



Consumed: How Digital Content Is Shaping a New Generation of Harm

Sarah Barnbrook

Away From Keyboard (AFK) Inc, Australia

Abstract

We are witnessing a silent crisis. Children are not just watching content—they are being shaped, conditioned, and consumed by it. Graphic digital content is no longer the exception; it's the norm. Misogynistic ideologies are not hidden in dark corners—they're front and centre, driven by algorithmic design and influencer culture. Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) is escalating at an alarming rate, yet our societal response remains far too slow. As the founder of Away From Keyboard (AFK) Inc., I've spent years on the frontline of digital harm prevention, working with children, carers, and neurodivergent communities abandoned by systems not built to respond to these threats. In this presentation, I explore how youth are influenced by online culture, including emerging themes in streaming programs like *Adolescence*, and the constant exposure to violence, coercion, and hyper-sexualisation. Through AFK's trauma-informed programs and the *Unsafe by Design* framework, I demonstrate how young people are internalising harmful messages that reshape their identities, empathy, and sense of belonging. Influencers are now shaping how children see the world—and many are teaching them to dehumanise. This discussion is not about demonising platforms; it is a call to recognise the tipping point we have reached. When tech outpaces regulation and childhood becomes collateral damage, we must ask: how do we keep up? If we do not act with urgency, ethics, and care, we risk raising a generation desensitised to harm and disconnected from compassion. The time to reimagine online safety is not tomorrow—it's now.

Keywords: algorithmic bias; digital consumption; digital harm; influencer culture; TFGBV