

**RIMMEL**  
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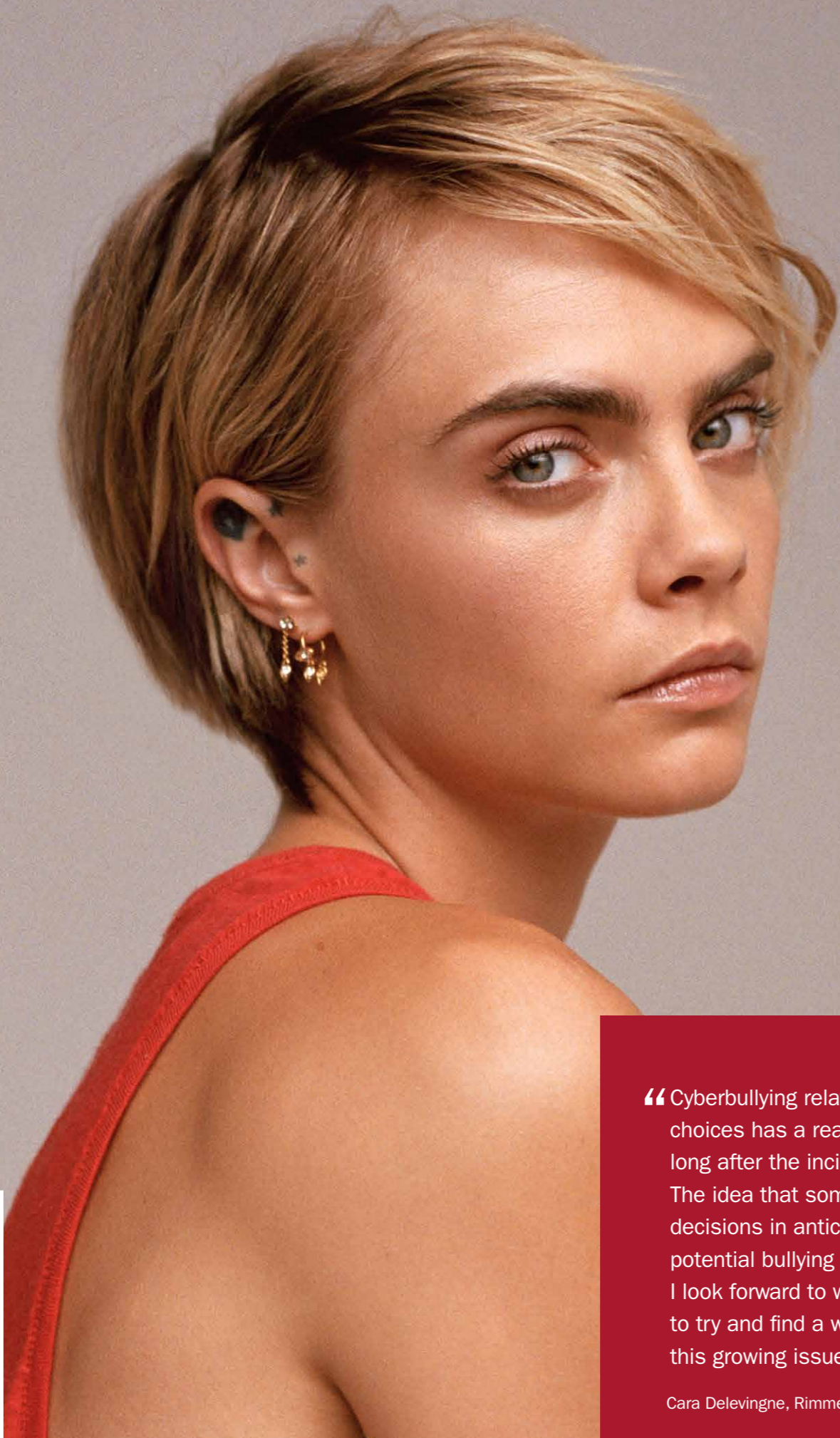
## **BEAUTY CYBERBULLYING**

## **- EXPRESSION REPRESSION**



**CONSUMER  
INSIGHTS THAT  
LED TO THE  
“I WILL NOT  
BE DELETED \_”  
CAMPAIGN  
FROM RIMMEL**





“Cyberbullying related to beauty choices has a real impact on people long after the incident occurs. The idea that some people make decisions in anticipation or fear of potential bullying is heartbreaking. I look forward to working with Rimmel to try and find a way of addressing this growing issue.”

Cara Delevingne, Rimmel Brand Ambassador

## INTRODUCTION FROM RIMMEL

Coty and Rimmel believe that beauty should make you feel happy and never sad, and that freedom of self-expression is critical to the beauty we want to represent through our brands and their communication. Make-up has always been a way for men and women, boys and girls to express their identity. Rimmel has a clear purpose to inspire people to experiment & express their authentic selves with make-up.

Our role beyond our products is to broaden the definition of beauty and inspire others to be genuine with their look because their beauty is what makes them unique. As a brand we are against narrow definitions of beauty, people being shamed, judged and criticised because of their looks. This behaviour manifests itself widely today in the form of beauty cyberbullying.

We wanted to understand the scale of this issue, why it was happening and what its impact is on those it affects? So, we commissioned a major piece of research across 10 countries, talking to over 11,000 young women aged 16-25.

