

# Safeguarding young people with Autism Spectrum Conditions from extremist ideologies



# **Safeguarding young people with Autism Spectrum Conditions** from extremist ideologies

Toolkit



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# Introduction and background

This Toolkit can be used in partnership with the Parental Guidance Booklet. It aims to give you practical resources to discuss difficult and sensitive topics and support you in safeguarding young people with Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC) from extremist ideologies.

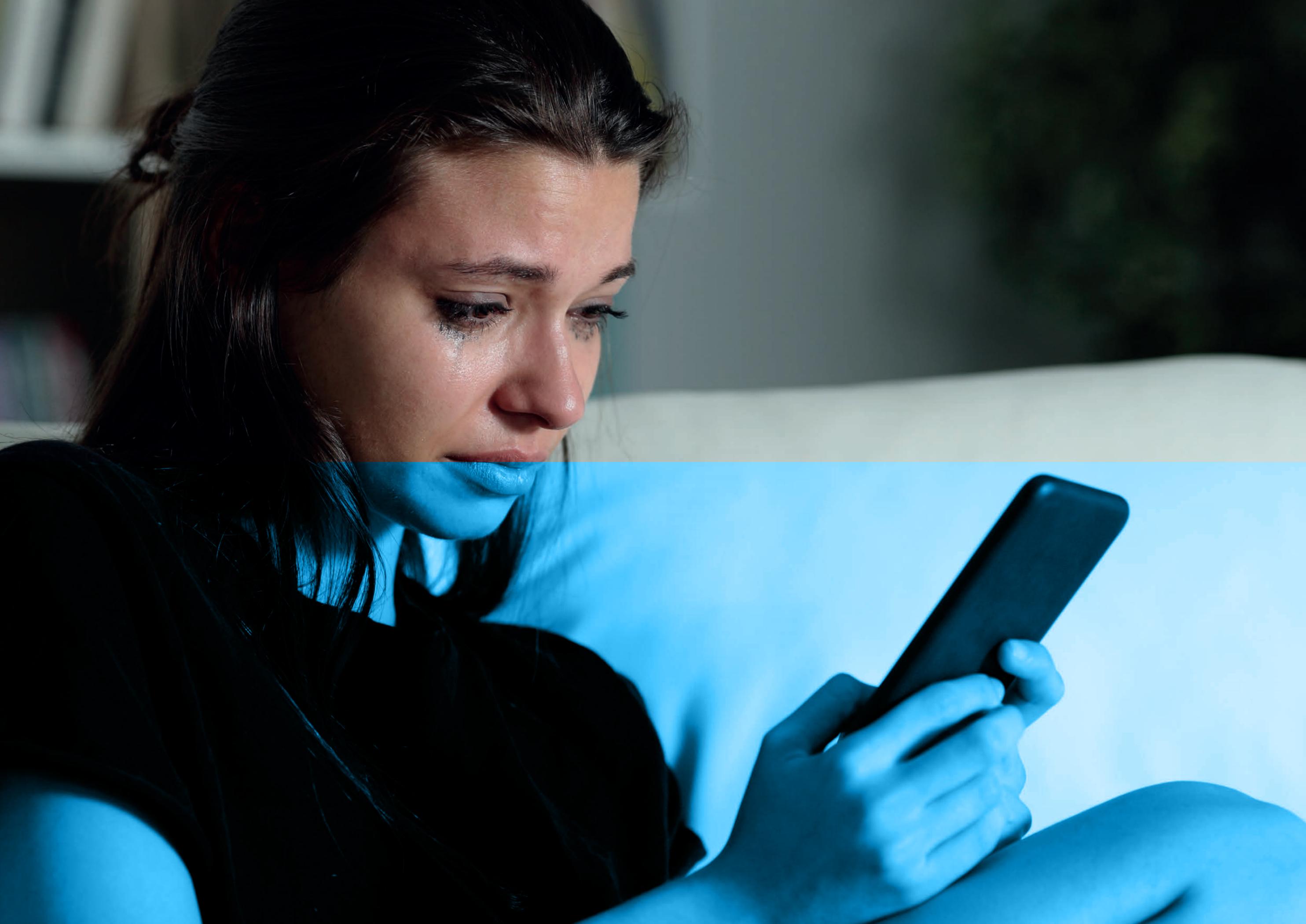
As a Crawley Borough Council funded project, created in partnership with WSCC and a range of experts on inclusion, ASC and radicalisation, this toolkit provides high quality, adaptable ASC friendly resources for you to explore together. The aim is to encourage awareness, critical thinking and transferable life skills that a young person with an ASC can draw on in future to build personal resilience to any concerning images, beliefs or people that may lead that young person into harm.

