



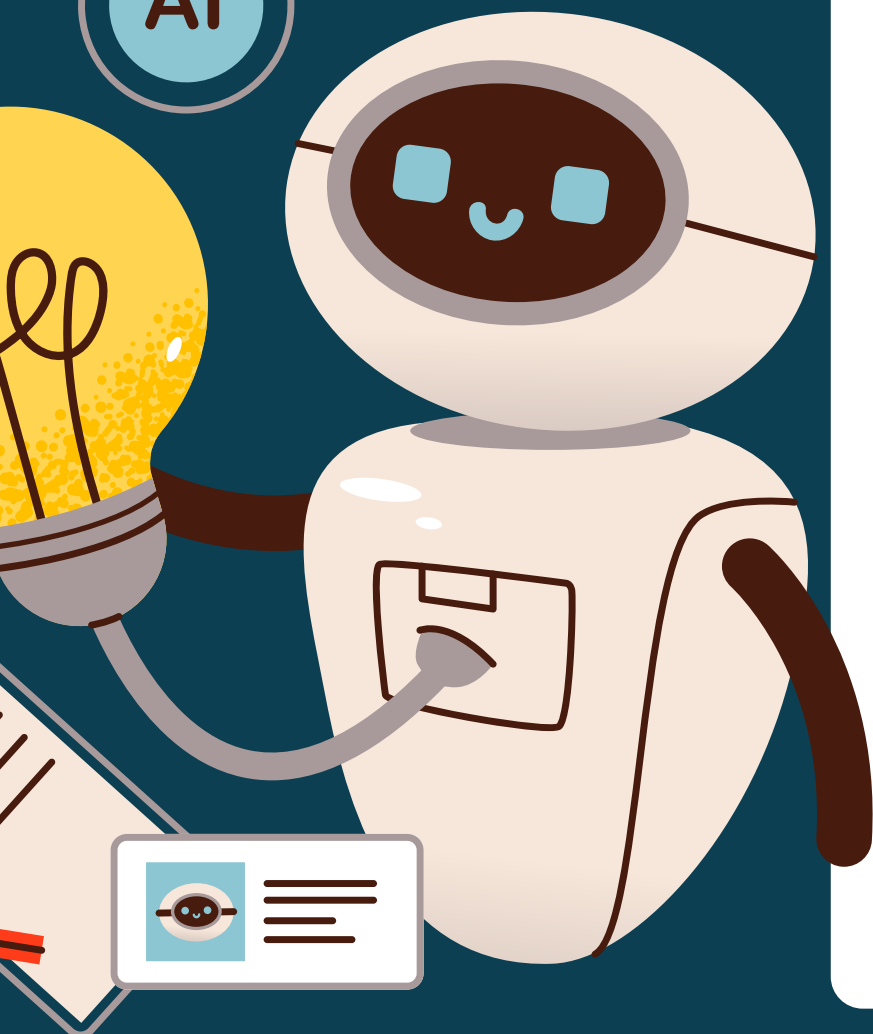
ONLINE SAFETY



WHAT CAN PARENTS AND CARERS DO?

Some current slang words and symbols used by children and teenagers have started out as language used in online communities where people have extreme views. Just because your child uses these symbols, doesn't automatically mean they are accessing harmful online spaces. Your child may also not know where the words or symbols originally came from or how harmful they are, but they may be influencing their thinking.

AI



1 BE CURIOUS, NOT CONFRONTATIONAL

Ask open questions like, "I heard that emojis can have hidden meanings. Do you know about this?" Keep it light and friendly.

2 CREATE A SAFE SPACE

If your child fears getting into trouble, they won't share. Let them know you're there to listen, not just to tell them off.

3 LEARN TOGETHER

Ask them to explain their online world. What do symbols mean? Who do they follow? Instead of guessing, just ask.

4 ENCOURAGE SMART THINKING

Help them question what they see online. "Why do you think some people push this idea? Who gains from it?" Teach them to think and ask questions, not just follow.

5 CHECK IN, DON'T SPY

Honest chats work better than secret snooping. Make online check-ins a normal part of parenting, not just a reaction to problems.

6 TALK ABOUT ONLINE TRICKS

Explain how harmful groups try to make young people feel special, luring them in with what might seem like secret information.

7 BOOST THEIR CONFIDENCE

When kids feel happy and valued in real life, they're less likely to look for approval in risky online spaces.

Regular conversations with your child about their online life can build a sense of trust. They know that you understand their online life and are interested, so are more likely to come to you with questions or if things go wrong.

TOUGHER CONVERSATIONS

Talking about issues like misogyny, pornography, bullying, grooming, sextortion and other tough issues is a key way to keep your child safer online.

Having the above conversations can help you get to this point. Use the following tips to help you have these chats.

Start small: Jumping to uncomfortable topics right away can feel scary. The casual conversations outlined above are a good place to start.

Do something while chatting: Going for a walk, kicking the football around, drawing; doing something while you chat gives your child somewhere else to put any nervous energy.

Use news stories or scenarios: Explain that you saw a story about the issue, or that your colleague's child experienced the issue. You can ask your child what they know and what they'd do in that situation.

Be direct: Avoid using unclear language or dragging out any pauses, which can cause discomfort or increase anxiety.