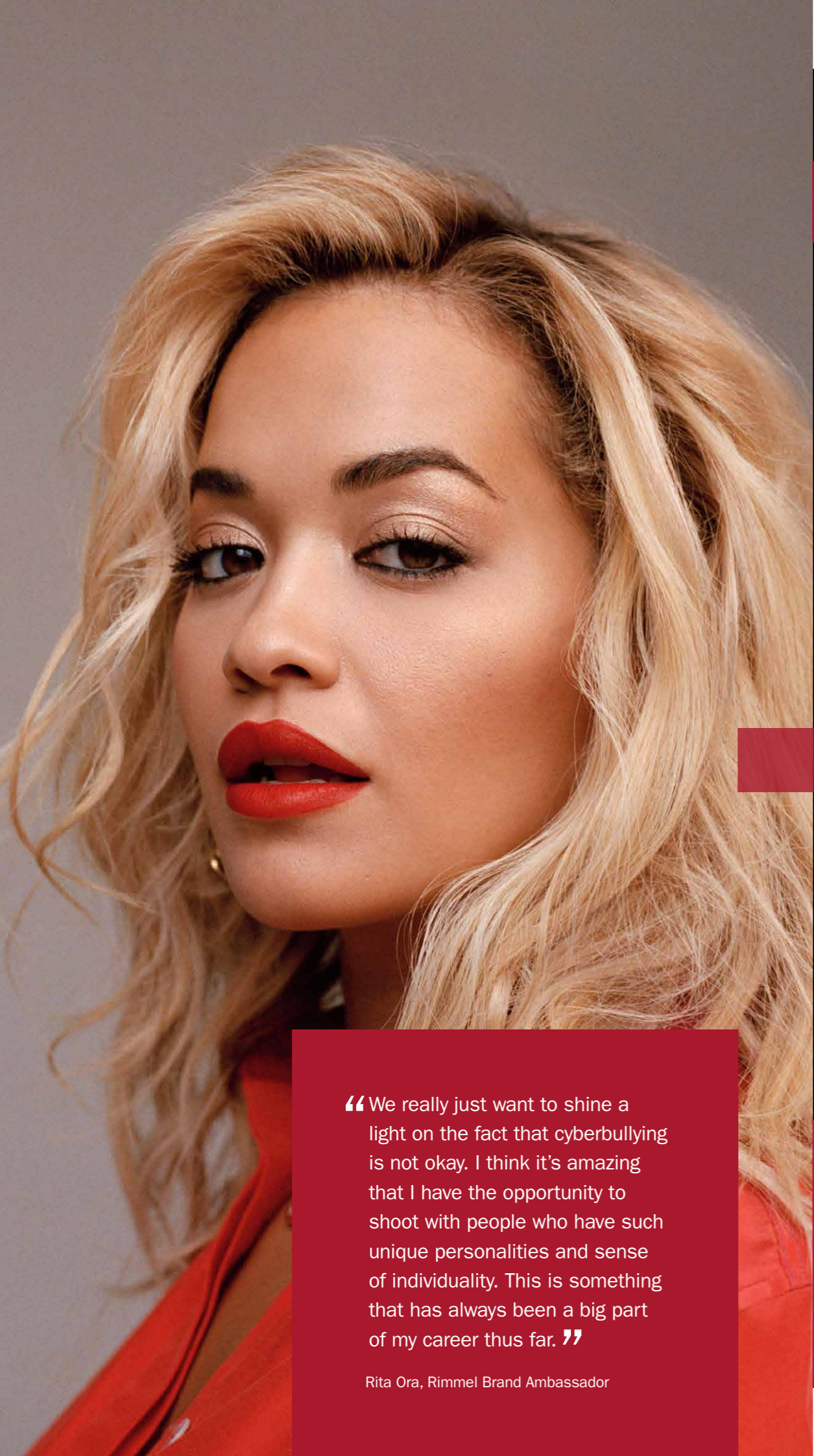
## WHAT WE DISCOVERED

### WAS REALLY DISTURBING.

1 in 4 women have experienced beauty cyberbullying. This means we all know somebody who has been affected. We project that 115 million images are deleted from social media every year, because of the comments or judgments that others have posted against them. The impact of this behaviour reaches beyond the screen. It undermines people's confidence in themselves and stifles their creativity, changing how they feel about themselves or how they look. With 57% of those bullied not telling anyone about their experience, we felt that now was the perfect time to give it a voice. A voice that is loud and clear. It is not okay to hide behind a screen and shame someone for the choices they have made to express themselves. They are who they are because this choice is only theirs to make.

We also learnt that 65% of those bullied lost confidence in themselves and that is something that as a brand we want to address and change. We want to give people the confidence and the platform to be their authentic self. To embrace their individuality and believe that their own individuality is beautiful. The report that follows highlights the key findings of our study. However, we also spoke to a number of people from across the beauty and fashion industry who have been personally affected by beauty cyberbullying. It was important for us to showcase real stories and show that beauty cyberbullying happens in all walks of life. Beauty influencers, models and celebrities have all experienced beauty bullying. Our cast were selected for their personal experiences and stories that you will see told throughout our campaign.





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cyberbullying is something that's very much in the public consciousness these days. There's hardly a day goes by without a media item exploring the topic. It's become part of global conversations, particularly regarding its impact on young people. Bullying at a broader level is something individuals have always had to deal with. Cyberbullying is just the latest way in which this cruel and hurtful practice has manifested. But the practice of subjecting individuals to online bullying tactics based purely on their physical appearance and personal looks, beauty cyberbullying, was the focus of this study.