**It is important to remember that these resources are not designed to act as a ‘one size fits all’, but rather they have been created as templates for you to adapt as you see fit, to best allow for discussion with the young person, depending on their individual concerns, needs and talents.**

In order to use these resources effectively, it is important that the young person is able to understand some key themes prior to tackling these subjects. For instance, the difference between what is right and wrong, legal and illegal, key emotions and feelings - even friendship! You can use many of the links and resources signposted within both this and the Parental Guidance Booklet, as well as the **social narratives** (for instance the one on **friendship**) to ensure this pre-learning has taken place before some of these higher level concepts can be explored. Similarly, this resource should be used in the context in which it has been developed – ensuring that it is young person centred and right for that individual moving forwards.

You will know your child best, so use your judgement and knowledge to select the most appropriate materials for their needs.

**We hope that this resource will help you to understand some of the risks and practically apply the information and ASC specific resources to ensure your young person has a reduced risk of harm in this area.**



## Key terms for young people

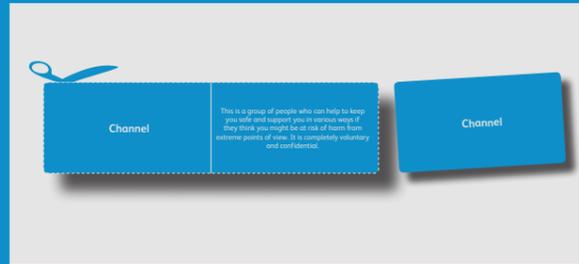


An activity to get your young person thinking about important words (supervision may be required when using scissors for cutting out).



## Activity

### How to use the flashcards



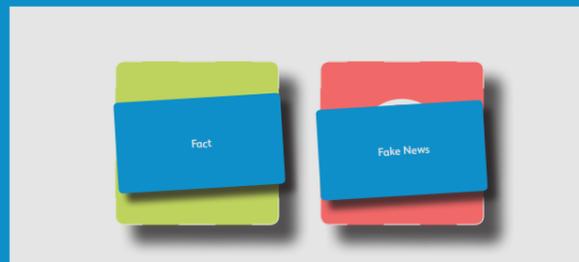
**Step 1**  
Carefully cut out each flashcard. Then fold each in half along the white line in the middle.



**Step 2**  
Carefully cut out the green (happy) and red (unhappy) faces on this page. This is where you'll put the flashcards after you've read them, if you think they are good or bad.



**Step 3**  
Place all the cards with their names up. Taking turns with your grown up turn them over...



**Step 4**  
If you think the card is good put it onto the green face. If it's bad, put it onto the red face.

## Channel

This is a group of people who can help to keep you safe and support you in various ways if they think you might be at risk of harm from extreme points of view. It is completely voluntary and confidential. This means you don't have to do it and others will not know if you do.

## Counterfeit deviance

This is where you may not realise that your behaviour or language is inappropriate. Sometimes you might not be aware that something you say can be shocking or upsetting for other people listening.

## Extremism

Scaring, terrorising or committing a violent act against someone or a group to make them agree with you or see your point of view.

## Fact

A fact is something that can be proven to be true. E.g. 'The sky is blue'. You can check that that is correct by looking at it. You can check facts on sites like FullFact and BBC Reality Check.

## Fake news

Information or facts that might seem true – but if you investigate further, they are not!

## False friend

A false friend or a fake friend is someone who pretends to be your friend and may seem nice at first, but they might not be trustworthy, and instead may want you to do something for them.

## Fundamental British values

This is the term used to describe a group of qualities you will often learn about in school. These are:

- democracy (this means that everyone has a voice and the right to share their points of view respectfully without anyone being unkind);
- the rule of law (everyone has to follow the laws in the country, and rules at school of course!);
- individual liberty (we each have the freedom to make our own choices – as long as these don't hurt anyone or break the laws!);
- mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, and for those without faith (this means that we don't all have the same beliefs or values, but that's ok – we should respect one another's ideas and accept different perspectives instead of trying to make them believe our values).

