Online safety:

What the current concerns are and how to help

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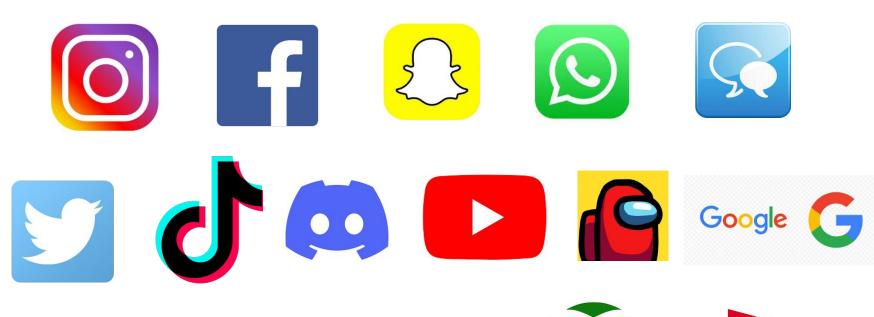
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There are risks that our young people face when using the internet…

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What are the main concerns around social media and young people?

Misogyny / How algorithms work

Body Image / Influencers

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Key words:

Misogyny: Hatred or prejudice against women

Incel: *(Short for 'involuntary celibate')* is a term closely associated with an online subculture of people (mostly white, male, and heterosexual) who define themselves as unable to get a romantic or sexual partner despite desiring one.

Gender Stereotypes: A gender stereotype is a generalised view or preconception about attributes, or characteristics that are or ought to be possessed by women and men or the roles that are or should be performed by men and women.

Gender stereotypes can be both positive and negative for example, "women are nurturing" or "women are weak".

Manosphere: refers to a collection of websites, blogs, online forums and communities focusing on men's rights, men's interests and critiques of feminism.

Algorithm: Algorithms act as an exact list of instructions that conduct specified actions step by step in either hardware- or software-based routines

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• Research conducted by the University College London has found that algorithms are being used to popularise and gamify online hate and misogyny for young people.

• The Incel movement is infiltrating social media platforms such as Tik Tok, Instagram reels and You Tube Shorts.

• Much of this content is delivered through the title of 'Self help'. However, entry into these videos can quickly lead into an extreme sub culture. When young people 'linger' on this content, the social media platform will recommend more and more of these links to them. *(This is how algorithms work)*

•As a result, ideologies, such as sexism and misogyny, are normalised amongst young people and seep into their everyday interactions.

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- Having body image concerns is a relatively common experience

- It is not a mental health problem in and of itself

- BUT - it can be a risk factor for mental health problems

- Research has found that higher body dissatisfaction is associated with a poorer quality of life, psychological distress and the risk of unhealthy eating behaviours and eating disorders

What causes Body Image concerns?

How our experiences and environment affect our body image will differ for everyone. However, overall, the research suggests that body image can be influenced by:

- Our relationships with our family and friends
- How our family and peers feel and speak about bodies and appearance
- **Exposure to images of idealised or unrealistic bodies through media or social media**
- **Pressure to look a certain way or to match an 'ideal' body type**

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- Set Ground Rules for Social Media Use

- Consider products that help you monitor online activity

- Check your child's phone and ensure that they follow positive role models on social media

- Be wary about using 'filters' – discuss this with your child

- Talk to your child about different social media accounts and the influencers / people they follow

- Reassure them that they can always talk to you

- Watch The Social Dilemma on Netflix for further understanding

- Channel 4: Social Media monsters (specifically set in Norfolk – County Lines)

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- Group me / Kik messenger (like whatsapp but with embedded adult themed GIFs)

- OMTV – live 'chat' (porn related)

- Andrew Tate

- Jordan Peterson

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- The best piece of monitoring software as voted for by TechRadar was Qustodio. Click below for a full list:

https://www.techradar.com/best/best-parental-control-app-of-year

- Young Minds – Social Media advice for parents: https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health -guide/social-media/

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A reminder about how you can report inappropriate content:

- Go to: www.reportharmfulcontent.com

- If your child was sent inappropriate content by someone else, report that account to the social media platform

- If it is sexual content, report to: www.ceop.police.uk

- You can report any harmful content to the police

- You can ring us for advice – please get in contact with your child's Head of Year

- The Safer UK centre offers some great advice as well:
https://saferinternet.org.uk/online-issue/reporting#:~:text=Report%20to%20the%20correct%20place&text=If%20you%20want%20to%20report,reporting%20functions%20available%20to%20users.

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Any questions?