

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU SEE SECTARIAN MATERIAL ONLINE

If you see something you consider sectarian or threatening, you can take a screen grab:

### Laptop/Desktop PC:

- Bring up the page with the offensive message
- Ensure that you can clearly see who, where and when the message posted
- Hold Ctrl and press Print Screen
- Open a new file in word processing software
- Hold Shift and press Insert
- Save the document with a relevant file name

### Smartphone/tablet:

Most smartphones/tablets have a 'screenshot' facility built-in. In order to do this:

- Bring up the page with the offensive message
- Ensure that you can clearly see who, where and when the message posted
- Hold in the power on/off button (normally found at the top of the phone/tablet)
- Select the 'Take Screenshot' option
- This should save to your smartphone/tablet photo gallery

**Once your screenshot has been saved, you can contact the police by calling 101 or by visiting [www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us](http://www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us)**

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT SOMEONE YOU KNOW POSTING SECTARIAN MATERIAL ON SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

If you are concerned about someone you know posting sectarian and offensive material on social media sites you should speak to a responsible adult or contact your 'campus cop' or youth worker.

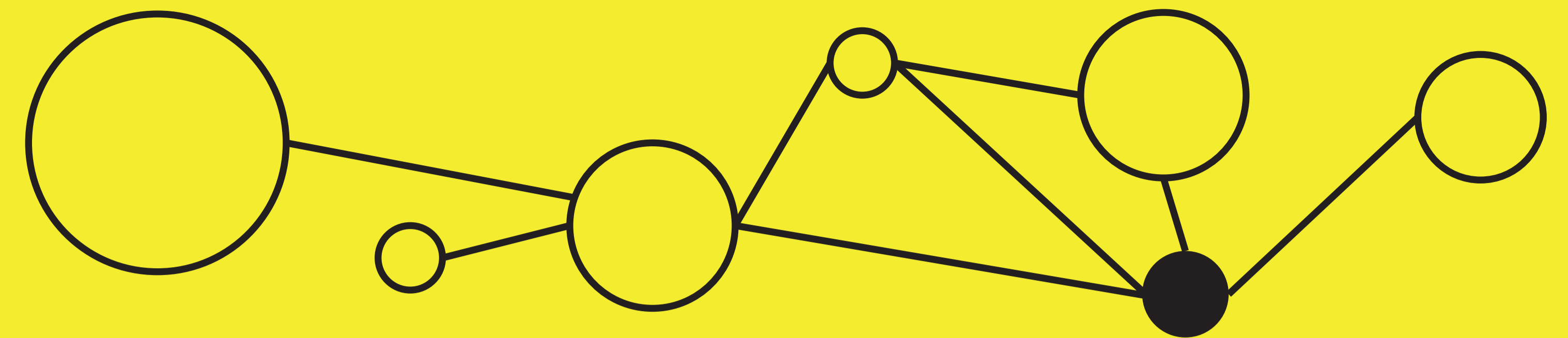
**For more information on sectarianism and general online safety, visit:**

[www.nilbymouth.org](http://www.nilbymouth.org)

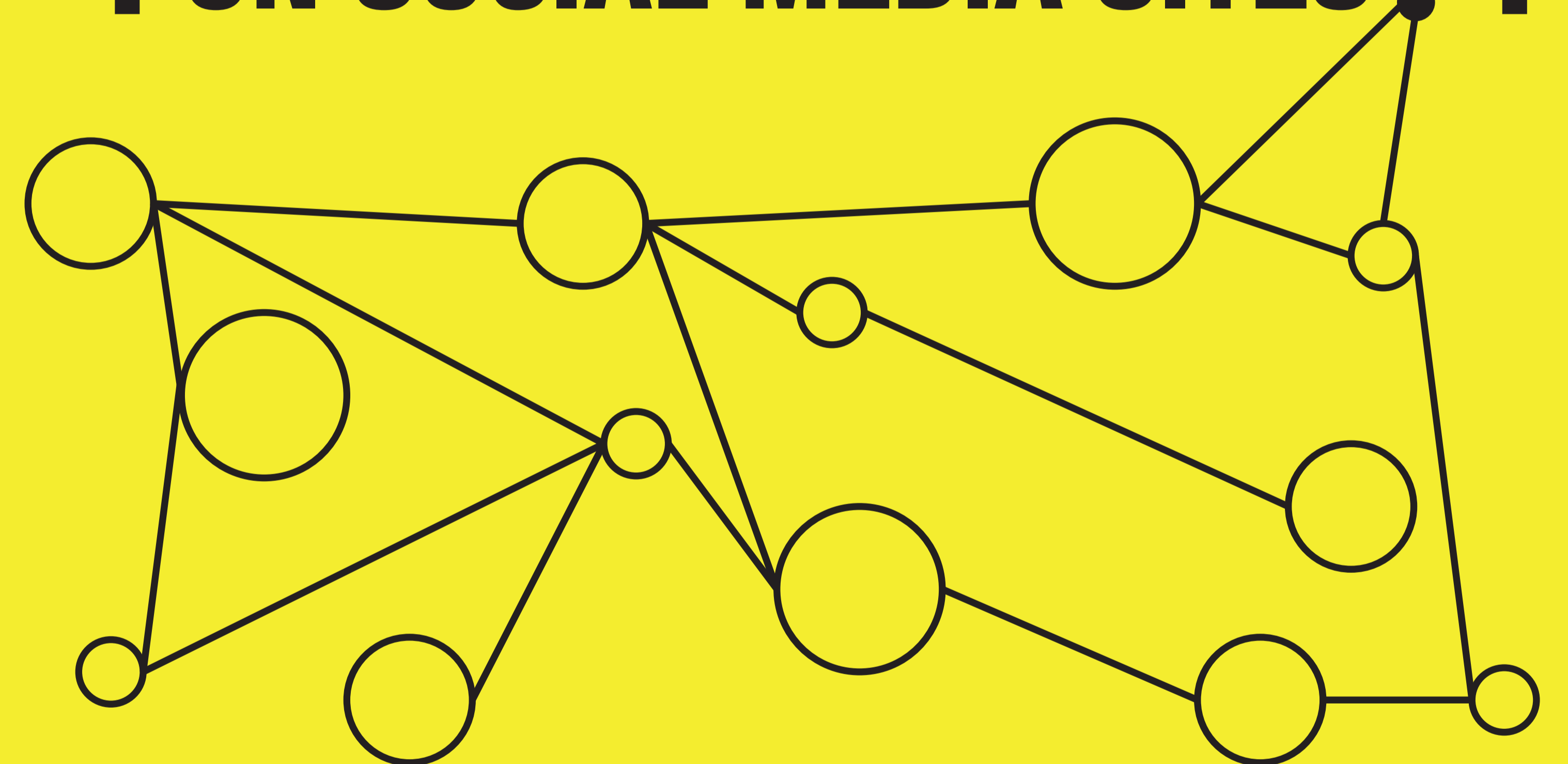
[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