## Group identity

Groups that you feel you belong to and that you understand that you are a part of. For instance, you are part of your school group, your family, your religion etc.

## Hyperfocusing

You might become interested in one topic or interest in particular and learn a lot of interesting information about it. Try to remember that some information you find out about that interest may be false, or other people might be trying to make you believe something that may not be true. If you aren't sure – check it with an adult you trust.

## Hypersensitivity

Sometimes things may be overwhelming – try to tell your adult what it is that is making you anxious. If you are online, turn off what you are looking at until you feel better and explain to your trusted adult what it was you were looking at.

## Identity

Things that make you, you. It could be your appearance, your interests, your religion – anything! Your identity may change over time too!

## Ideology

Someone's beliefs or opinions. These can be the beliefs of an individual or a group. Be wary of ideas which are shocking or want to cause harm to others. Be careful as some things they tell you might seem to be true, but when you dig deeper, they have been manipulated (changed) to seem that way and are actually false.

## Memes

A meme is an image, video or piece of text that is copied and spread quickly, often on the internet. Sometimes people may pretend they are joking when they use these memes, but they can also have more negative secret meanings – so be careful if you are thinking of forwarding them on as they can make people feel bad.

## Motive

Someone's reason for doing something. Some people might have good motives, but some might have bad ones and sometimes it's difficult to tell the difference! Some people's motives may be to share information (real or false) that makes someone dislike particular groups of people.

## Multiplayer function

This is when you can play games with other people online. Remember you might not know who the person you are playing with really is as you cannot see them in real life.

<b>Online radicalisation</b>	Where someone uses their relationship with you online to persuade you to believe or do something extreme. It could also be shocking, unkind or even violent content that someone has posted.
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<b>Opinions</b>	An opinion is just what someone thinks about something. Sometimes people make their opinions seem like facts to persuade you to believe or to do something. For example, someone may try to persuade someone to dislike others or a particular group by sharing their opinion as if it is fact.
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<b>Propaganda</b>	This is where people give you information that is deliberately false or misleading to persuade you to believe something. It may seem true but often the information has been manipulated (changed) to make it seem that way. It could take many forms – for instance a leaflet, a poster or even a website, game or social media post.
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<b>Radicalisation</b>	When someone influences you (this could even be online) to believe something extreme which could hurt yourself or others.
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<b>Real friend</b>	A real friend is someone who you can talk to, who listens and shares your interests and feelings, and really cares about your happiness.
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<b>Self esteem</b>	What you believe and think about yourself. If you feel good about yourself, you have good self-esteem.
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<b>Social media</b>	Websites, apps, forums and chat sites that let you connect with others over the internet.
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<b>Stereotypes</b>	Thinking a certain thing about someone or a group of people before we really know them, sometimes based on propaganda or opinion. E.g. You might assume: 'all girls are bad at football'. But there are many girls who are good at football! Stereotypes can seem positive or negative but are hurtful and untrue.
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<b>Theory of mind</b>	Understanding that other people don't think the same way as you and may have different beliefs. Try to think about what their thoughts and feelings might be if you can.
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<b>Vulnerabilities</b>	Things about you (such as your qualities, knowledge or special talents) that may mean people try to harm or influence you in some way, or even encourage you to harm others.
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# Identity – who am I?



A quick activity to get your young person thinking about their identity.



Why not look at the example and see what Tom likes. Would you and Tom have similar interests?

**Identity:** things that make you, you! It could be your appearance, your interests, your religion – anything! Your identity may change over time too!

List five things about yourself.

A \_\_\_\_\_

B \_\_\_\_\_

C \_\_\_\_\_

D \_\_\_\_\_

E \_\_\_\_\_

You can also draw a picture if you'd prefer (use page 27) and label different aspects of yourself.



Now put this in order of what the most important things to you are. Draw a line between them.

A      B      C      D      E

1<sup>st</sup>      2<sup>nd</sup>      3<sup>rd</sup>      4<sup>th</sup>      5<sup>th</sup>



Tom likes telling jokes, his friends tell him he has a great sense of humour.



He likes gardening with his dad, especially growing vegetables in the garden.



His favourite hobby is swimming.



Tom's favourite animals are chickens and his pet dog.

List five things you like and five things you dislike

I like...

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

I dislike...

