Cymorth i Ferched Cymru
Welsh Women's Aid

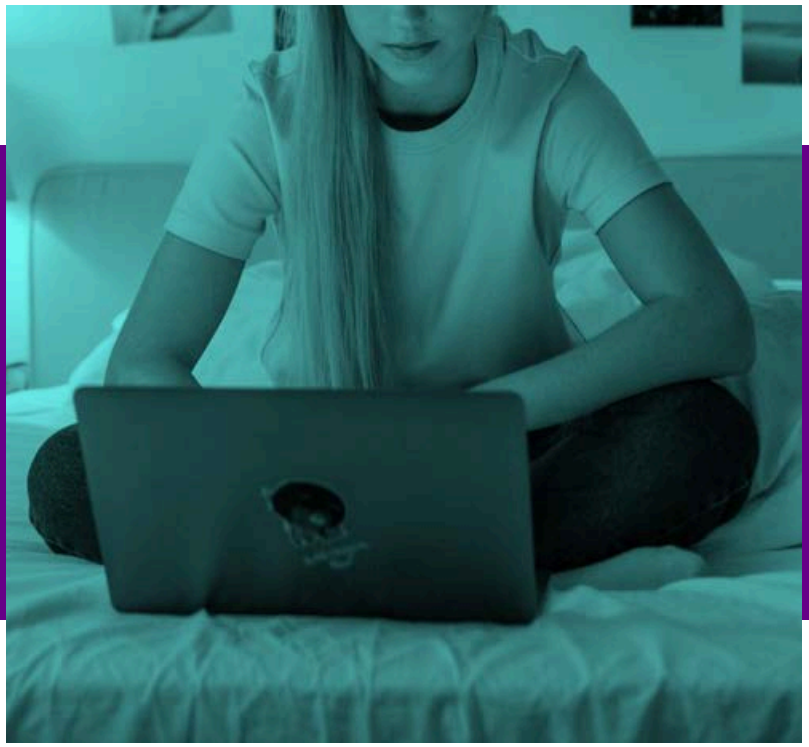


Building Online Safety Together

Women & Girls Match Fund
BigGive

We all know that online spaces have become far more important in our lives than we ever anticipated. These spaces have a huge impact on relationships both the physical and virtual world. Children and young people particularly, can be affected by the abuse, harm and influences of online content. These spaces often take advantage of how difficult it is to keep up with constantly changing safety risks.

Welsh Women's Aid are pleased to present our Toolkit for Building Online Safety Together. This toolkit aims to support parents and carers in supporting children and young people online and helping them to build safety online together, in a way that supports everyone. These conversations can often be awkward and we aim to help a little along the way – although we can't promise the awkwardness will be totally eliminated!



As the online world is ever-changing, so is policy and legislation.

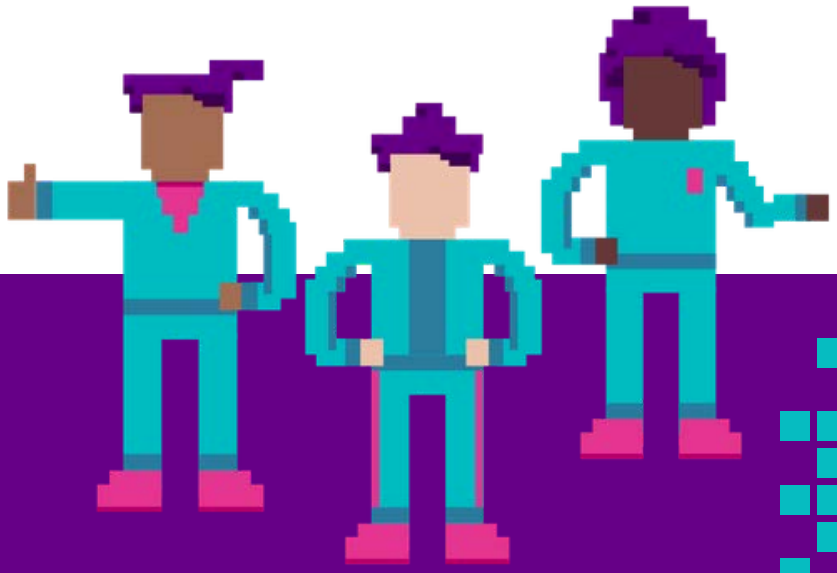
This toolkit comes at a time where we are waiting for details of the UK Government announcement to ban social media for under 16s. You can find more information on plans here: Fact sheet: New rules to protect children online - GOV.UK. These changes are to be implemented in Spring 2027. We aim to provide a briefing on these changes once more details have been released.

The social media ban means there will certainly be a different approach needed to support children under the age of 16. But we also know that children will still have access to the online world. It is important that we all continue the work together to ensure that these spaces are made as safe as possible.

It is incumbent on social media companies and other online bodies to make these spaces a place where all children are able to express themselves in safe ways. But until these companies take responsibility and accountability, we aim to do what we can to equip children and young people and their parents and carers with the knowledge they need.

Whilst many of these resources are separated into age-appropriate categories, it is important to consider each child and young person as an individual. Children and young people progress at different ages and this should be considered when selecting which resources of the toolkit to use.

Please note, that some of the topics within this toolkit may be challenging and uncomfortable. We also know that parents and carers can have their own experiences and this can affect how difficult these conversations can be. We want to keep you safe also. With that in mind, we have included resources and signposting to specialist services that are there to listen and support you.



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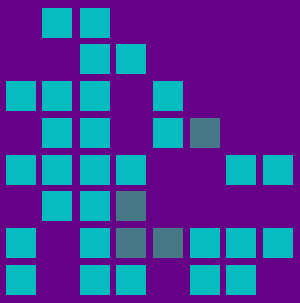
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We are pleased to share a number of resources, like how to start difficult conversations, important words and contexts, and shared problem-solving activities.

Take a look through our guide in your own time and select what you think will be appropriate and helpful for you and your child or young person.



What's what:
A guide to the topics we'll cover

Analysing online content

We consume content on a daily basis. Ofcom found in 2025 that a child aged between 8-14 spent an average of 2h59m online across multiple devices, with girls spending more time online compared to boys.

With more online usage than ever before, it's important that children know how to distinguish the facts from the fiction in what they're consuming. Important areas of consideration here include how was the content created? For what purpose was the content created? Is there a monetary value to the content? Is the opinion shared necessarily your opinion?

Our section on analysing online content will hone in on these questions, allowing children and young people the space to develop their own analytical processes.

Online safety tips

How do we instil good online practices in the consumption habits of children and young people? Let's start the conversation from accessing porn to sending images, and everything in between.

The law says that a nude or semi-nude picture of a person under 18 is an 'indecent image of a child', even if you took it yourself and if everyone involved agreed. As a result, taking the picture, sending it, receiving and keeping it, and also sharing it with others are all offences. Anything vaguely sexual in nature is covered by this. This is still the same if you're aged 16-17.