Women have used the rise of social media platforms as an opportunity to express their individualism and diverse strengths. This is particularly true in the way selfies are used to share their identities that would not have been possible before. But with the birth of this creativity and self-expression we've also seen the growth in abusive online behaviour. Beauty cyberbullying has become a major problem, affecting now almost one in four young women globally. It's having a significant impact on the way they are expressing themselves online and how they feel about themselves inside.

**115 MILLION IMAGES ARE DELETED  
GLOBALLY EVERY YEAR AS A RESULT  
OF BEAUTY CYBERBULLYING**

We project that on average 115 million images are deleted globally every year as a result of beauty cyberbullying. And this is just the tip of the problem. Women are changing their behaviours online, not just deleting images that attract abuse, but also closing their social media accounts, or editing photos before posting. Offline they're even changing their appearance, from make-overs to cosmetic surgery, in order to overcome some of the comments being made. What was an act of celebration has become an excuse to target women's differences as a negative, leading to a loss of self-confidence. Two thirds of those who experienced beauty cyberbullying in our study, had their confidence undermined as a result. Over half said they are less experimental or bold in their looks because they are worried about the comments this might attract. Worse, it can lead to actual emotional and even physical damage, with over two-fifths having harmed themselves physically in some way.

With almost two thirds of young women affected by bullying not talking about the experience to anyone, it is clear that many are suffering in silence. Yet those who do stand up to the bullies are finding this incredibly empowering.

“We really just want to shine a light on the fact that cyberbullying is not okay. I think it's amazing that I have the opportunity to shoot with people who have such unique personalities and sense of individuality. This is something that has always been a big part of my career thus far.”

Rita Ora, Rimmel Brand Ambassador



## THEME 1

# THE BEAUTY CYBERBULLYING PROBLEM

## EXPRESS YOURSELF

The rapid growth of social media as an everyday part of our lives has been a liberating and levelling phenomenon. The ability to express your identity and share with the world who you are has never been as easy or as accepted. Nine out of ten women between 16-25 have a social media account and they're using it to tell the world who they are and what matters to them.

Beauty is a big part of this self-expression. The selfie culture has provided women with a platform to share their lives and themselves with friends and strangers alike. A celebration of their individuality and creativity. This is particularly true for Centennials and late Millennials (those aged 16 - 25) who devote significant time to their online lives and personalities. They have, on average, four social media accounts, with 81% having three or more accounts.

**23% OF YOUNG WOMEN  
HAVE BEEN BEAUTY CYBERBULLIED**

The selfie remains the main form of self-expression, with 87% of young women having posted some sort of image of themselves and 38% doing so regularly. Three quarters (73%) of women have ever posted make-up or 'going out' images. Women share these images mostly to update their friends and family on their lives and activities. But more than half (54%) share selfies because they want to express themselves creatively with others. Sharing an image not only expresses a sense of pride in how great they feel about their look (49%), but for many women, doing so helps them feel better about themselves in general (44%).

Social media, and the internet more generally, are places where women can have their individuality celebrated. Whether that's an image of getting ready for a night out, a flawless finish or a proud picture of their workout, creativity is at its core.

“ I had a lot of people commenting on my acne scars, I've always had problems with my skin. I did a photo of my before and after make-up ... and someone was like “this girl should leave her make-up somewhere where she can't touch it, because she is god damn awful with it and without it.” ”

Chessie 26



## THE DARKER SIDE

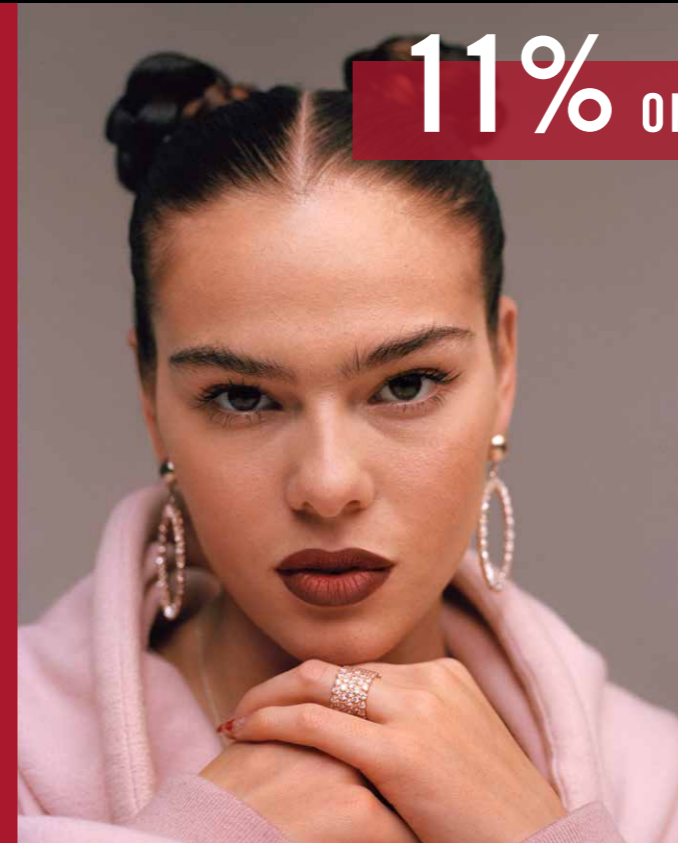
The increase in self-expression has come with a darker side. Women say that the majority of comments their selfie posts attract are positive. But for a significant number of women their experience is one of abusive comments or aggressive online behaviours specifically targeting their appearance. This can range from their size/shape to facial/physical features, or to other aspects such as appearance, make-up, dress or hair.