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

What words would you use to describe yourself to others? Are all of these positive? If not, why? Discuss these with your adult.

Repeat these activities in

- a week
- a month
- a year

Are your lists still the same? Have the most important things to you changed?

It is natural that our identity as well as our likes and dislikes and what is important to us changes over time – this is part of growing up!

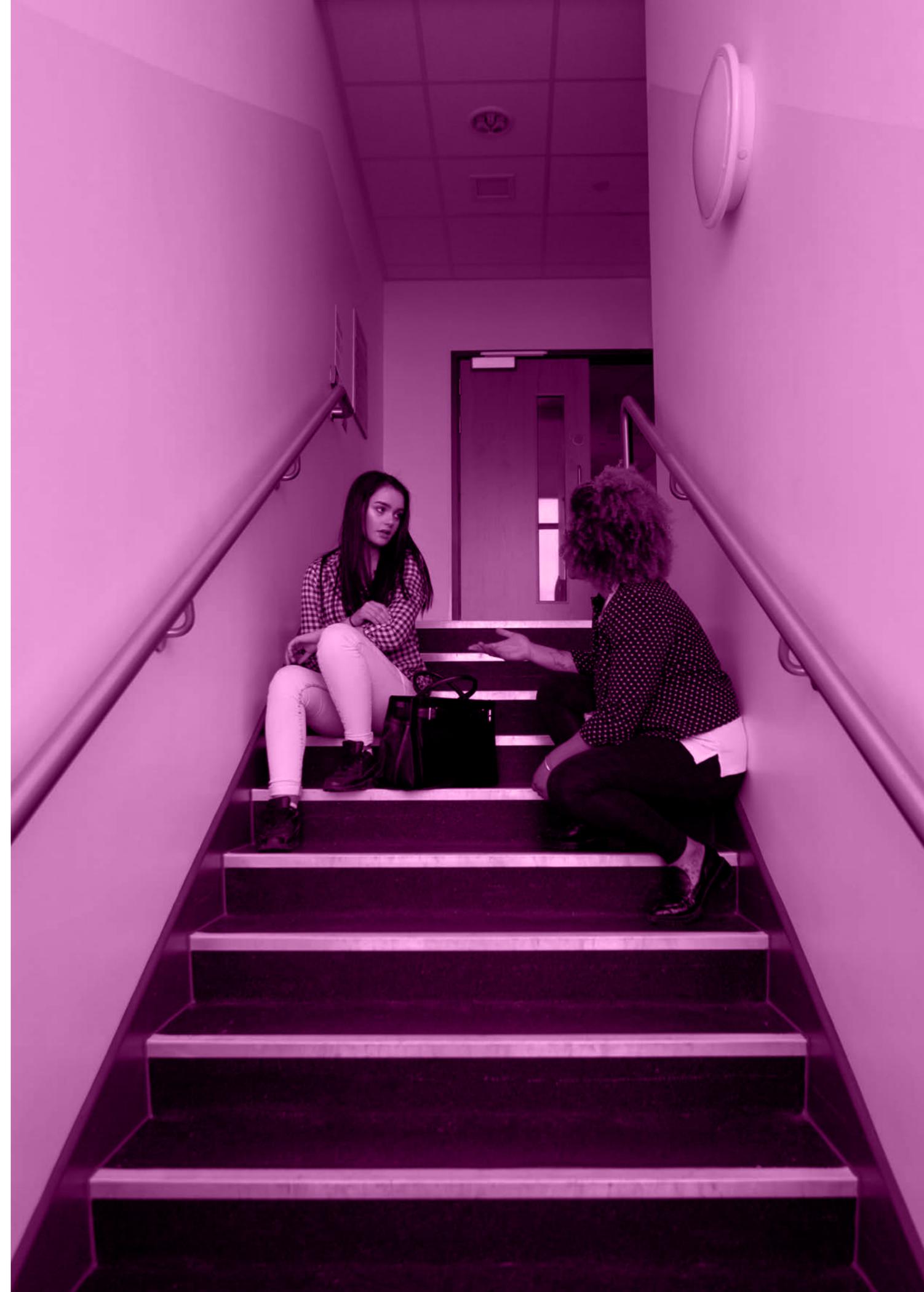
If you are curious, or have worries or questions about your identity, this website may be able to help: [www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)



## Social narratives

These social narratives are designed to help you initiate conversations with your young person on many of the topics and sensitive themes considered in this guidance.

