#ASKTHE AWKWARD

ONLINE/OFFLINE: DIFFERENT WORLDS?

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

1 Online life is real life. Digital technology and the internet play a role in most aspects of all our lives, including relationships. Think of 'online', as another space where young people spend time, rather than a different world.

2 Young people's happiness is often linked to being connected to others. Technology helps young people to maintain their existing friendships and relationships, as well as build new ones.

3 Young people want to have positive conversations about their life online. They want the adults in their lives to talk about the opportunities, not just the risks, and for parents and carers to share their own experiences. Use our introduction to Asking The Awkward to start the conversation with your child.
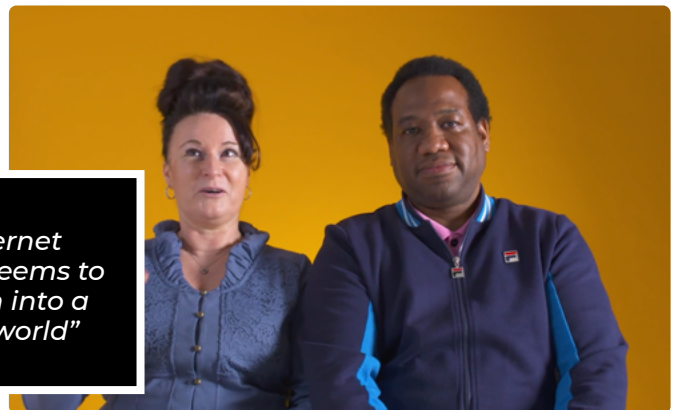
CONVERSATION STARTERS

Do you see online and offline as different worlds?

In what ways does being online make life better for you?

How does being online help you feel connected to others?

"this internet world just seems to grab them into a different world"

WANT MORE INFO?

Social Media benefits for young people
www.internetmatters.org/resources/social-media-advice-hub/social-media-benefits/

Supporting your child with their Digital Wellbeing
www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/hot-topics/digital-wellbeing

A parent and carers introduction to Asking The Awkward
www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/ask-the-awkward

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#ASKTHE AWKWARD

EXPLORING SEX, SEXUALITY AND IDENTITY ONLINE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

1 The internet helps young people learn important information about relationships and sex. If directed to trusted online sources, young people can read content which helps them to develop healthy attitudes to relationships and sexual experiences. Trusted websites include: CEOP Education, Brook, Childline and The Mix.

2 Educational websites and forums are especially helpful for LGBTQ+ young people (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer). LGBTQ+ young people say the internet has helped them understand more about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. They said the internet gave them an opportunity to meet like-minded individuals, and feel part of a worldwide community.

3 Online spaces help young people shape their identity. Finding support, information, space to voice opinions and view positive messages are some of the things young people see and do online which contribute to developing a strong sense of self and identity.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

How can online spaces help LGBTQ+ young people to explore sexuality and gender?

How would you know what information to trust?

Are there things to learn about relationships and sex online that you might not be taught offline?

Is it easier or harder to be yourself online? Why?

"maybe they're a girl and they wanna dress like a boy or you're feeling like you are transgender or anything like that, you really understand that you're not the only person".

WANT MORE INFO?

Sex and relationships advice for parents, NSPCC
www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/sex-relationships/

Supporting LGBTQ+ young people online
www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/supporting-lgbtq-young-people-online/

LGBTQ+ glossary, Stonewall
www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/faqs-and-glossary/glossary-terms

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FLIRTING AND STARTING NEW RELATIONSHIPS ONLINE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

1 Online is just another place young people meet. It provides a space to meet like-minded people, build confidence and find new relationships. Over a third of young people have started a relationship with someone they met online.

2 Online interactions are not replacing in person ones. For most young people, technology is helping their interactions and is a natural extension to in person relationships. Young people tell us they still prefer in person chat for a range of conversations, including expressing love and talking with a partner about what worries them.

3 It's natural to want to meet up with someone you've met online. Talking openly and calmly with your child and finding out more about the person they're talking to can help you decide if meeting up is appropriate and agree a plan together. Use our safer online dating advice to help them find ways to make it safer.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Why do you think so many relationships start online these days?

How would you know someone was flirting with you online?

Do your profile pics and posts matter when you're trying to attract someone?

Is it easier to meet someone you're interested in online? Why?