Globally 23% of women have experienced this type of bullying. That equates to 55 million women. For half of them it is happening right now, not just as something in their past. And for 11% of those being beauty cyberbullied, it is a regular occurrence, happening monthly or more often. What's more, 13% of women admit to having engaged in some type of online bullying behaviour, and 17% of those who have been bullied themselves have also been a bully at some point.

**11% OF BEAUTY CYBERBULLIED YOUNG WOMEN  
ARE BULLIED ABOUT THEIR LOOKS  
ONCE A MONTH OR MORE**

“ Social media is not only a platform to promote yourself, connect yourself, it's also this big opening for this negative side... Whenever I do eyebrow tutorials they get up to 500-800k views. Some comments are 'oh my god, amazing', but some people get like really emotional and passionate about it. So, someone will message me like 'hope you catch cancer, so that all your hair falls off'. Literally people go that deep and that's when I realised 'wow, this is crazy'. ”

Fifi 24



“ People with bad heart try to make you feel bad, so they can feel better. ”

Paula 25

The majority of beauty cyberbullying is happening on the most popular social media platforms. Facebook and Instagram top the global list of places where bullying has occurred, with 50% and 21% respectively. This isn't that surprising given their size and the visual nature of these platforms. Snapchat was the third largest place where beauty cyberbullying is experienced, but with far less occurrences at only 9%. This may be related to the ephemeral nature of posting on the platform. In some countries the more popular local platforms are where the bullying takes place, such as vKontakte in Russia (71%) or WeChat (31%) and Weibo (34%) in China.

As if the bullying itself weren't bad enough, the results of being beauty cyberbullied are deep and many. It has a direct impact on how women live their lives and express themselves. Over half (54%) say that they have bullying behaviour on their mind when they are getting ready to go out or are about to post something online. 14% say they think about it all the time. A quarter (23%) of all young women also believe that their personal look makes them open to being bullied. This bullying behaviour and the fear it raises in an individual is preventing the very self-expression and creativity that social media has made possible.

# 54% OF YOUNG WOMEN HAVE BULLYING ON THEIR MIND WHEN GETTING READY TO GO OUT OR WHEN POSTING SOMETHING ONLINE



“ I often I get called things, even now, like alien or fish... a number of comparisons to animals. It used to make me very upset. But now, 'alien' for example, I love that and I own that. ”

Stef 22

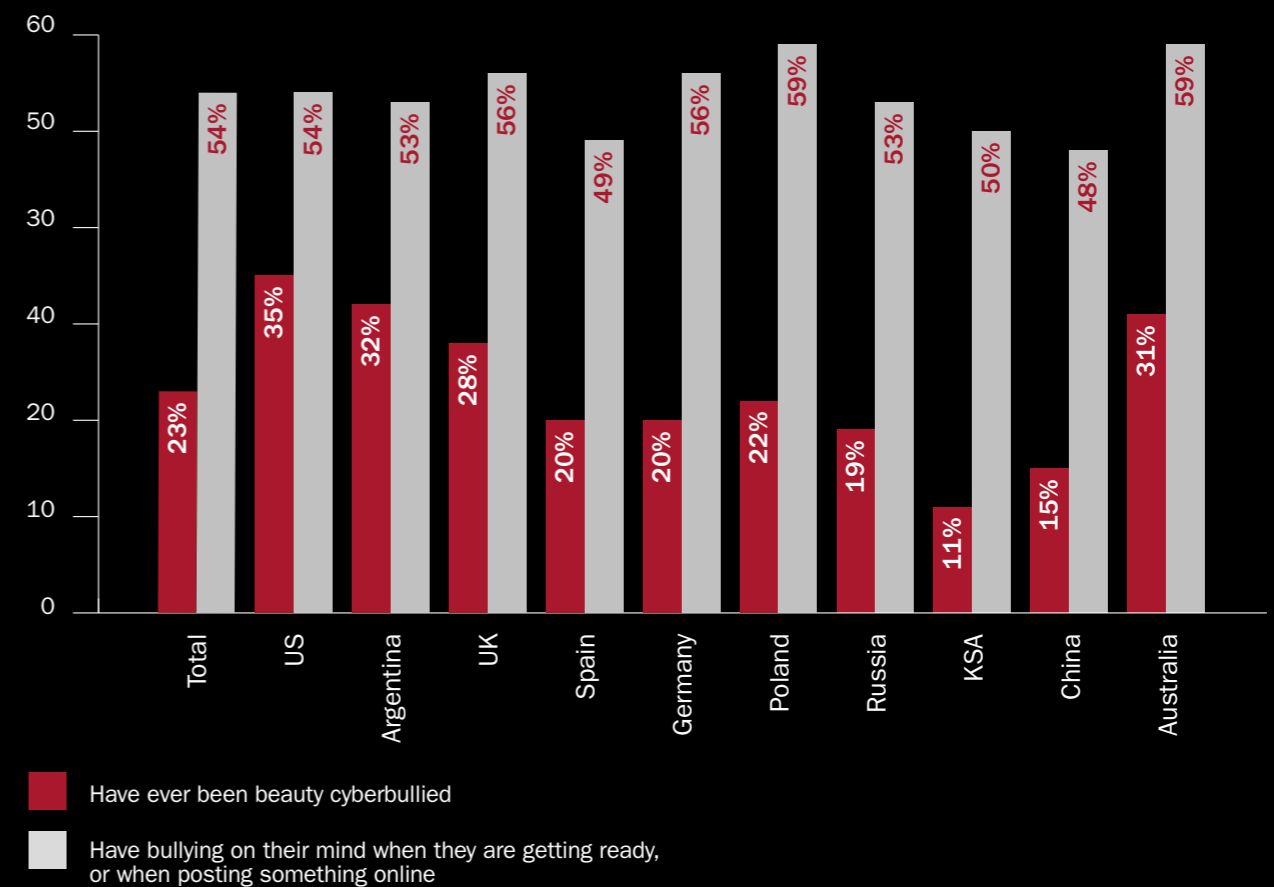
“ Beauty bullying has changed the way I present myself on social media... When it first happened I would think twice about things I was posting. Almost self-doubt. But now I definitely think I've learnt to embrace my features. ”