Grooming

Grooming is the process in which a person establishes a close, trusting relationship with a child or vulnerable adult in order to exploit them in some manner. It can occur in real life, or online. It can look like contact being made with the child and the groomer portraying themselves to be a trusted figure.

Relationships can be built around friendship or romantic relationships, but commonly used tactics include:

1. **Targeting the victim:** those who are vulnerable in some way; perhaps they are unpopular, spend time alone, are unsupervised, have additional learning needs or have previous experience of abuse. They may be more susceptible to being exploited.

2. **Do favours and compliments to lower the child's defences.**

3. **Building relationships:** in the targeting stage, the groomer will collect information about their victim. Here, they'll put it to use. Offer unsupervised child support and friendship. The power dynamic will make this relationship inappropriate.

4. **Gain trust:** this can look like gifting, giving attention, secret conversations and anything that gives a sense of a special relationship. Consider this in the context of a person trying to become an influencer, support, media coverage and mentorship could easily be offered.

5. **Fulfilling needs:** once the relationship is formed, trust is built... now the groomer fulfils promises by demonstrating actions they previously agreed upon.

6. **Insisting that the child keeps their 'friendship' a secret.**

7. **Isolating the victim:** this is classic groomer or abuser behaviour where the perpetrator puts themselves between their victim and their support network. It can look like a victim changing behaviours online, or perhaps meeting up with and talking to friends less. Perhaps the groomer now has intimate images of the victim and is threatening to release them online.

8. **Maintaining the control:** once the victim is isolated, the groomer can abuse the victim at will. Online, this can look like coercing them to send intimate images or videos, and keeping the control by threatening to distribute them.

Over time, the child may become isolated from family members, which allows the groomer greater control.

Misogyny and Incels

Over 100 people around the world have been killed as a result of incel attacks.

Misogyny and Incel Culture are closely linked but are very different issues.

Misogyny refers to the hatred or contempt of women and girls. It can look like being prejudiced against women and girls and discussing feminine stereotypes. It's rooted in a belief of male dominance and that simply put, men are better than women. It can also be used to punish women who venture outside of gender norms. It differs from sexism in that it's an active dislike targeting women only. It can look like harassment, harm or unfair beliefs. In this age bracket, it could look like saying that someone 'throws like a girl', telling an upset friend that 'boys don't cry, weak girls do' or saying that there are specific games or jobs for specific sexes.

In short, it's a belief that female classmates are less: less clever, less strong, less important. Schools may treat signs of misogyny in children as a safeguarding issue, because it can lead to an increased risk of peer-on-peer abuse and future issues around harm.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines 'incel' as ' a person (usually a man) who is or identifies as involuntarily celibate and typically expresses extreme resentment and hostility toward those who are sexually active'. It is a movement separate from misogyny but closely linked. Incels more often than not blame women and society for their lack of romantic relationships, stating that 80% of women target the top 20% of men, if men were to be ranked according to looks and power. The movement started off quite small as a safe space for people of any gender to discuss loneliness and social isolation but has grown into a massive subsection of the internet, with terms such as 'manosphere' often being used in conjunction. It is now a male-dominated environment with deep hostility and prejudice against women seen often. It has been linked to multiple mass murders and public attacks.

Manosphere

The Manosphere is the term given for the network of forums, sites, and social media pages dedicated to misogynistic and incel ideology. It has its own language and different subsections. What these subsections have in common is a definition of masculinity, a hatred of feminism and gender equality and a drive to engage with newsfeeds, either through content creation or real-world crime.



Porn and depictions of harm

Between 2021-22, a governmental review found that 10% of children had viewed pornography by the age of 9, by the age of 11 this had risen to 27% and then to half of all children surveyed by age 13.3 Pornography has almost become a part of the process of growing up. Pornography is not only accessed through adult sites, but also through social media platforms like X,

Instagram and Snapchat or through adult stars using apps such as Tiktok to drive user traffic to their content. In October 2023, the Online Safety Act came into law, targeting illegal content and maintaining strict age verification policies. From this, we've seen major adult sites require age confirmation through the provision of users' legal identification before access can be gained. However, we live in an ever-changing world, and in a world of Virtual Private Networks and network spoofing, pornography education is still a much needed resource.

Pornography by and large is monetised content, with someone set to profit. In order to stand out from the crowd, we have seen more and more extreme depictions of sexual activity become normalised in recent years. An example of this is strangulation – so normalised, that there is now a major TV soap plotline based upon it. This isn't normal, nor should it be normalised. Conversations about depictions of sexual activity should start from a young age and be rooted in ideas of safety, respect and analysis of content creation.

Setting boundaries online



Have we ever been as readily contactable as we are now?

It could be argued that the days of knocking on someone's door and asking a friend can come out to play are drawing to a close in many areas, particularly as we consider further safety implications around a child left outside without direct adult supervision. Using apps such as Roblox, Snapchat and other social media platforms, children and young people are living entire lives online, with intricate social dynamics at play. From a young age, let's build habits that safeguard in more ways than one.

Managing cyberbullying



Cyberbullying is a form of bullying which utilises technology. It can happen alone or in conjunction with bullying in the real world. The National Centre for Social Research has found that 47% of children reported being bullied by the age of 14, with girls more likely to experience this. We'll offer simple advice and guidance to cope with a complex situation.

Cyberbullying can look like:

- **Trolling** – the deliberate posting of inflammatory, off-topic, or provocative messages online primarily to upset people, spark arguments, or disrupt conversations rather than to repeatedly harm a specific individual.
- **Mobbing** – a group of people collectively and repeatedly targets an individual using social media to harass, humiliate, isolate or intimidate them.

- **Stalking** – targeted pattern of online behaviour such as monitoring, messaging, or tracking that causes the someone to feel afraid, threatened or severely distressed.
- **Harassment** – repeated insulting or threatening messages across social media platforms.
- **Creating fake profiles online to abuse others.**
- **Fake news** – sharing false gossip, 'facts' and similar online.
- **Embarrassing photos being shared online.**
- **Constant negative comments.**

Contacting the Police is certainly an option when it comes to combating Cyberbullying. Keep screenshots and examples of everything, it could constitute an offence under the Malicious Communications Act 1988.

This act covers:

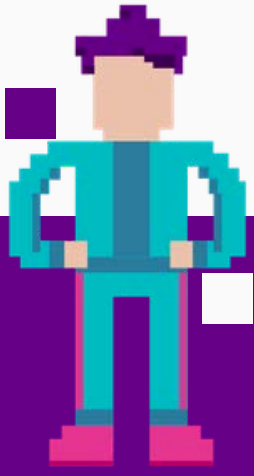
- Emails, texts, social media posts and comments.
- Indecent or offensive comments.
- Threats.
- False information – the sharing of lies you know aren't true.