"if it's someone that I'm interested in, I have to make sure the post is perfect"

WANT MORE INFO?

Digital Romance report
www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/digital-romance-research-2017

Safer online dating
www.ceopeducationco.uk/parents/articles/safer-online-dating-how-to-support-your-child/

Teens and online dating advice hub
www.internetmatters.org.uk/resources/teens-and-online-dating-advice-hub-for-parents/

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APPS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

1 There are benefits to using apps and social media. Online platforms give young people the chance to chat with friends and family, learn new things and have fun. It's important to recognise these opportunities, and start conversations with the positives.

2 Regular conversations with young people are the best way to stay up to date. There are new apps being created all the time, and you will never learn about all of them. Chat little and often about the apps and sites young people use, have heard about, and how they work. You'll start to find that many have the same or similar functions.

3 Focus on three key areas to help your child stay safer: viewing, sharing, socialising. When faced with a new app or platform, talk about the following:

- the content they can view
- the things they can share
- the people they can talk to

Use our being social online guide to help them find ways to make it safer.

WANT MORE INFO?

Being social online: what parents and carers need to know
www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/parents-guide-being-social-online

Is your child ready for social media?
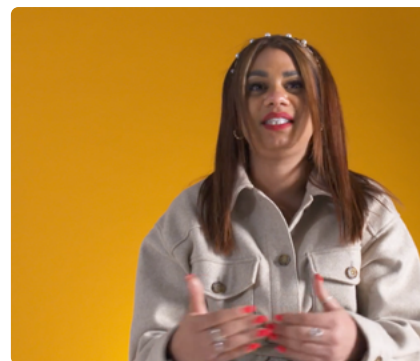www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/is-my-child-ready-for-social-media

CONVERSATION STARTERS

What do you use apps/ social media for most?

How do you stay safe on apps/social media?

Do you know what apps I use?

What's your favourite app at the moment? Show me...

"this is the world ... and we kind of all have to understand that, there will be another app tomorrow, we've just got to understand it and keep going with it"

Guide to apps, Internet Matters
www.internetmatters.org/resources/apps-guide

Children's Media Use and Attitudes, Ofcom
www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/childrens

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TWO-WAY TRUST:
PARENTS/CARERS & CHILDREN

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

1 Building trust is more important than setting rules or making threats of punishment. Young people need positive advice and guidance as they develop and begin to make their own decisions. Learning and setting agreements together is better than banning online use. Revisit agreements as young people get older.

2 Young people want adults to lead by example. They need positive role models for all aspects of life, including socialising and interacting online. Good role modelling online includes: asking consent to share pictures of others (including your child), not posting comments that can cause offence and only accepting friend requests from known people.

3 Young people want to feel they can turn to adults for advice and support. They want adults to listen to them and not judge. This means not blaming them for anything that has happened online and providing calm support and guidance on what they can do and where they can get help.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

What do you think might worry me about you being online?

What might worry you about me being online?

Do you think a family agreement for online use is a good idea? How might this look for us?

How much do you think I should know about what you do online?

"I think learning it [social media] together has been a better relationship for the both of us"

WANT MORE INFO?

Sharing pictures of your children online
www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/Sharing-pictures-of-your-children/

Having a conversation with your child
www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/having-a-conversation-with-your-child/

A parent and carers introduction to Asking The Awkward
www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/ask-the-awkward

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HOW DO YOU KNOW
WHO YOU CAN TRUST ONLINE?

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

1 Trusting relationships can be built online. A healthy, trusting relationship is based on respect, consent and honesty, whether online or in person. The other person doesn't put you down, say rude things to you, ask you to do things you don't want to or pretend to be someone they are not.

2 Being 'catfished' can happen to anyone. People lie online for a range of reasons, and anyone, including adults, can be tricked. Reasons people catfish can include: as a joke, to make themselves feel better, bullying or abuse (such as grooming or blackmail).

'Catfish' *A person who assumes a false identity or personality on the internet, to deceive or manipulate.*

3 Young people need help to think critically about their online relationships. It can be difficult to spot when people are lying or have bad intentions. Read our safer online dating guide for tips on how you can help your child spot when somethings not right.

WANT MORE INFO?

Safer online dating
www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/safer-online-dating-how-to-support-your-child/

Online blackmail
www.ceopeducationco.uk/parents/articles/online-blackmail/

CONVERSATION STARTERS

What would tell you that you could trust someone online? What qualities would you expect to see?

