

AGED BASED CONVERSATION GUIDES

PRE-TEENS (<11 YEARS)

START EARLY, KEEP IT SIMPLE AND DON'T MAKE IT WEIRD

Kids under 11 don't need the full horror show – nothing scary, just clear and real. They are more literal, trusting and still very open to guidance. But they do need tools for staying safe, knowing what to do when something feels off and knowing they can trust you as their go-to grown-up.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Have you ever seen something online that felt a bit weird or made you uncomfortable?

Do you know what to do if someone you don't know sends you a message?

Has anyone online ever asked you to keep a secret from me or your friends?

Can we chat about how to stay safe when you're playing games or using the iPad?

If a friend saw something strange online and didn't know what to do – what would you tell them?

FOLLOW UP CHATS

How do you know if someone online is really a kid?

What would you do if someone asked for a photo and said not to tell anyone?

Is it okay to say no or block someone, even if they seem nice?

Why do you think some people pretend to be someone they're not?

USE CURIOSITY NOT FEAR

ONGOING TRUST & SAFETY CHATS

LAY FOUNDATIONS

KEEP IT FLOWING

REASSURING WORDS TO DROP IN

I'll never be mad if you tell me something that happened online – even if it's weird or scary.

If you ever feel yucky, confused, or unsure, you can always come to me – you'll never be in trouble and I promise I won't yell.

Not everything online is true or real – so it's okay to ask questions and double check stuff.

My job is to keep you safe – not to get you in trouble.

There are some sneaky people online who pretend to be kids – we're going to learn how to spot them together.

HELPFUL ACTIONS TO TAKE TOGETHER

Tech Check-In

Ask them to show you a game or app they like and use it as a moment to gently explore who's in the game, do they chat with other players, how it works and what they know about staying safe.

AGED BASED CONVERSATION GUIDES

YOUNGER TEENS (11-13 YEARS)

FACTS WITHOUT FEAR. BOUNDARIES WITHOUT ACCUSATIONS OR BLAME.

Kids aged 11-13 need to understand what's happening online in a way that's straightforward, age-appropriate and gives them confidence – not panic.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Hey, I read something wild about scammers pretending to be kids online – want to hear how it works?

Do you know what the word 'sextortion' means? It's actually a scam – not a sex thing.

if someone messaged you asking for a photo, what would you do?

Have any of your friends ever gotten a weird message or DM from someone they didn't know?

Why do you think someone would pretend to be a teenager online?

FOLLOW UP CHATS

What would you do if someone online made you feel uncomfortable?

Do you know how to block or report someone in that app?

Have you ever seen a fake-looking profile in a game or chat? How do you know its fake?

What do you think makes someone trustworthy online?

Why do you think scammers often ask people to keep secrets?

KEEP IT LIGHT & CASUAL

DON'T INTERROGATE

HEY, I'M LEARNING THIS TOO

BE THEIR SAFE PERSON NOT DISCIPLINARIAN

REASSURING WORDS TO DROP IN

There's nothing you could tell me that would make me mad – even if it's awkward or scary.

I'd rather know than have you deal with something alone.

Scammers want you to stay silent – but we don't keep secrets like that in our family.

My job is to help you feel safe – not to get you in trouble.

If something ever happens, we'll deal with it together.

HELPFUL ACTIONS TO TAKE TOGETHER

Tech Check-In

-  Review privacy settings on apps and games together
-  Practice screenshotting/reporting fake or creepy messages
-  Do a scroll-together check-in:

"Show me what you've seen on <insert favourite app> lately – anything interesting or weird?"

AGED BASED CONVERSATION GUIDES

MID TEENS (14-16 YEARS)

RESPECT THEIR INTELLIGENCE. PROTECT THEIR DIGNITY. INVITE THEIR INPUT.

You're not giving them a lecture - you're throwing them a line. Assume they already know & have seen something (probably a lot more than you think) and give them room to fill in the gaps.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

You've probably seen stuff about sextortion online - is it something you and your mates talk about?

There's this scam going around where teens get blackmailed after sending pics - ever come across anything like that?

I read that some of these scammers use fake profiles and AI. How would you spot one?

Do you reckon it's harder for boys or girls to deal with this stuff?

What would you do if a mate told you they'd sent something they regretted?

FOLLOW UP CHATS

What would make someone trust a stranger enough to send a nude?

If someone threatened to share stuff - what do you think the best first move would be?

Why do you think people don't tell anyone when this happens?

Do you reckon reporting stuff to platforms or police even works?

How would you support a friend if they told you something like this happened to them?