Lucy 17



## PREVALENCE OF BULLYING VARIES AROUND THE WORLD

The countries with the highest levels of beauty cyberbullying include the US, Argentina and Australia, while it is lowest in China and Saudi Arabia.





## THEME 2

# THE CONSEQUENCES OF BEAUTY CYBERBULLYING

## LOSING CONFIDENCE

There are many things that factor into women's perceptions of beauty and their personal look. Beyond the online world there are still many challenges for women, who feel the standards set are often unachievable and impact their self-esteem. Perceptions of beauty can, of course, differ greatly across the world. It is a complex issue and is impacted by cultural attitudes and societal norms. But negative feelings in women impact a number of areas like clothing, make-up and hair style. The source of these issues includes the depiction of women in media and advertising (nearly a third of women feel this is the case), but also comments from family, partners and friends (47% say that this is where the negativity comes from).

**46% OF BEAUTY CYBERBULLIED YOUNG WOMEN WENT ON TO HARM THEMSELVES AFTER THEIR EXPERIENCE**

(EITHER THROUGH AN EATING DISORDER, SUBSTANCE ABUSE OR PHYSICAL SELF-HARM)

The effects of this anxiety and low self-confidence are serious. 56% of beauty cyberbullied women say they have either considered or actually engaged in some form of negative or self-abusive behaviour. This takes a number of forms. It has been food related (starving themselves, binge-eating or forced-vomiting - 34%), alcohol or other substance abuse (26%) or serious self-harm (cutting, scratching or burning - 32%). As many as 46% of beauty cyberbullied women have done one or more of these things as a result. These major issues grow from online behaviours that can seem harmless on the surface.

Beauty cyberbullying has a direct impact on women's online behaviour. Over half (51%) have edited a photo after being bullied; 39% have stopped sharing images after the bullying took place and almost a third (32%) have closed their social media account; and, 22% have removed the image that's at the centre of the bullying behaviour. That's 115 million images deleted globally every year due to beauty cyberbullying<sup>1</sup>.

1. Calculated using claimed image deletion and beauty cyberbullying ratios applied to online population estimates (women aged 16-25) for the top 40 countries in terms of size of economy and number of internet users. (Ratios taken from 10 countries studied and used as proxies for other countries).

## A DESIRE TO CONFORM

Lower confidence in self-image, following beauty cyberbullying, has meant that women are less likely to be brave or experimental in their look or dress. The majority of women who have been beauty cyberbullied said that their experience has negatively impacted their confidence (65%) and a substantial minority said that this impact was significant (22%). Bullying is preventing these women from expressing themselves, with over half (51%) saying it has stopped them from beauty experimentation. Instead of expressing themselves and showing their creativity, they feel the need to conform to society's perceived beauty standards.

This conformity shows up in a number of ways. 73% of women consider changing their appearance or look after being bullied. Some women do this through something as simple as a make-over, not in itself a negative. What makes this damaging is the need to conform to a standard of beauty defined by others instead of celebrating and expressing their own individuality. Other women resort to more permanent solutions, with as many as one in ten women who have been bullied resorting to some form of cosmetic surgery. A further 33% of those bullied said this is something they would consider.

“When I was a child, my friends would say I had a big mouth or something, and I'd feel so sick and so sad. I'd always hide my mouth with a mask. I also have freckles, which isn't normal for Japanese people.”

Yuki 23

**65% OF BEAUTY CYBERBULLIED YOUNG WOMEN**

**SAID THIS NEGATIVELY AFFECTED THEIR CONFIDENCE**

“I decided to delete Instagram, like completely deactivate the account because I felt I was obsessing over it. I felt everything I posted wasn't good enough... not for likes, not validation, but for just acceptance. I really wanted to be accepted and I felt the need to always triple check everything. Captions, filters, photoshop everything!”

Joanne 21



**51% SAY BULLYING HAS STOPPED THEM**

**EXPERIMENTING WITH LOOK OR DRESS**

Beauty cyberbullying does need to be viewed in the wider context of the expectations of women's beauty, and a broader beauty shaming culture. While most women believe that beauty is both about internal and outward appearance (85%) there remains pressure on women to achieve and maintain high standards of external beauty. A third of women believe that beauty is about being flawless, glamorous and is based on what we see on the catwalk. And those who experience beauty shaming and bullying behaviour, or those who worry about it when making beauty decisions, are more likely to have higher standards of perfection in beauty for themselves.

This desire to conform to defined standards of beauty means it is already hard for women to break out and express their identity with their personal style and look. Beauty cyberbullying only makes the issue worse, creating another barrier for women to overcome on the very platforms that are intended to liberate and celebrate creative individuality.

“I haven't deleted a photo down to trolls for a year, but before that I deleted so many because I was like 'oh my god, I'm getting so much hate I can't deal with it!' But in the last year, I have really just stuck to who I really am and I think I have shown more because I've just proved to the trolls that I don't really care and I show Instagram and reality... I will delete their comments, but I won't delete my photos because it's who I am.”