However, they are merely templates, and should be appropriately adapted to your young person and their individual needs in a person-centred approach.



# Thinking about identity

Every person has their own individual identity.

There are lots of things that make up a person's identity. Some of these include:

- The way they look
- Their likes and dislikes
- People who are important to them e.g. role models
- Things that they are good at
- Friendships groups
- Family
- The communities they belong to.



All of these things that make up a person's identity can change over time. They may change the way they look; what they like or dislike might change; they may change who they admire or who they see as role models; they may have different friendships groups; their families may change in some way and/or they may become part of new or different communities. This is okay.

**My identity may change and that is okay.**



If I am worried or unsure about my identity, I can try to ask for help.



Parents or teachers/lecturers at school/college or other trusted adults may be good to talk to about identity.



Activity

What is my identity?



Why not draw a self portrait

# Being a good citizen

We are all humans and deserve to be treated with respect. We can help with this by helping others to feel happy and ensuring that everybody feels that they belong. This is being a good citizen.

For instance, we can show respect to other people by:

- Asking others about their beliefs, opinions, thoughts and feelings
- Listening and respecting them – even if we don't agree. Listening to people makes them feel valued and happy
- Following the rules so that everyone gets the opportunity to get what they need, and no one gets hurt, is left out or is unhappy
- Being kind even if we think someone is wrong or we don't agree with them.



People who are good citizens do things like:

- Obey rules and laws
- Help others
- Vote in elections
- Tell an adult if someone is a danger to themselves or to others
- Be responsible for their own actions and how they affect others.

## Activity

### Am I a good citizen?

Talk to your grown up and ask each other these questions:

Do I ask others about their beliefs, opinions, thoughts and feelings?

Yes/No

Do I listen to and respect other people?

Yes/No

Do I listen to people so it makes them feel valued and happy?

Yes/No

Am I kind even if I think someone is wrong or I don't agree with them?

Yes/No

Do I follow the rules so that nobody gets hurt?

Yes/No

Am I honest, polite and trustworthy?

Yes/No

Am I helpful?

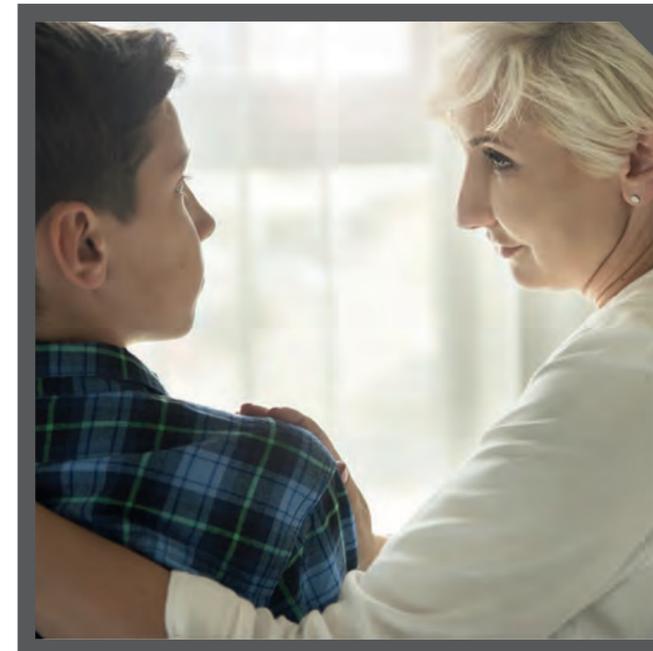
Yes/No

**No one is born a good citizen. We all must develop the skills to become a good citizen. The skills I can try to learn are:**

- How to be cooperative and work together with others
- How to listen, share our ideas and be fair towards all people
- How to show respect, be patient and tolerant toward people who are different from us.

**Some things I can do to practise or show that I am being a good citizen are:**

- Volunteer and be active in my community, be a good neighbour
- Be honest, polite and trustworthy
- Follow the rules and laws
- Respect the rights and the property of others
- Be informed about the world around me and try to protect the environment
- Be helpful and be willing to put the needs of others first.