It's all about the intent behind the act and it doesn't matter if the message is unsent, clicking send in the first place was not ok.

Screentime

Screen time can often be a tricky subject to discuss as it is one where people have strong views. We're not here to judge your parenting. Many families utilise screen time to help manage busy lives, work demands and children's needs. This is especially true if a child has additional needs and relies on a device to help regulate. When considering screen use, it's helpful to look at it like a tool, but not the entire toolbox.

There isn't a set amount of screen time that is suitable for every child in every family, it depends on that child and the balance that they experience. Are they balancing screentime with socialising, sleep, eating and family and friends? Can they create meaningful connection with other humans in the real world? If this is tricky for them, then certainly a conversation can be had with them. By working with children and young people to achieve goals, you increase buy in and ensure that interventions (if applicable) are rooted in real and meaningful changes.



Communicating effectively

Setting the scene



This toolkit includes a number of conversation starters, below is guidance on how to approach this.

Having open and honest conversations about complex topics can be difficult. Before you get started, ask yourself 'does this conversation need to happen now or is there a better time for it?' Put differently, are you being proactive or reactive? Wherever possible, being proactive is the best option. Demonstrate a willingness and ability to chat about the hard things in a healthy environment, rather than after a challenging event or difficult interaction. There is no such thing as a perfect parent, and it is okay to get things wrong along the way. Parenting can sometimes feel like a rollercoaster and the trickiest of conversations might pop up unexpectedly, so here are a few quick tips to set you on the way to success:

- Is this a conversation to be had face to face or a conversation to be had while doing an activity? For example, driving in the car can be a good time to chat to teenagers particularly. They do not need to make eye contact and may feel more comfortable talking about difficult topics during this time. You could have a conversation about misogyny whilst doing an arts and crafts activity like' 'draw a boy and now draw a girl, what is different and what is similar?'



- When giving your opinion, use a lot of 'I...' statements and model this for them too.
- Be open and responsive to your child.
- Acknowledge that the conversation might be difficult or awkward, but make clear why it's important that you're having it.
- Children might need time to consider what you're saying, and responses might be a long time in coming – allow space for thought. It may be helpful to adjust some of the wording to make it sound reflective.
- Try to avoid displaying strong emotions. It is okay to be nervous. You can even say, "I am a little nervous speaking to you about this, and it is okay if you feel this way as well". This kind of honesty builds trust and not shame. The same goes for embarrassment!

- Be open, honest and prepared for the conversation. You won't always have all the answers, so consider searching for them together – this could help build research and source analysis skills too.
- If you're worried about the language you should be using, or want to use a website resource to help guide the conversation, Childline have a range of games which could provide a good starting off point: https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/u12-landing/.

What does active listening look like?



Active listening is not something we tend to do on a day to day basis. A lot of the time, the conversations we're having require us to listen in order to respond – this is very different. By using active listening skills in the tricky moments of life, we build trust, strengthen bonds and also are able to get a full sense of what is happening for the child in front of us.
Active listening skills include:

- **Paying full attention** – in this, put away any potential distractions and focus on the person in front of you. They might find it easier to chat whilst doing an activity, that's ok! Focus on the person and the activity, not any devices or other people who may be around.

- **Use your body** – body language shows a person when we're listening and when we're not. Are you keeping eye contact, nodding and smiling along? Orient yourself so that you're facing your child and keeping an open posture. Crossed arms won't help here!

- **Give space** – don't leap in to fill silences or cut your child off. When we leave spaces, humans will work to fill them, and you'll find yourself having a more detailed and nuanced conversation.

- **Reflect on what your child has said** - 'I can hear how confusing it is for you from….', 'When you say …., what do you mean?' This shows you're listening, but also that you care to get it right and seek clarification.

- **Open up those questions!** Ask open questions and follow up with more if this feels right. Bloom's Taxonomy can help you when it comes to articulating questions. See below!

Bloom's Taxonomy

remember

- Can you name all the...?
- Describe what happens when...?
- How is (are)...?
- How would you define...?
- How would you identify...?
- How would you outline...?
- How would you recognise...?
- List the... in order.

understand

- Can you clarify...?
- Can you illustrate...?
- Condense this paragraph.
- Contrast...
- Elaborate on...
- Explain why...
- Give an example.
- How can you describe...?

apply

- Can you group by characteristics such as...?
- Do you know of another instance where...?
- Draw a story map.
- Explain why a character acted in the way that they did.
- From information given, develop instructions about...?

analyse

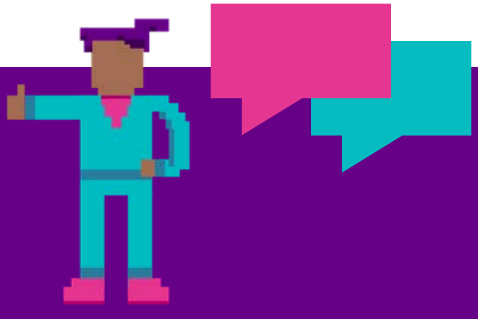
- Discuss the pros and cons of...
- How can you classify...according to?
- How can you sort the different parts...?
- How is...connected to...?
- How is...similar to...?
- How would you categorise...?
- How would you explain...?

evaluate

- How would you feel if...?
- How would you grade...?
- How would you have handled...?
- Is there a better solution to...?
- Judge the value of...?
- Rank the importance of...?
- Rate the...
- What are the alternatives?
- What are the consequences of...?

create

- Can you develop a proposal which would...?
- Can you see a solution to...?
- Devise a way to...?
- How would you elaborate on the reason...?
- How would you generate a plan to...?
- How would you improve...?



We're not here to script your conversations, but let's help you on your way.

Starting the conversation

Is this conversation happening as a result of an event? If so, be upfront about it, but ensure that an appropriate length of time has passed.

Are you feeling agitated or emotional about what has happened? If yes, consider waiting a bit longer.