How do you build trust with someone you've only met online?

How do you think it would feel to be catfished? What impact do you think this would have on someone?

What are the warning signs that someone online is lying or isn't who they say they are?

"but online, you can tell me lots of lies, and I would never know"

What is sexual grooming?
www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/What-is-sexual-grooming/

If you are concerned a child is being groomed or blackmailed online, report to CEOP
www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre

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SHARING NUDES AND SEMI-NUDES

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

1 Sending nudes is a way for young people to explore their sexuality and relationships. There are many reasons why young people send nude images of themselves. This includes flirting with someone, sending to a partner, as a joke between friends, or to feel good about their body. Young people should never feel pressured to share an image of themselves if they don't want to.

2 Sharing nudes of someone else is always wrong. Sharing a nude of someone else, without their permission, is never 'just a joke' and can have a devastating impact on the young person in the image. Nudes received of other people should never be sent on further, and help should be sought for the person in the image.

3 There is help if a young person has shared a nude. Young people often feel powerless to prevent bad things from happening after sending a nude. They can ask the person to delete the image, or if it's been posted online, a report can be made to Report Remove to remove the image from the internet.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

What are the reasons why young people might share a nude?

How would you support a friend who has had a nude shared around?

Do you think it's worse for boys or girls if their nude image is shared around? Why?

"it's much worse for girls sending pictures"

WANT MORE INFO?

Nude selfies: what parents and carers need to know videos
www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/Nude-selfies-a-parents-guide/

7 questions parents ask about nude selfies
www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/7-questions-parents-ask-about-nude-selfies/

Report Remove
www.childline.org.uk/remove

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NEGATIVITY ONLINE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

1 Young people experience online negativity. This may be due to personal characteristics, as a joke or on purpose to annoy – often referred to as 'trolling'. Online negativity can impact young people's mental health and wellbeing; they need support to manage this and to understand why doing it themselves is wrong.

'Trolling' *Deliberately trying to upset or start arguments with people online by posting offensive or unkind things.*

2 Girls and LGBTQ+ young people are more likely to experience negativity online. They are more likely to be judged and shamed for their appearance, and experience sexism, sexual harassment, homophobia and transphobia.

3 Break ups are the time when many young people experience negativity online. Breaking up is emotionally difficult and this can be made worse for young people by receiving nasty comments from others, worries about nudes being shared and friends taking sides publicly online.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Do people say things online they wouldn't in person? Why do you think this is?

Have you, or your friends ever received hurtful comments from someone online?

What would you do if you saw someone else getting hateful comments online?

"lots of people will say stuff online that they would never say to someone's face"

WANT MORE INFO?

Tackling online hate and trolling
www.internetmatters.org/resources/tackling-online-hate-and-trolling

Supporting LGBTQ+ young people online
www.ceopeducation..co.uk/parents/articles/supporting-lgbtq-young-people-online/

Online sexual harassment
www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/hot-topics/online-sexual-harassment

Personal characteristics include: *race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity.*

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UNWANTED SEXUAL CONTACT ONLINE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

1 Young people may receive unwanted sexual contact online from adults. This can include being sent or shown naked or semi-naked images or receiving sexual messages. Unwanted contact can happen as a standalone incident, or it can be ongoing and happen as part of online grooming to sexually abuse a young person.

2 It is illegal for anyone (adult or child) to send a message containing indecent or obscene content. If a young person has received an indecent message from an adult, they can report it to CEOP.

3 Young people will feel a range of emotions when they receive unwanted sexual contact online. Some will feel disgusted, worried, confused, or find it amusing or interesting. These reactions are normal, and talking to them in a calm and supportive way about how they feel and what they can do, will help them make sense of what has happened.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

What could someone do if they were sent a nude or sexual message they didn't ask for?

Do you know what online grooming is?

How might someone feel being sent a pic or sexual comment they haven't asked for?

"why would you send that to someone? Why would you send that to me?"

WANT MORE INFO?

Are you worried about something that has happened online?
www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/are-you-worried-about-something-that-has-happened-online

What to do if your child has seen something inappropriate online
www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/what-to-do-if-your-child-has-seen-something-inappropriate-online

If you are concerned a child is being groomed or blackmailed online, report to CEOP
www.ceop.police.uk

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