunities in political responsibility reporting: This study reveals how network UK television news bulletins reported devolved decision making during the early months of the pandemic.

Framework for assessing the role of public service media organizations in countering disinformation and outlines factors that help determine the role of public service media in their national environment, the activities carried out to fight disinformation and assessments to reduce the impact of disinformation.

(Mis)understanding the coronavirus and how it was handled in the UK is an analysis of public knowledge and the information environment draws on a news diary study of 200 participants during the pandemic and found they easily identified examples of "fake news" but were less aware of relevant facts that might help them understand how the UK government managed the crisis.

For more information please contact: CushionSA@cardiff.ac.uk.

Ditch the Label

In October 2021 Ditch the Label published a report into the ways in which young people aged 13-25 are engaging with and using social media and technology. The insights are gathered from over 13,000 respondents across the UK, and focus on behaviours online such as time spent on platforms, selfies and drawing comparisons between oneself and other social media users. Further it looks into the topics of consent, unwanted attention and the need for online moderation.

 In November 2021 Ditch the Label teamed up with Brandwatch to look at 263 million online conversations around hate speech online to see how it has changed since the start of the pandemic. **Uncovered: Online Hate Speech in the Covid Era** looks at social media sites, forums and blogs to see how racism and other topics have evolved between 2019 and mid 2021.

In December 2021, to mark World AIDS Day, Ditch the Label partnered with Brandwatch to analyse 239,000 online conversations globally to understand how serophobia has evolved online between 2019 and 2021. The report examines how hate speech targeting people living with HIV and AIDS online has changed since the pandemic began, where the conversation about serophobia is happening globally, and how advocacy efforts have helped.

For more information please contact: sue@ditchthelabel.org.

The Internet Commission

The Internet Commission's second accountability report identifies 46 trust and safety practices in 6 organisations including Twitch, Sony Playstation, and Tinder. Based on two years of evidence and

analysis, it highlights the importance of user voice, coordinated oversight and innovation to balance safety and freedom. Participating organisations can benefit from confidential independent review, knowledge sharing between organisations and inclusion in the report, which will be published in the coming weeks. Request your copy here: inetco.org/report.

For more information please contact: patrick.grady@inetco.org.

Internet Matters

Internet Matters launched the first UK index, Children's Wellbeing in a Digital World, in the culmination of a year-long project. The index provides a benchmark which will now be tracked year on year, and compared across different groups of children in the UK. Internet Matters is making the data openly available and welcomes proposals for collaborations from other organisations.

Internet Matters worked with YouthSight on research supported by Roblox which explored how being online affects young people's identity, personalities and relationships. The Demystifying Teens' Online Interactions research found that when teens aged 13-16 have greater agency, they make better decisions to improve their online experience. However, the research also found that perceived online lives can be unrealistic, and putting opinions or creative work out in the open can be a target for negativity.

For more information please contact: simone.vibert@internetmatters.org.

Liverpool University

(The Me and My Big Data project) – funded by Nuffield Foundation– has published their final report on "Citizen's Data Literacies". The research used five citizen 'personas' derived from research data to explore the findings from both a national survey and focus group discussions. The report highlights the limited levels of Data Literacy among many groups and the potential policy implications.

For more information please contact: Simeon.Yates@liverpool.ac.uk.

Liverpool University, Loughborough University, City University, Good Things Foundation and Critical Research

A collaboration are developing a "Minimum Digital Living Standard" for households with children Building on the established Minimum Income Standard.

Developed by the Loughborough team, this innovative project funded by the Nuffield Foundation will explore the minimum basket of digital goods, skills and services households need in order to have an adequate quality of life and participate in society. Over the coming year the team will be undertaking participatory fieldwork to set the standard. After which the project will use a national survey to map households and areas meeting or falling below the standard.

For more information please contact: Simeon.Yates@liverpool.ac.uk.

London School of Economics

The outcomes of gaining digital skills for young people's lives and wellbeing

A systematic evidence review found a positive association between digital skills and online opportunities, information benefits, and orientation to technology. Greater digital skills were indirectly linked to greater exposure to online risks, although any link to harm was unclear. While technical skills were linked with mixed or even negative outcomes, information skills were linked with positive outcomes.

Playful by Design® Free play in a digital world

Playful by Design® examines the intersection of free play and the digital world. It draws on new qualitative and quantitative research to analyse understand what children value and enjoy about free play and to make evidence-based recommendations to the designers of digital products and services to improve children's opportunities for free play and overcome the inhibiting factors that children report.

The impact of digital experiences on adolescents with mental health vulnerabilities

This report describes the first pilot stage of a research project examining internet use and its relationship to mental health in adolescents made vulnerable by pre-existing mental health problems.

Newsguard

Social Impact Report for 2021. 2021 brought many milestones for NewsGuard: we rated and updated our ratings for 7,466 news sites, led 1,801 news publishers to improve their editorial practices, cataloged 762 false narratives as misinformation fingerprints, and served more than 7 million library patrons with our Reliability Ratings for news sites.

For more information please contact: alex.cadier@newsguardtech.com.

NewsWise

NewsWise have published their latest evaluation report. Primary schools can continue to sign up to take part in the free NewsWise programme for this year and the upcoming academic year. Results from the evaluation showed that after taking part, more than double the number of pupils could tell if a news story was real or fake; 91% said they found it easy to tell if news was trustworthy, compared to 33% before; twice the number of pupils would check if news came from a person or source they trust; 100% of teachers said pupils have increased skills in thinking critically about news and 100% feel more confident in supporting pupils' news literacy.

For more information please contact: newswise@theguardianfoundation.org.

Public Interest News Foundation

A Survey released by the Public Interest News Foundation in December 2021 uncovered the British public tend not to trust local news that's produced outside their area. In a poll of 2,000 adults by

Opinium, only 31% said that they would trust local news that came from a news organisation based outside their area, whilst 55% said that they would not. By contrast, 58% said that they would trust local news from an organisation that was based in the area, versus 31% who said that they would not. To find our more please visit their website.

Sheffield University

The fight against disinformation and the right to freedom of expression, a collaborative research report was published in July 2021.

 For more information please contact: i.katsirea@sheffield.ac.uk.

International

Centre for Excellence in Media Practice, Bournemouth University

Non-UK focussed media literacy research (current / recent) – info on the CEMP website. Working with British Council, GCRF, AHRC on media literacy with refugee youth, marginalised communities, and Global South partners.

ERGA Media Literacy Report

The European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA) published their Media Literacy Report. (The ERGA AG3 – Media literacy report) The report identifies six principles to guide best practice in the design, delivery and implementation of media literacy initiatives: transparency, multistakeholder engagement, focus on the user/citizen, reach, localisation, and evaluation. It also includes a Media Literacy Toolbox for Video-sharing Platforms.

Newsguard

NewsGuard launched in Canada, our sixth market in addition to the U.S., U.K., Italy, France, and Germany. We've already rated the English and French Canadian news sites that account for over 92% of online engagement with the news, and are excited to be expanding our work in Canada in the coming months.

NewsGuard and the American Federation of Teachers announced a partnership that will see our credibility and transparency ratings be made available, through our browser extension, to millions of public school teachers and students across the United States — a sign of the value, effectiveness and accessibility of our media literacy tool.