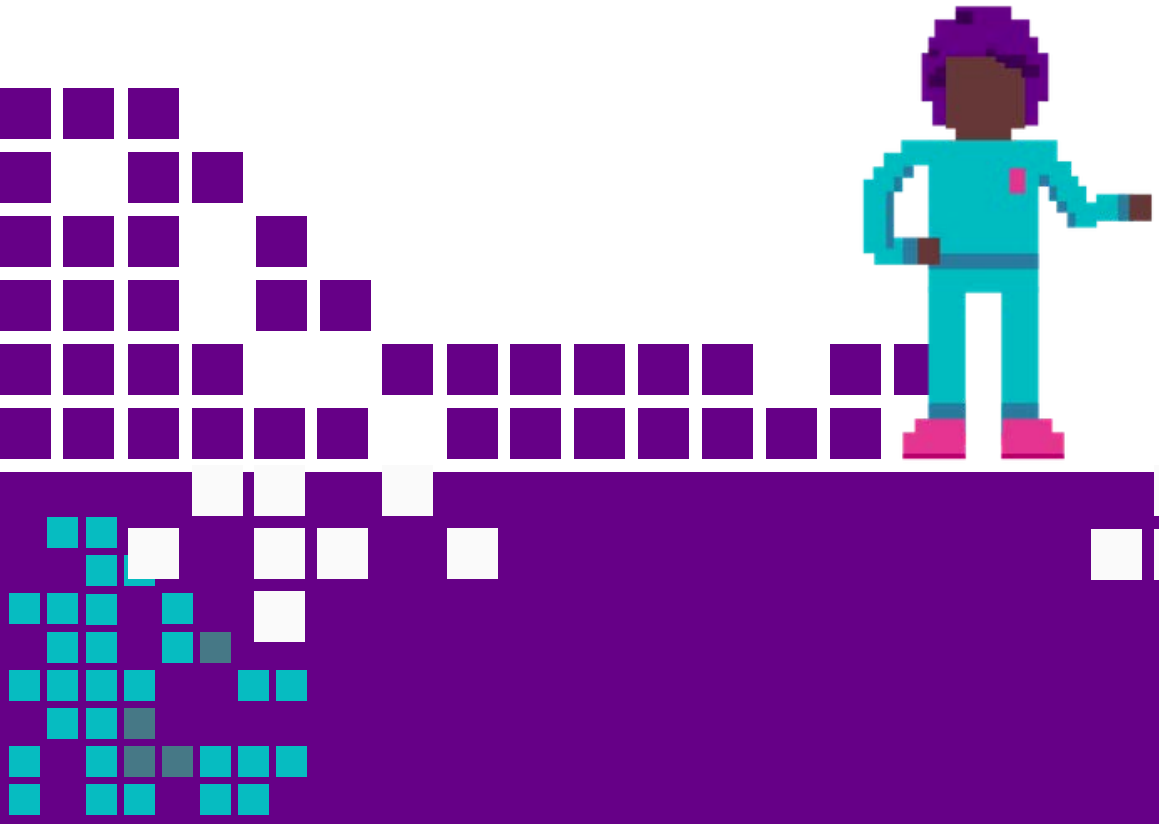
After what happened, I think it's important that we take time to talk about... . What do you think?'



If it's a proactive conversation, what about a simple:

It's important as people that we take care to consider others. It's also important to look after ourselves. Have you got time today to talk about ...?

I've been seeing a lot of conversation online about..., have you seen this?'



How does this link to the curriculum?

Phase 2 of the Curriculum for Wales Relationships and Sexuality Education Code states that learners should:

- Have the ability to form and maintain relationships which are equitable, respectful and kind with a range of others.
- Recognise and know how to safely respond to and challenge gender and sexual stereotypes and unfair behaviour.
- Have an awareness of how positive and negative social and cultural norms regarding sex, gender and sexuality influence relationships and behaviours.
- Have an awareness that there are many different sources of information offline and online that help us learn about our bodies and affect how we feel about our body and other people's bodies.
- Be able to identify trustworthy sources of information and able to raise issues and questions with trusted adults.
- Have an understanding of the importance of fair treatment for all and of respect in all interpersonal interactions offline and online.
- Be able to recognise the value of non-discriminatory behaviours and when and how to take safe action to respond to and challenge discriminatory behaviours.
- Have an understanding of the right to bodily privacy, personal boundaries including online.
- Recognise which steps to take to keep safe from harm both in offline and online friendships.
- Know how and when digital media can be shared safely, with permission and when it can be a source of harm.
- Have an awareness of the benefits and dangers of the internet and social media in forming friendships online.
- Be able to explore the motives behind fabricated and digitally-altered media.

Phase 3 of the Curriculum for Wales Relationships and Sexuality Education Code states that learners should:

- Understanding and use of effective communication, decision making, managing and resolving conflict, and refusal skills in a range of different contexts and types of relationships, offline and online, including intimate relationships.
- Critically engaging with positive and negative representations of a diversity of bodies, including through various forms of media and understanding that these can be unrealistic and harmful.
- Understanding the legal age of consent.

- Recognise and be able to use a range of support services to access information and support around relationships, health and well-being and safety.
- Developing a sense of individual and social responsibility to others, including consideration of how we respond to behaviours that are 12 discriminatory, disrespectful and harmful, offline and online.
- Understanding the impacts associated with sexual material and intimacy online, including the ethical and legal implications.



Please note that the curriculum phases cover a range of years and it's important to remember that children develop at different rates. Please take this information as a guide, and tailor according to your child's development and needs.



Supporting parents of children aged 8-11 years

It's not easy parenting in an ever-changing world.

In our survey, parents shared their concerns and their recognition of work already being done to set children up with the skills they need to adapt to an ever-changing world. In the context of education, this section allows children to be able to form and maintain safe relationships with peers, whilst fostering an understanding of fair treatment, privacy and harm mitigation as noted in Phase 2 of the curriculum.

Having difficult conversations



How trustworthy is the internet?

What can you tell me about how people use the internet?

Of the people who use the internet, are there any who get paid for this?

Proceed then to discuss influencers and how they work – they get paid a certain amount for views and interactions.

Can you name any influencers or celebrities that use the internet? Are there many?

What do you think this large amount of influencers means in the context of what people share? They need to stand out from the crowd and sometimes the easiest way of doing this is to make content that is eye-catching or shocking. Sometimes, this content isn't true and might be an exaggeration. Sometimes, they might use AI to create videos or images that look very, very real. Do you think AI could be used for less honest reasons?

When we look at anything online, we need to consider who is saying that thing and if they stand to gain anything from saying it.

How can we keep safe online?

What do you know about relationships?

Are there any things you may have seen online that you're not sure about or don't understand what's happening?

Are there any words you're unsure about that you may have heard or seen being used?

Not every person is a friend

Who are your friends? How did you meet them? (Expect here to hear about family friends and friends from school.)

Are there any friends that we (parents/guardians) haven't met? What do they like to do?

At some point, you might have a friend who asks you to keep secrets from us. They may be worried, embarrassed, or not feel safe talking about it. While it's kind to support your friends, some things are too important to keep secret and should be shared with a trusted adult. Does this sound familiar to you?

Are there any other kind of unsafe friends? How about friends we talk to on the internet? Do you know all of the ones you talk to online in real life? This is always best because sometimes people online are not who they say they are. If someone you don't know tries to talk to you or add you, it's ok to not accept them and to click block – this is not being rude.

Misogyny

Can you list all the adjectives you can think of to describe girls and do the same for boys? What about their skills, what kind of skills do boys and girls have - are they different?

Have you heard anyone ever say that a person throws like a girl? What do you think that means? What if they say that boys shouldn't cry, why do people say this?

It's important in life to treat everyone in a fair and kind way. People deserve to live happy, safe lives. Sometimes, people target girls in particular in an unfair way and say that they shouldn't do things, or even that they can't do things because they're girls. What do you think of this? How might this impact girls' lives? What should you do when you see this kind of behaviour?

