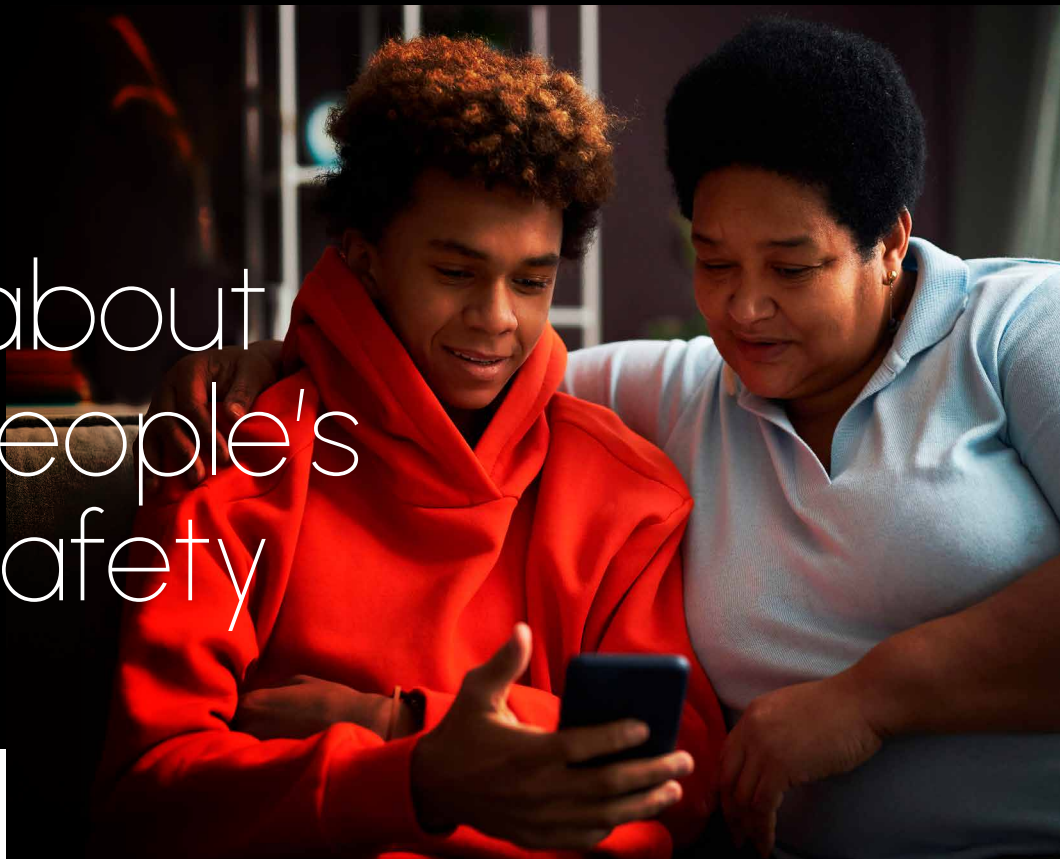


# Talking about young people's online safety



## What is the conversation?

Many of us – young people, parents, and carers alike – spend a lot of time online. The internet is part of our everyday lives, and so we should feel confident and comfortable talking about it as part of our everyday conversations. These conversations are easy when the subject is light but it can be hard to start them when we encounter things that make us feel unsafe or upset. But these more difficult conversations can be the most important ones to have.

## When to talk about it?

When deciding whether we need to talk to someone, we should think about how what we've experienced makes us feel.

### If something makes us feel bad

Sometimes we receive a message that makes us angry or watch a video that upsets us. Part of discovering who we are is knowing what makes us feel negatively and why, and it can help to speak to someone when we feel like this to learn more about ourselves and the people around us.



### If something just doesn't feel right

It isn't always obvious when something is making us feel bad but sometimes things just don't sit right. We might not be able to pinpoint how we're feeling or why, just that something isn't right. And talking about it can help us sort out what is going on and why.

### When we're not sure how to react

Our judgement isn't always the best when we aren't sure how something that we've seen makes us feel or when it makes us feel negatively. In these situations we might not know the best way to react so talking it out with someone less involved in the situation can help us decide on the right thing to do.

### We don't have to wait

It can be tempting to try to let things sort themselves out or wait until a situation has played out before letting someone in on it. But we can have a conversation with someone at any point. Even if it doesn't feel worth mentioning, it can help to get it off our chests.

### We don't have to talk about it but we should know that we always can

Talking to someone can help but it isn't the only solution. Sometimes stepping back, pausing, and reflecting is all it takes to process how we're feeling.

## Who to speak to?

The most important thing about choosing who to speak to is that they are someone we trust. We can talk to parents, siblings, teachers, coaches, tutors, friends, extended family members, or counsellors when things don't feel right or we aren't sure how to react.

## Tips for parents/guardians/carers

We all want our children to feel comfortable talking to us about what's going on in their lives and when it comes to their online safety, there are things that we can do to show them that we're here for them.

### Educate yourself about what they do

Ask about their favourite social media platforms and learn about them. Don't rely on your children to educate you, instead be ready to speak with them using their language. Familiarise yourself with the way that your children's favourite platform is used by looking into it and trying it yourself. Many platforms have guides for parents that you might find helpful too.

### Make sure that they know that we're there for them

Respect that their online lives are their own and don't force them to have conversations that they aren't ready for or don't want to have.

### Reversing roles: if you were them and they were you

It can be useful to think about what you would want your parents to do if you were a young person using social media today. Would you want them to be open and approachable? Would you want them to have firm boundaries? How would you want them to talk to you?

The most important thing about choosing who to speak to is that they are someone we trust.

## RESOURCES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

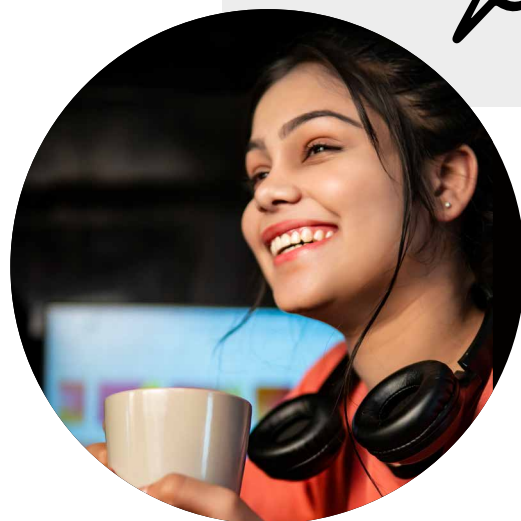
- [eSafety for young people](#)
- [eSafety for kids](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)

## RESOURCES FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

- [eSafety for parents](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [Parentline NSW](#)

## REPORTING UNSAFE CONTENT OR HARMFUL BEHAVIOUR

- [Reporting unsafe content at eSafety](#)
- [eSafety reporting forms](#)



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