CASUAL WITHOUT ALARM

OPEN, CURIOUS, RESPECTFUL & SAFE

NON-ACCUSATORY

FIND A WAY INTO THEIR DIGITAL WORLD WITH CURIOSITY NOT JUDGEMENT

REASSURING WORDS TO DROP IN

I'm not here to judge - I just want you to know how this stuff works.

You don't have to tell me everything, just know I'm always on your side.

If anything ever feels off, I'd rather you tell me early than sit with it alone.

There's literally nothing you could tell me that would make me angry or disappointed.

This stuff happens to smart people. It's built to manipulate - not because someone's stupid or naive.

HELPFUL ACTIONS TO TAKE TOGETHER

Tech Check-In

-  Review privacy settings - what apps are public and private on their devices and why?
-  Spot the Difference - play a game of spot the real and fake profiles. Discuss the red flags
-  Seek to understand:
"I'd love to know how snapchat DM's work? Can you show me disappearing messages?"

AGED BASED CONVERSATION GUIDES

OLDER TEENS (17+ YEARS)

TREAT THEM LIKE ADULTS IN THE MAKING - NOT KIDS IN TROUBLE

They don't need you to scare or berate them. They need you to be real, respect their intelligence and offer tools & support that don't feel like lectures.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

You've probably seen stories about this - but have you heard about sextortion scams going around?

Would you be able to spot a fake profile or AI-generated image if it popped up in your DMs?

If a friend was getting blackmailed online, would they come to you? What would you tell them?

Do you think most people your age would report something like this? Or just try to deal with it alone?

What would make you not tell someone if this happened to you?

FOLLOW UP CHATS

What do you think makes someone a victim of this kind of scam - even if they're smart?

Do you know the signs to look for when someone's trying to manipulate or coerce online?

How would you help a mate who was getting pressured to send stuff?

Have you seen dodgy profiles or sketchy messages in the apps you use?

What would make someone believe a scammer was legit?

OPEN, NON-JUDGY

CURIOSITY NOT CONTROL

GET THEM THINKING

YOU'RE NOT TRYING TO WIN THE CONVERSATION, YOU'RE BUILDING TRUST & SAFETY

REASSURING WORDS TO DROP IN

You don't need to tell me everything - but I'm here if something ever feels off.

There's no shame in getting tricked. These scams are slick - and emotional manipulation is real.

If something ever happens, I'd rather know and support you than have you deal with it alone.

This isn't about control - it's about making sure you've got backup.

HELPFUL ACTIONS TO TAKE TOGETHER

-  Look at fake profiles together and play "spot the red flags"
-  Watch a short clip or podcast together on sextortion scams and talk about what surprised you
-  Ask them to show you privacy settings — "Can you show me how you'd lock down your Insta or Snap if something got weird?"
-  Ask for their advice: "What would you tell younger teens or your siblings about staying safe online?"

OTHER WAYS INTO THE CONVERSATION

YOU DONT HAVE TO USE THE WORD SEXTORTION IF IT SHUTS THEM DOWN

Try something like – *“It’s basically digital blackmail using nudes – and it’s happening to heaps of people your age. Wanna know how it works?”*

OPENS THE DOOR TO DISCUSS PLATFORMS AND PRIVACY FEATURES

What’s the most common way people your age chat online now?

GENTLY CHALLENGES MYTHS

Some people think disappearing messages are totally safe – what do you think?

USES RELATABLE EXAMPLES

Have you seen any scams or catfish stories on TikTok, Snapchat, or Insta?

GETS THEM THINKING ABOUT MANIPULATION TACTICS

What do you think makes someone trust a person they’ve only met online?

PUTS THEM IN CONTROL AND SHOWS YOU VALUE THEIR IDEAS

If you could design the safest chat app for teens, what would it have?

LEADS INTO GROOMING AND SCAM TACTICS

Have you ever seen or heard about someone getting a weird message from a stranger?

INVITES THEM TO TALK THROUGH ACTION STEPS

If someone started sending you messages that made you uncomfortable, how would you handle it?

ALLOWS THEM TO PROBLEM-SOLVE WITHOUT FEELING ACCUSED

If one of your friends got a scary message asking for money or pictures, what should they do?

OPENS A BROADER CHAT ABOUT PEER PRESSURE AND SOCIAL CURRENCY

Do you think people your age feel more pressure online than in real life?

SIGNALS YOU WANT TO HELP, NOT PUNISH OR JUDGE

What could I do that would make it easier for you to tell me if something online went wrong?