Content we're not comfortable with (pornography etc.)

What kind of things have you seen online? Have you ever seen anything that made you feel uneasy? Tell me about it!

The internet can be a really cool place, but because it's made up of millions of people putting content online, it can also be weird, inappropriate and sometimes just plain scary. What can you do when you see things you're uncomfortable with?

Boundaries are brilliant

What do we do when someone says no? We listen and adjust our behaviours. It's ok to prioritise you and what makes you feel happy and safe. if someone displays behaviour you're not comfortable with, tell an adult. If you feel up to it, you could tell them something along the lines of 'I don't want to do that as I don't feel comfortable. Please stop asking me.' It is okay and important to have boundaries.

Cyberbullying

Bullying behaviours happen in a lot of different ways. In school, have you seen someone be called names or maybe treated roughly – pushed or hit? This is bullying.

But bullying doesn't have to be physical. Have you seen someone be left out from games or conversations? How do you think this feels? Who is the person making them feel like this? If it's you, how is it making you feel? It's not ok for people to feel scared at school or uncomfortable around others, even if it is their friends making them feel like this.

Cyberbullying is being unkind to someone online. How might this happen? (here, your child might be stuck to start with, so begin perhaps with using the example of editing someone's photo or leaving unkind comments and messages on their chosen platform) How do you think this feels for the person?

Begin to discuss here avenues of support. Tell a trusted adult what's happening. Don't suffer alone when there is help to be had.

Screen time

Before getting started here, consider:

- How do you use screens?
- When there is no screen time, how does your child react?
- How does your child seem after screen time?
- Have electronic devices led to any issues?

If the above raises red flags for you, then it might be time to have a conversation.

What do you like to do?

How do you feel about how much screentime you have?

How would you feel about trying to mix things up so you have lots of new experiences? We can make a list together. This isn't me saying no more device, but rather an opportunity to branch out.

We're all going to try not to use devices during meals now, as we're getting used to it, is there anything you'd like to have instead? Colouring, books or maybe a puzzle?

Technology is brilliant and it's great having information at the tips of your fingers at all times, but when screens are everywhere, sometimes we need a break.



Building Online Safety Worksheet 8 to 11

Fill in the gaps

You can use technology like _____ to create or edit photos, videos and documents.

Sometimes unkindness towards people is rooted in things they can't control, like their gender, age or nationality. This can quickly develop into _____.

Not everything we see online is real, people use _____ to help make points in arguments or to make money.

_____ is the most important part of being online.

When we say 'no' and don't share information about our lives online, we can call this having _____.

Bullying doesn't just happen face to face. When it happens online, we call it _____.



misinformation	A.I.	boundaries
hatred	cyberbullying	safety

Spot the difference

There are six differences in the pictures below, can you find them all?





Why might a person want to edit how they look before putting a picture online?

What do you think?

Jamie is ten years old and in year five in his local primary school. At the weekend, he plays football for the second team in town and loves it. He has a small group of friends and they talk every day at school. At home, he plays PlayStation Live with the same friends.

Recently, friends from football have asked to join in on the gaming and he's added them to the chat. Mikey, his friend from school, is a bit shy and slow to warm up to people. Tom, a friend from football, has been calling Mikey a snob and arguing that he isn't kind to them as he's quiet. Jamie was added to a separate gaming channel last night, Mikey wasn't there and the other boys from both friendship groups talked about how fed up they were with him. In school today, Mikey was quieter and his eyes looked swollen and red. Jamie feels stuck in the middle and wants to please everyone, but isn't sure what to do.



What do you think of the group's behaviour?

What could Jamie do next?

What would you have done?

Additional sources of support



For guides:

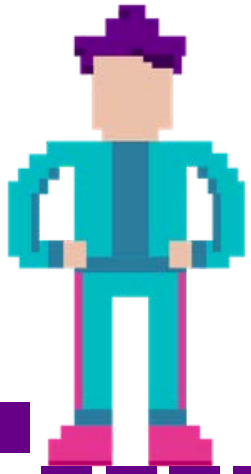
- https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/8_10/watch/

For gamers:

- https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/quiz/
- https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/band-runner/

For grown ups:

- https://www.barnardos.org.uk/blog/online-safety-parents-questions
- https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/
- https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/8_10/grown-ups/
- https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/child-and-youth-safety-online



Supporting parents of children aged 11-13 years

It's not easy parenting in an ever-changing world.

In this section, we will consider age-appropriate ways to have open and honest conversations with our children, supported with an optional worksheet. This section links to the curriculum as it develops children and young people's abilities to engage critically with sources, understand the impact of decisions made around relationships and intimacy, and consider how to respond to harmful practices.

As always, we're not here to judge or to provide exact scripts you need to follow, but rather to help you start that conversation and give you the resources to feel comfortable in doing so.

Having difficult conversations



Online safety

Most social media platforms have minimum age rules for users. However, these currently do not require proof of age and can quickly be duped. As such, it's important that we take some time to discuss common social media community guidelines. Whilst each platform will have their own specific rules, there are common themes to these.

- Don't share or send explicit content.
- Don't share or send discriminatory content.
- Don't doxx people (share personal information about them).
- Don't encourage dangerous behaviour or violence.

Take time with your children to talk about the platforms they use and then look at the specific rules for that platform. You'll see these in our useful links section. If they do come across anything they're unsure or uneasy about, by having open conversations you demonstrate that you are a person who can talk about this comfortably without being emotional and they'll raise these things with you in future. You'll find platform specific guidance on how to block and report in our useful links section.

What kind of things do you do online?

Be very protective of your algorithm. On average, we're about four pieces of content away from things we want to view to content we don't. Social media algorithms are incredibly clever, and track how long you wait before scrolling onwards. The app will measure how long you pause to read or watch a video, if you interact further and also how fast you flick past things you're not interested in. With that in mind, if you view things you don't necessarily like, the algorithm might easily get skewed. If you come across any content you

don't like, talk to me about it. Let's talk about how it makes you feel and why. Then we'll look at ways where we can work to ensure you don't come across something like that again.

Content - is it realistic? Is it even real?

The rapidly evolving use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has made it increasingly easy to create convincing deepfakes (video, image or audio recording that has been artificially created using AI and machine-learning techniques to make it appear like someone said or did something they did not), raising important concerns about misinformation, trust and online safety.

Can you spot AI generated content?

What might be an indicator that something has been run through an AI system?

You might look out for:

- Writing that is deformed or just plain gibberish. Signs, badges and background items are often affected by this.
- Odd shapes in the background. Are patterns repeating, getting blurry or just plain wonky?
- Physical features. Count the fingers and check the ears!
- Does the skin have any blemishes? Everyone has skin texture and some flaws. Perfectly smoothed and airbrushed skin do signify the use of filters at the very least.

