

Concerned about online influences



6 practical things to do as a family:

1. Talk about who and what influences them online



Ask what they enjoy, who they follow and what catches their interest. Keeping this part of normal conversation helps you understand the trends, ideas and people shaping their online world.

2. Explore why certain content appeals



Gently ask what they like about a creator, community or trend. This helps them think more critically about the messages they see without feeling judged or shut down.

3. Build curiosity and simple critical thinking habits



Prompt light questions such as "What do you like about this?" or "Would everyone agree with that?" and offer simple checks they can use on their own like "does this feel good or not?" or "is this healthy or harmful?"

4. Talk about unsafe influence online



Explain that some people online say unsafe things that can hurt others or stop them getting help. Support your child to understand the difference between this and safe support. Encourage them to recognise this as a sign to step away, stop talking to that person and tell a safe adult. Reassure them that they are never in trouble for coming to you and that you will help them stay safe.

5. Encourage a wide mix of content



Support them to follow creators and join communities that help them feel positive, inspired and safely supported. A varied feed reduces the impact of repeated unhelpful messages and gives a more balanced view of the world.

6. Create space for questions and worries



Let them know they can come to you when something feels off. Respond calmly and work through concerns together. Remind them that everyone is influenced at times and that if something leaves them feeling bad or encourages unsafe choices, it is a sign to reach out for help, including services like [Childline \(0800 11 11\)](https://www.childline.gov.uk) and [Shout \(85258\)](https://www.shout24.org).

Spotting harmful online influence:

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| 1
Individuals and communities that encourage risky or unsafe behaviour. | 2
Accounts which promote messages that make people feel not good enough or worthless. | 3
Individuals and communities that encourage and celebrate harmful coping behaviours. | 4
Individuals and communities who discourage people from getting help or talking to loved ones. | 5
Accounts and communities which incite hatred towards others. | 6
Repeated exposure to narrow or extreme views. |
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If your child spots these on their feed encourage them to...

MUTE IT ▶

They can mute posts and accounts that they want to take a break from.

UNFOLLOW IT ▶

They can unfollow accounts they have noticed are having a negative impact on them.

REPORT IT ▶

They can report content to the platform that they think is harmful to others.

REACH OUT FOR SUPPORT ▶

If you're worried about a child's safety or wellbeing call: **NSPCC Helpline** on **0808 800 5000** or **Young Minds Parent Helpline** on **0808 802 5544**. You can also visit the 'Get Support' pages on our website for more advice: [mollyrosefoundation.org](https://www.mollyrosefoundation.org)