[www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

[www.saferinternet.org](http://www.saferinternet.org)



# WHAT IS SECTARIANISM ON SOCIAL MEDIA SITES?



Community Links (South Lanarkshire) | Unit 1a | Clydeview Shopping Centre | Blantyre | Glasgow | G72 0QD  
T: (01698) 827583 | F: (01698) 829000 | E: [administrator@communitylinkssl.co.uk](mailto:administrator@communitylinkssl.co.uk) | W: [www.communitylinkssl.co.uk](http://www.communitylinkssl.co.uk)  
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**Chances are that you're a regular user of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter** – as most people are these days. These sites are a great way to keep in touch with friends, talk about your interests, keep up with sports news, share pictures and see what others are up to. However, there are risks and people have found themselves in serious trouble for posting offensive or sectarian content online - in some circumstances even receiving jail sentences.

### **'WHAT IS LIKELY TO GET ME IN TROUBLE?'**

An online post that targets a group or individual because of their:

- religion
- sexual orientation
- nationality
- ethnicity
- disability

You are especially likely to get into trouble if you send a message that includes a threat of violence. Showing support for terrorist or para-military groups who have committed acts of terrorism can also lead to serious legal action.

If you 'retweet' or share an offensive or sectarian Facebook status, that is as serious as you saying it yourself.

Depending on what you post, how often, and other factors, you could receive a fine - anything up to a five year jail sentence - and of course a criminal record. You have to disclose this to potential employers and it could prevent you from getting certain jobs.

### **'BUT, IT'S JUST THE INTERNET! WHAT I SAY ON IT DOESN'T MATTER, AND BESIDES, I'M JUST HAVING A LAUGH WITH MY MATES!'**

This isn't the case – what you put on social media sites DOES matter and has REAL consequences. When it comes to sectarianism, if you wouldn't say it out loud to a group of strangers, don't post it online.

You might consider what you have written is a bit of a laugh, general banter or a political statement – but the police, and a judge, may not agree.

Even if you use privacy settings, you can never be sure who or how many people see what you've posted online.

### **'YEAH, BUT I'M UNDER 16 – NOTHING CAN HAPPEN TO ME... CAN IT? THE LAW IS THE SAME FOR EVERYONE'**

If you are under 16, you can still get in serious trouble - 'You can be prosecuted, end up in front of a Children's Panel or even Court for more serious cases.

### **'OK, SO WHO ELSE CAN SEE WHAT I'VE POSTED?'**

Family and friends, but also employers and potential employers may check people's social media pages.

If people share or retweet YOUR post, then more and more people are also likely to see it.

They could report you to the police – all they need to do is take a 'screen-grab' and contact the police.

### **'HOW ARE PEOPLE CAUGHT? AND WHAT HAPPENS TO THEM?'**

You might think the police are 'watching' the internet all the time and that's how people are caught.

However, that's not usually the case – most people are caught as a result of a 'tip off' from a member of the public – similar to any other committed crime. It could be someone you have never met before or someone living in another town miles away.

The police will investigate reports and can easily locate the offender, who can then be charged under a range of legislation:

Section 6 - [www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2012/1/section/6](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2012/1/section/6)

Section 38 - [www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2010/13/section/38?view=extent](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2010/13/section/38?view=extent)

Section 127 - [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/21/section/127?view=extent](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/21/section/127?view=extent)

Plus, during an investigation, it's likely that everything you and your family own that can connect to the internet will be confiscated by the police.

Yes, that even includes your smartphone, tablet, PC, laptop and games console...