It is worth noting that with the rapid improvement of AI, these signs might be outdated soon. If an image or video is too good to be true or too far-fetched then it probably is AI generated. I.e. bunnies on the trampoline.

If you're ever unsure about an image, conduct a reverse image search. Copy and paste it into Google to see where else on the internet it might live. This is especially useful when considering buying items off the internet from sellers you don't know.

Grooming

You can be groomed by people you know such as family members, friends or trusted adults, as well as by complete strangers.

Consider your friends list. How did you build it?

Do you know everyone on it in real life? If not, how did you meet that person?

Have you ever had someone get in touch with you unexpetedly? They might start with

compliments on the content or ask that you collab with them. We live in a world where social media can be monetised and requests like these can be completely legitimate.

Here are some things to ask yourself when you get contacted from people you don't know:

- How do you know them in real life?
- Are they offering a bespoke/special/personalised service just for you? Run this past an adult.
- Are they trying to speak to you elsewhere, perhaps an app that isn't monitored by parents?
- Are they offering you anything?
- Are they wanting to keep your friendship 'special', 'secret' or 'just for you' or similar?
- Do they want to meet up in real life?

If any of these ring true, talk to a trusted adult. There's no judgement, no anger – just recognition that not everyone on the internet is who they say they are.

Misogyny

Can you tell the different meaning between the phrases biological sex and gender?

For this chat, we're going to focus on male and female characteristics and behaviours. We're also going to spend time looking at gender stereotypes.

What is feminine to you and what is masculine?

Where do you get these associations from? (Explore family, friends, school and media influences here.)

Everyone has a belief system, but what can happen at times is that people's belief systems can be at odds with ideas around equity, equality and societal progress. Can you give me an example of this?

Misogyny is an example of this. It is the hatred of women and girls for the reason that they are women and girls. It's bigger than sexism and comes from the belief system that males are dominant and as such, more deserving of power, opportunity, education etc.

We stop misogyny by doing little things that go towards the bigger picture. If you see someone making a joke where someone is called 'girly', ask them what they mean and why it's funny, if you see someone being told they throw like a girl, tell them about the achievements of female sporting heroes- there are lots of ways of countering misogynistic rhetoric.

More information on gender & sex – When we're born, we're assigned a sex at birth based on biological factors like our genitals. More often than not, expectant parents are told during ultrasound scans if their baby is male or female, but this isn't always accurate! Sometimes, a child might be born with elements of both sexes' reproductive organs or hormones that don't typically fit into male or female sex brackets. In this instance, a doctor might use the term 'intersex'. This might not necessarily be apparent at birth, but become apparent during puberty or later on in life.

Depictions of harm

What do you know about pornography?

Where can you find porn?

What's the point of porn?

There's a lot of porn available on the internet, in a lot of different formats. Since the Online Safety Act, people have to show proof of age in order to be able to access it, but are you aware of anyone who's found a work around?

Because there is a lot of porn available, producers work really hard to make their content stand out. In this, you might see people with perfect bodies doing things that a person may not necessarily do day to day. This can include strangulation. There is no safe way to strangle a person and the effect it can have on a person worsens every time they are strangled. It's important to note too that porn in which protection is used often doesn't perform as well, leading producers to create work that doesn't show things like condoms.

Some people might watch a lot of porn and expect that this is what people look like in real life and this is what they do. That's rarely the case. The age of consent in the UK is 16 and building trust and respect is far more important than trying to match what you see online.

Building and maintaining boundaries

How many group chats are you in?

What are they like? I don't need to see them unless you want to show me something.

Do you find that people answer very quickly and expect you to do the same?

It's ok to prioritise time away from screens. The more you do it, the more normal it becomes. How would you feel about this?

What kind of things do you talk about at school or with friends?

Is that different or the same things you talk about online?

Remember that once something is said, it can't be unsaid. This is the case too with sharing content online – it's incredibly difficult to delete things from the internet wholly.

What can overshare look like?

It looks like posting personal, sensitive or excessive detail that you wouldn't comfortably share in a normal conversation, or that could create risk for you or others. For example, a long, emotional post describing a breakup, family argument, with names, screenshots of private messages and identifiable locations or daily posts about your exact routine or whereabout which build a predictable pattern.

What could be the effect of this?

Oversharing online can feel normal, but it can put your privacy, safety and future at risk by giving people too much info they could use to find you, pretend to be you or embarrass you.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying too is about the things we say not being able to be unsaid at times.

Cyberbullying can look like:

- Harassment: repeated insulting or threatening messages across social media platforms.
- Creating fake profiles online to abuse others.
- Fake news: sharing false gossip, 'facts' and similar online.
- Embarrassing photos being shared online.
- Constant negative comments.

Have you seen something like this happen? Has it happened to you?

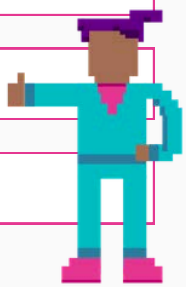
What do you think the bullied person felt?

Who can help at times like these?

Building Online Safety Worksheet 11 to 13

Define the term

Boundaries	
Deepfakes	
Gender	
Grooming	
Misogyny	
Monetised content	
Sex (biological)	



Is this okay?

1. You receive a message from an unknown account with a picture of a cat as a profile picture. It complimented your grid content and included a link to a social media marketing company.



2. You find a TikTok video of a classmate rating female classmates' appearance out of ten. Generally speaking, the ratings they give are quite high.



3. Your group chat is called Junior Kings and is made up of members of your sports team. One of them says they have an important thing to share. Two minutes later, they send a loud pornographic video as a joke.



Is this okay?

4. Your friend changes her username to Ana_2026 and begins posting content centered around fitness and bodies.

OK

NOT OK

5. You arrive at school to find your friends are blanking you and pretending as if you're not there. Last night, you uploaded an embarrassing image of your friend Lucy with a funny caption. The others have done something similar in the past.

OK

NOT OK

A.I. spotter

Have a look at this image. How does it make you feel?

If this was monetised content, would you be likely to follow this person or interact with them?



Now look at this image. How does it make you feel?

If this was monetised, would you be likely to follow the creator or interact with them?





Additional sources of support



For guides:

- Community guidelines by site: https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/11_18/lets-talk-about/online-safety/community-guidelines/
- Report and block: https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/11_18/lets-talk-about/online-safety/reporting-and-blocking/
- https://platfform4yp.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/39660-Platfform-NSPCC-Digital-Report-2026-English.pdf

For gamers:

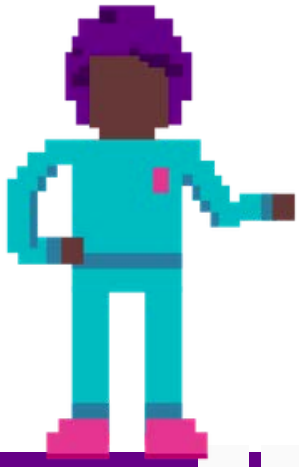
- https://cybergamesuk.com/cybergames

From Ask Me CYP: Slide 4

- https://welshwomensaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Online-Safety-Protected-2.pptx

For grown ups:

- https://www.barnardos.org.uk/blog/online-safety-parents-questions
- https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers
- https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/child-and-youth-safety-online



Supporting parents of children aged 14-18 years

Parenting teenagers can feel like it is not for the weak of heart.