Chessie 26

## 51% HAVE EVER EDITED A PHOTOGRAPH OF THEMSELVES AS A RESULT OF BEING BULLIED

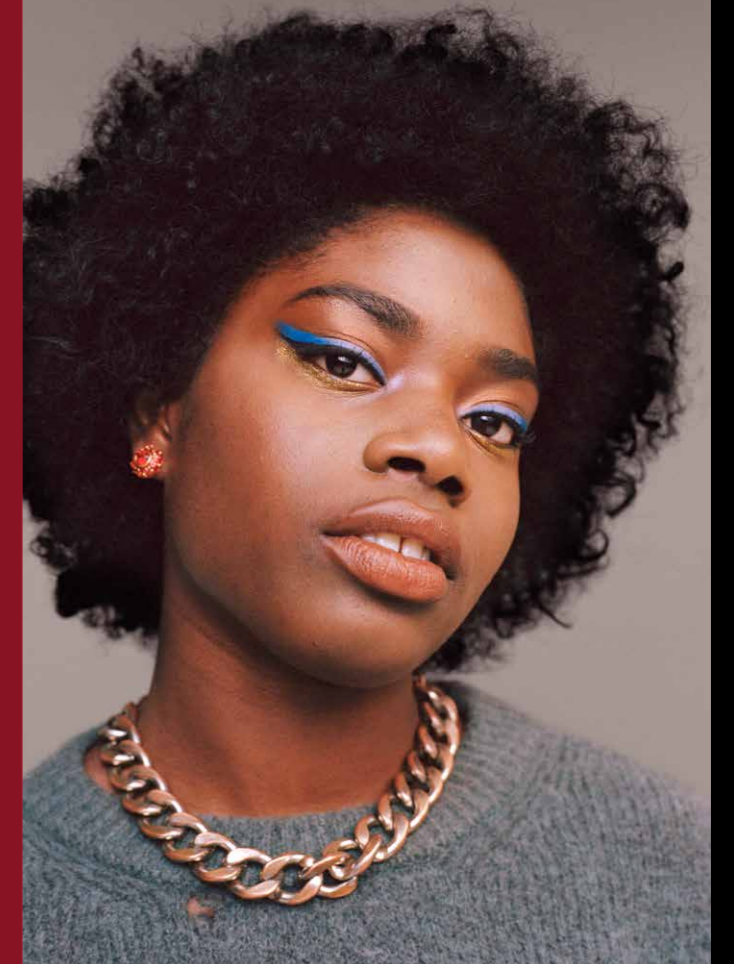


“As an Arab woman, sometimes you don't really have body autonomy because you aren't meant to do certain things with the way that you dress or the things that you put on your body or the places that you chose to show, you lose that. ... So, I get a lot of bullying on the choices that I have made for my body; the piercings and the tattoos and the way I choose to cover, I get a lot of hate for that sometimes.”

Ascia 29

“I did initially follow the beauty standard at the time in trying to look a certain way, having my make-up a certain way, contour a certain way; which didn't suit my face, but I was trying to look like a completely different person. Anything that made me look different and not Eden, I would do it... I was trying to embrace who I was, and I'd wear extravagant clothing, or loads of bright colours. I tried to use shimmering eye liner; something to express myself, jewellery, anything! And people pretty much found anything wrong with what I did. And it got to a point where I pretty much hated myself... I've had experiences where people have made pages to try and break me down, make comments on my skin, comments on how I dress. And for a while, I tried to dim myself and I was made to become less of a person really.”

Eden 18



## 22% REMOVED AN IMAGE AT THE CENTRE OF THE BULLYING



“A year ago, with photoshop, I'd have my photos looking really flawless and amazing and all the make-up looks so nice! ... People would write to me 'oh my god, you're so lucky' 'you've got amazing skin' and I was thinking in my head, no it's not! It's edited, everything you see on my screen is from an app, it's not real. And then [one day] I just had enough and just showed my bare skin to people.”