This section will include a wider scope of discussion and support as you have conversations with your child. It is during this age range that they legally become adults. Whilst the age of consent is 16, your child will legally be a minor until their 18th birthday. It's important that they are aware of how this means that some things they consider a normal part of relationships, e.g. sexting, are illegal and could have consequences.

This section links to the curriculum as it develops children and young people's abilities to engage critically with sources, understand the impact of decisions made around relationships and intimacy, and consider how to respond to harmful practices.

This guide will differ from the others as the age bracket spans both the age of consent and the age in which you become an adult. The sections will be clearly defined, and you might find that the ways in which you have conversations may evolve as your children grow and become adults.

Having difficult conversations



Analysing online content

Have you seen something online which looks a bit funky?

AI can be an amazing tool, but it is also a mechanism which is used to cause harm and distress. AI Deepfakes are a widespread issue in which people's images and videos are used to create often explicit content depicting a range of acts.

Have you seen any examples?

If you do, report any pieces of content. There are tools which can be used to remove content from the internet if you become aware of AI-generated content of you being circulated.

Money talks!

In other sections of the toolkit, we've explored monetisation of content. Here, we'll take a bit of a technical view of it.

Have you ever watched a film, a video or a programme and seen that the camera lingers on brand logos or specific items like a phone or trainers? This is on purpose. Once you start spotting it, it's hard to miss!

Influencers are legally required in the UK to make it clear if they are using gifted or

sponsored content. Check the list of hashtags, can you see a #ad mixed in there? If the content is clearly sponsored, and there is no AD or tagging of a company, report this content.

If you're being encouraged to interact in some way, chances are, it's monetised content. There is a monetary value to keeping you engaged and this can quickly add up for influencers; especially when you factor brand deals into the mix!

This need to make money and be seen also leads to polarisation of content on the internet. The algorithm LOVES extreme views – it drives up engagement and driving up engagement means you drive up the bank balance. This can lead to people becoming more and more caught up in world affairs until they struggle to get a break from heavy content. As the algorithm becomes smarter and provides more of what is consumed, newsfeeds can become an echo chamber. This is great when you consider it might be full of posts around helping others and the like, but when we consider then political extremism, misogynistic content and incel culture – less great.

Probing questions:

- What does your newsfeed look like?
- Why do you think people posted that?
- Can you think of examples where the internet has played a part in real world events?

Online safety tips

Sending images

Have you sent or received any videos or pictures that you could describe as intimate?

Why did you do this? How did you feel?

What do you think might happen if these images are sent further afield?

Whilst the age of consent may be 16, you should know that you are not legally an adult until 18. This means that sending intimate images has legal implications.

The law says that a nude or semi-nude picture of a person under 18 is an 'indecent image of a child', even if you took it yourself and if everyone involved agreed. As a result, taking the picture, sending it, receiving and keeping it, and also sharing it with others are all offences. Anything vaguely sexual in nature is covered by this. This is still the same if you're aged 16-17.

If you're sent a picture of someone under the age of 18, don't keep it – delete it! Tell a trusted adult or report it to the police. If it's over social media, report it to the app too!

How would you feel about doing any of the above?

Can you think of instances where people at school might have sent it on? How do you think the pictured person felt?

If it was you doing the sending, consider:

- Why did you send it? Did you feel coerced or manipulated at all?
- Do you trust the person you sent it to?
- How do you feel about the fact that they're well within their rights to contact the police?

Sending images for adults 18+

Have you been sent any unsolicited pictures? How did this make you feel? What did you do?

Have you been asked to send pictures or feel tempted to do so?

Consider, do you trust the recipient?

Do you trust that they would never keep or share images or videos of you?

How would you feel if they did get out?

Here, you may wish to consider practical safety tips if the adult is planning on sending images. You cannot control everything, particularly if they're adults, but you can give advice and indicate that you are person who can talk without judging or getting angry.

Consider discussing who they are sending these images to. Do those people consent to receive those images?

Consider discussing avoidance of identifiable features or background in the images/videos. Whilst this won't replace open and honest conversation about why people do what they do, it might help to mitigate any future risk.

Online dating and catfishing

The minimum age limit for major online dating sites is 18. If you're aware of people clearly under 18 on these sites, report the profiles. If you know them in real life, have conversations with them about online safety or let a parent/guardian know if appropriate. Due to the Online Safety Act, most platforms do require proof of age to verify your account.

Once you are on a dating service, it doesn't mean that there is no inherent risk.

When contacting a potential partner, consider their photographs – do they seem legitimate? A problem unique to the age of the internet is that of catfishing. Some users may use photos of a random human as their own, particularly if they feel they may be more traditionally attractive. Have you heard of instances like this? What happened?

Often, you might not realise you've been catfished until you meet a person, or you spoken on a video call, e.g. they tell you they've visited a particular site, and you ask for a call.

If everything proceeds in safe manner, you might wish to consider meeting up.

Where would you meet?

Public places are best.

Who will know where you are and when you're meant to check in?

What will you do if they are not who they appeared to be?

It's important to plan for the worst case and hope for the best in order to safeguard yourself and your safety.

If you suspect that you might be speaking to someone under the age of 18, stop communicating and block the profile.

Grooming

Grooming has steps.

1. Targeting the victim: those who are vulnerable in some way; perhaps they are unpopular, are lonely, are unsupervised, have additional learning needs or have previous experience of abuse. There will always be a weakness that groomers can exploit but it can happen to anyone that may be overly trusting.

2. Building relationships: in the targeting stage, the groomer will collect information about their victim. Here, they'll put it to use. Unsupervised child? Offer them support and friendship. The power dynamic will make this relationship inappropriate.

3. Gain trust: this can look like gifting, giving attention, secret conversations and anything that gives a sense of a special relationship. Consider this in the context of a person trying to become an influencer, support, media coverage and mentorship could easily be offered.

4. Fulfilling needs: the relationship is in place, the trust is built... now the groomer needs to put their money where their mouth is and demonstrate some of the things they've been promising.

5. Isolating the victim: this is classic groomer or abuser behaviour where the perpetrator puts themselves between their victim and their support network. It can look like a victim changing behaviours online, or perhaps meeting up with and talking to friends less. Perhaps the groomer now has intimate images of the victim and is threatening to release them online.

6. Maintaining the control: once the victim is isolated, the groomer can abuse the victim at will. Online, this can look like coercing them to send intimate images or videos, and keeping the control by threatening to distribute them.