Kadeeja 22



## THEME 3

## STAND UP, SPEAK OUT

### BE BRAVE, STAND UP

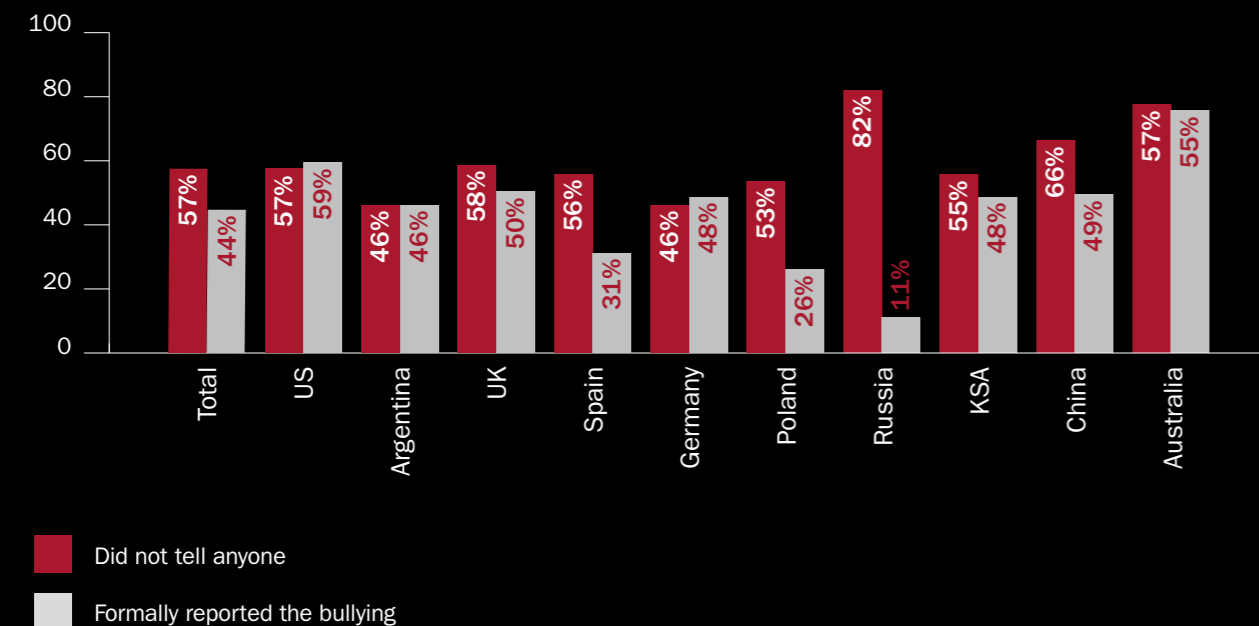
One of the most important things an individual can do if they are being bullied is to report it. While this may seem like an obvious and simple solution, it is not always something individuals feel able to do while they are going through their experience.

There are some women who have felt able to stand up for themselves, with 61% of women having stood up to some form of bullying in general. A few even manage to meet beauty cyberbullying with a sense of amusement (12%). But the majority suffer in silence. 57% of those women who have been beauty cyberbullied didn't tell anyone about their experience. Only 44% reported it to either the online platform where the incident took place or someone in authority.

"The message that I have for young people who are being affected is that you are enough! It doesn't matter what anyone else says and you are not alone. We have to stand by each other and think twice before we comment. The problem with cyber beauty bullying is that people can write something and never have to deal with the consequences. The comments I have read are heart-breaking and its terrifying to see what words can do to someone" says Cara Delevingne, Rimmel Brand Ambassador

### AROUND THE WORLD, THE LIKELIHOOD OF WOMEN COMING FORWARD TO TALK ABOUT BEING BULLIED VARIES CONSIDERABLY.

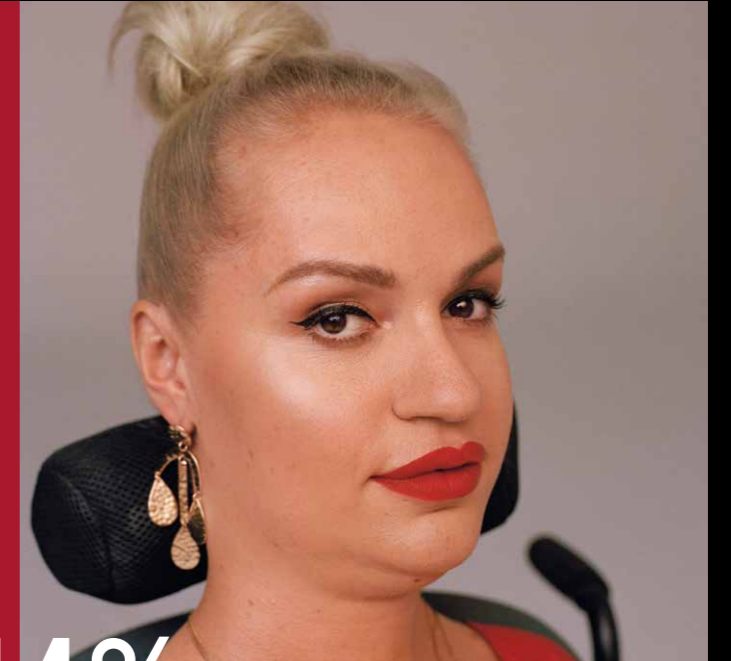
Those affected in Russia and China are the most likely to keep their experience to themselves, with only one in ten bullied Russian women saying they reported the abuse.



# 57% OF BEAUTY CYBERBULLIED YOUNG WOMEN DID NOT TELL ANYONE ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE

“ I think [negative] comments have changed the way that I post [online]. They actually encourage me to annoy people even more. I've had people comment on things like my footwear because ... my feet have never been walked on and I don't have particularly nice-looking feet. So when trolls attack my feet and my toes, it doesn't make me want to cover them up, it makes me think 'you're actually staring at my toes!' It doesn't make me shy away, it makes me think wow, you are bored! ”

Tess 29



# ONLY 44% OF BEAUTY CYBERBULLIED YOUNG WOMEN FORMALLY REPORTED THE ABUSE

Standing up for yourself can be tough, but there are positive benefits for those who do. Of the women who reported their bullying experience 77% said it made them feel more positive. They said they felt brave, felt strong and confident. And 68% felt that it helped them or was helping others.

If beauty cyberbullying is happening in our social media feeds, maybe we can help to create a more open web by calling it out when we see it. There is a need for us all to be more active, braver, and to stand up for one another. To report bullying when and where we see it happening to others online. It's the step we need to take if we want our online spaces to be truly creative locations of self-expression.



# 68% FELT REPORTING THE BULLYING HELPED THEM OR OTHERS



## EXPLORE YOUR EXPRESSIVE SIDE

The vast majority of women see beauty as more than 'just a pretty face' (85%). But standards of beauty still have an impact on the type of look women aim for. Most women around the world (72%) feel that the natural look is achievable for them personally: it is a look that's aspirational (56%) which can also be 'unique' (59%). However, less than half (46%) believe that they can create their desired look without make-up. With most women rating themselves as having an 'average' look, few feel able to explore more fashion-forward styling.

There are some individuals who are willing to try something different and explore their expressive side. The side that's more eye-catching and unique, standing out from the everyday crowd. An expressive look is considered more daring or unusual, and in-step with current fashions. But only 40% believe that an 'edgy' or 'bold' look is something that's possible for them personally.

Perhaps the first step to reducing beauty cyberbullying is to encourage the sharing of messages that celebrate the extraordinary and the differences between women. To show more pride in expression of their personal style. The power can be taken back by individuals who un-delete a selfie that previously saw them targeted by bullies. Busting the beauty myth of conventional standards doesn't have to come from traditionally creative individuals. There is a role for everyone to play in stopping beauty cyberbullies from squashing self-expression and diversity.

“ We have to fight it... because bullying on the internet can make your real life really miserable. I know it's really hard to change people, but any action can do something and if only one person will be stronger, or one person will stop bullying then it's worth it. ”

Ewa 33

## RIMMEL'S PERSPECTIVE

We're about self-expression. It's what makes our customers who they are. It's why we love make-up – it lets someone be who they want to be. To learn that this self-expression is under threat is not something we can ignore. The results of this research were so horrifying for us that we were determined to do something. To take a stand. That's why we've created our new campaign to encourage everyone to start talking about beauty cyberbullying. We want to give people the confidence to call others out. We want people who do bully, or who share comments, to think about the impact this is having on their victims. We want them to think before they say something.

The campaign we're launching is unlike any other we have done before - and that is absolutely deliberate. Having a purpose, standing up against this behaviour, making a statement about something we truly believe in, and affecting real change was what we set out to do. We'll be launching this campaign during UK National Anti-Bullying week, which we think is a really poignant moment to start talking about this really important topic. Focussing on digital channels, where the bullying takes place, we want people to stand up to the beauty cyberbullying that they see. We want to encourage them not to question and worry and doubt about the comments that they might receive. We want to support them to stand up to those negative comments and help others who are victims of beauty cyberbullying. We want to give them confidence.

We've also committed to working with non-profit organisation The Cybersmile Foundation. We'll be helping parents, schools, children, teenagers, and older adults understand how to manage and respond to beauty cyberbullying. At the same time as raising awareness of the issue, we're supporting the development of an artificial intelligence tool that will direct those seeking help to the right resources. It will give them access to helplines and organisations who can provide them with the confidence and reassurance they need most.

By sharing the powerful stories of empowerment from our cast, raising awareness of beauty cyberbullying, and by partnering with Cybersmile, we believe we will help this important non-profit reach more people. By using our platforms, our network of influencers, our consumers and partners, we can raise much needed awareness of this issue. We can help people see just how serious it has become. We can help women and men who are experiencing beauty cyberbullying realise that they are not alone. We will champion everyone's right to express themselves, to help more people feel confident, and to support them to stand up to beauty cyberbullying.



## ABOUT THE CYBERSMILE FOUNDATION

The Cybersmile Foundation is a multi-award-winning non-profit organisation committed to tackling all forms of digital abuse and bullying online. They work to promote diversity and inclusion by building a safer, more positive digital community and encouraging people to realise their full potential without the fear of ridicule and abuse.

Cyberbullying, harassment and digital abuse is increasing. The current online environment lacks the balance and social rules of engagement that have been cultivated over generations. Rules that govern the behaviour and relationships in the physical world. This holds many individuals back from enjoying the benefits that internet access can provide. The Cybersmile Foundation is committed to helping everyone realise their true potential. By supporting those who are bullied and abused online, and changing the behaviour of the bullies themselves through education, they are preparing this and further generations for a safe and positive digital future. The Cybersmile Foundation promotes positive digital citizenship. Their mission is a simple one: they “believe that everybody should have the right to access and enjoy the benefits that our new connected digital world offers – without the fear of bullying, threats and abuse.”

With Rimmel’s support over the next year, Cybersmile will launch Cybersmile Assistant, a ‘state of the art’ AI driven tool that will recommend appropriate resources, helplines, organisations and articles localised to the user and best suited for their particular problem. The nature of AI machine learning means that Cybersmile Assistant will become more intuitive and more effective as it grows over time. This ground-breaking tool will be launching in all English-speaking countries in 2019.

Scott Freeman, CEO, The Cybersmile Foundation says, “we are excited to be partnering with Rimmel, working together for a more inclusive Internet where people can recognise and celebrate their own beauty and individuality without fear of ridicule, bullying and abuse. Rimmel’s brand purpose is perfectly aligned with the Cybersmile mission.”

A lot more information can be found on their website – you can find more info here

[www.cybersmile.org/who-we-are](http://www.cybersmile.org/who-we-are)

## ABOUT THE STUDY

The Global Beauty Cyberbullying study was conducted by **delineate**, a strategic insights firm and their sister company **opinion.life**, an international market research company.

The study was conducted in November 2017 among over 11,000 women aged between 16 and 25 from 10 countries worldwide: US, Argentina, UK, Spain, Germany, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, China and Australia.

Women were selected from online consumer panels in each market and then invited to complete the online survey by mobile or computer. Respondents were eligible on the basis of age and region, with representative quotas set according to published statistics for each country. All women were eligible to take part, irrespective of their make-up usage or brand preferences.

For more information please contact:

[NAME]

Rimmel [ROLE]

EMAIL





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