The steps can happen slowly, or all at once. But when we look back, the steps are painfully clear. From friendly comments, to private DMs offering advice and favours to arrangements to meet up soon.

If you see that your child's behaviour is changing, that they're talking to new people or becoming quite secretive, ask them about it.

You've been rather quiet lately, what's happening for you?

Ask open questions and use active listening skills to encourage them to disclose fully. If they disclose, start the process of keeping evidence – messages, images, content, anything that demonstrates a pattern of behaviour and the effect it has. Report the person to the platform and to the police.

If you think that your child may be grooming others, carefully collect evidence. Do you feel that you can bring this up with them?

If so, ask about their friendship with people online. Use those same active listening skills.

Misogyny and Incels

Misogyny

Misogyny is the hatred of and prejudice against women and girls, because they are women and girls. At its core, misogyny is about male dominant status and maintaining the patriarchy.

But the thing about the patriarchy is it harms us all. It keeps women down and makes it harder for men to reach out for help.

Incels

The term incel stands for 'Involuntary Celibate'. They are humans who are unable to find a romantic partner, although not for lack of trying. By and large, incels are heterosexual males. It started as a relatively innocent project documenting someone's lonely life, but was co-opted and deteriorated into what we see today.

At their core, incels believe that 80% of the female population target 20% of the male population for romantic partners, with targeting decisions made due to aspects like looks, money and power. They see themselves as being single as a result of feminism and societal behaviours, rather than their own efforts. They call this the Black Pill. Incels will have the belief that they are owed sex, and that the granting of equality and successes in feminism are limiting this access to sex.

Incels are linked to increasing amounts of violent acts, such as recent shootings in Montreal and Plymouth. This is an interesting article: https://www.psypost.org/a-reverse-timeline-of-tragedy-reveals-the-warning-signs-of-incel-violence/.

Manosphere

The Manosphere is the term given for the network of forums, sites, and social media pages dedicated to misogynistic and incel ideology. It has its own language and different

subsections. What these subsections have in common is a definition of masculinity, a hatred of feminism and gender equality and a drive to engage with newsfeeds, either through content creation or real world crime.

Associated language:

UN Women have created a brilliant resource giving definitions:
https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/glossary/glossary-the-manosphere

Starting the conversation

- Have you seen any memes or jokes that don't sit well with you?
- Where did you first see it?
- How might this affect other people?
- Who is a role model online for you?
- Are there any influencers you follow that say things about what it is to be male or female? What are they like?

Getting help

If you think your child might be following problematic influencers or falling into the manosphere, support them to make safer choices.

- What makes them a role model?
- What do you think is the effect of what they're saying on people?
- What do you think about what they're saying?
- How does what they're saying link up to equality and giving people the best chance in life?
- How do you think their partners feel about what they're saying?

Support them in finding other influences online who share safer messaging around consent, respect and equality.

Porn and depictions of harm

What's your opinion of porn?

Why do you think there are different kinds of porn?

Is everything that is uploaded online safe to consume?

Why do you think people might include more extreme things in porn online?

What types of things might feature in porn that

that perhaps doesn't happen in real life? (Lead to depictions of harm here, especially non-fatal strangulation.)

If people see this online, what might happen as a result? (Normalisation and efforts to re-enact.)

Have you been sent anything by friends that makes you uncomfortable? Tell me about it.

What does safe sex mean to you?

Setting boundaries online

How many group chats are you currently in? I'm in XX myself.

How are you finding them? I sometimes feel overwhelmed when they're all pinging off at once. Do you feel that?

What happens if you don't respond?

How does your group of friends interact with each other?

Have you seen people falling out in real life over what happens online? Do you feel there is a gap between the online and offline world?

I've heard of times when group chats use the block functionality as a punishment of sorts – have you seen anything like this?

How do you think that makes them feel?

Do you think that this could feel like bullying?

If this happened to you, what would you do? Consider guiding the conversation here along the lines of what it means to be a good friend – respect, empathy and kindness towards others. Are their friends acting in this way? If not, are they friends at all? You might find here that it is your child being unkind. Explore reasonings for their behaviour and how their behaviour is affecting others.

Managing cyberbullying

It's nearly impossible to fully delete something once it's been put online as we can't control who saves copies.

Many platforms give you the capability to post and interact with others anonymously. What do you think can happen as a result?

Is anyone ever truly anonymous online? Group admins can see names, IP addresses can be logged – there is

always metadata.

Have you seen someone use AI to create content?

How could that be misused?

If people use AI to make intimate content, it's illegal. If they're under the age of 18, it is both illegal in the sense that it's intimate image abuse, but also in producing child sexual abuse material. Why do you think people do it?

What would you do if you saw something like that?



Building Online Safety Worksheet 14 to 18

Your networks

Draw a visual representation of your social and familial networks. How did you meet everyone? Are there people that you only know from a specific place? Where do you tend to meet people?

Work to challenge

Review the conversation below. Identify problematic elements and describe how you might work to challenge these:

Where were you today?

Ela
20:08

Dentists. It ran late so mum and I went for lunch before coming back to school. Is everything ok?

Wini
20:32

You missed Rhiannon making an absolute fool of herself. She's such a mess.

Ela
20:33

What happened?? 👀👀

Work to challenge

You know how she loves Iwan from 11J? She actually asked him out, desperate pick me girl that she is. I can't believe she had the nerve. She's known for ages that Iwan's mine. So I might have done something 👀

OMG WHAT. WHAT DID YOU DO? Why is she even like this. I hate that we have to talk to her. Can I just kick her out of the group chat now. She's a freak

Remember when we went swimming in the reservoir over summer? I took THAT picture (you know the one) of her and put it on public SnapMap.

Wait, the one where she's fallen over half changed from her swimsuit? Harsh 😂

Yeah. Let her try to be smug now that we've aaaall seen everything she has to offer. State of her.

Ela
20:41

Hahahaaha 💀

Wini
20:42

1. How does this make you feel?

2. Which laws may have been broken?

3. How can you challenge behaviour like this?

4. What could Ela have done instead?

Additional sources of support



Videos & interactive:

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWaKaOGW55w
- https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zg78239

Guidance:

- https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-media-endorsements-guidance-for-content-creators/social-media-endorsements-being-transparent-with-your-followers
- https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/glossary/glossary-the-manosphere

Reporting:

- https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/professionals/guidance/report-remove3/
- https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/report-remove/
- https://www.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/online-safety/online-safety/deepfakes-what-is-a-deepfake/deepfakes-reporting-it-to-us/
- https://www.meta.com/en-gb/help/policies/1352307406415932/?srsltid=AfmBOoqHAuWD9j7ICQQmEaC2KVulLiulIiyiRXQMqfVGjbl1A5kG15R5

Parents:

- https://www.instagram.com/reel/DbYVAGYMLu4/?igsi=b2JiYTdzcHM4ZnJv



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Putting Women & Children First