**If I am concerned about other people who are not good citizens, I can tell my teacher/lecturer or my parent or carer.**

**I will try to learn the skills needed to be a good citizen. I will try to be a good citizen. Everyone in my family, my community and my school/college will be pleased to see my good citizen skills.**



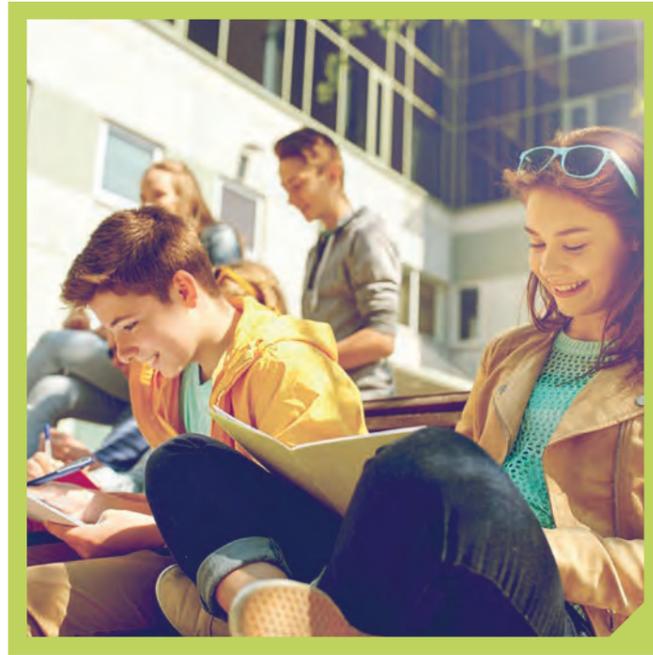
Top tip

**‘To be compassionate is to be understanding and caring towards someone else.’**

# Belonging

**Belonging means feeling accepted.**

We can belong to, or feel accepted, in a range of different groups. These might include school, family, home, an online group, a club we belong to, the country we live in, the school or college we attend or the community we live in.

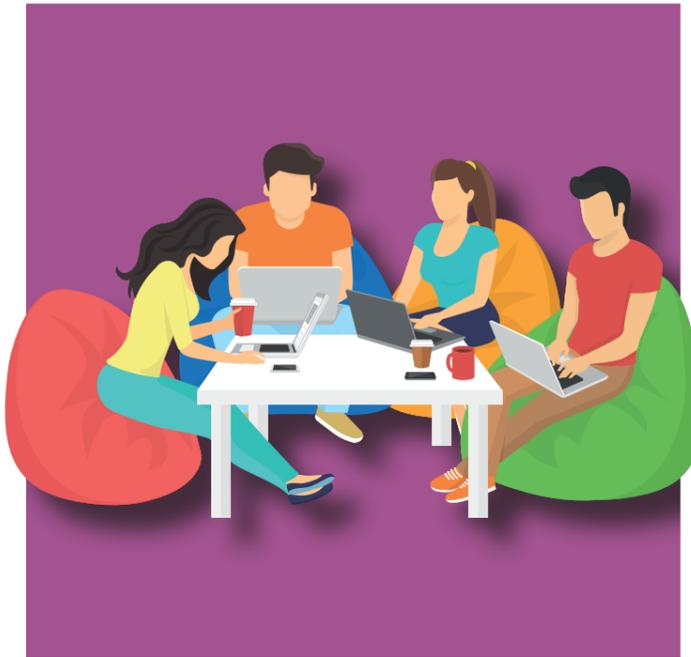


When we feel like we belong it might feel like we fit in or like we are an important member of the group. It might give us a sense of being valued and part of a community.



**Belonging can give us comfort and make us feel good about ourselves.**

Different social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube, Whatsapp, Snapchat, etc. enable us to interact with each other, even if we live far away from each other. We can share things we are interested in, including photographs and videos.



This helps us to create a sense of belonging. Sometimes when we feel a sense of belonging to a group, we might be more likely to follow the ideas of that group and believe the things they tell us or do things that they ask us to do.

**It is important to think carefully about what we are seeing and hearing in these groups.**

**We can keep ourselves safe by checking facts and thinking about whether we are concerned about something we see or something someone asks us to do in one of our online groups.**



**If I am worried about something I have seen, heard or am asked to do online or in a group, I should talk to a parent or a teacher/lecturer, or I can report it to someone in authority like the police if I think it is against the law.**



## Activity

**I can feel like I belong:**

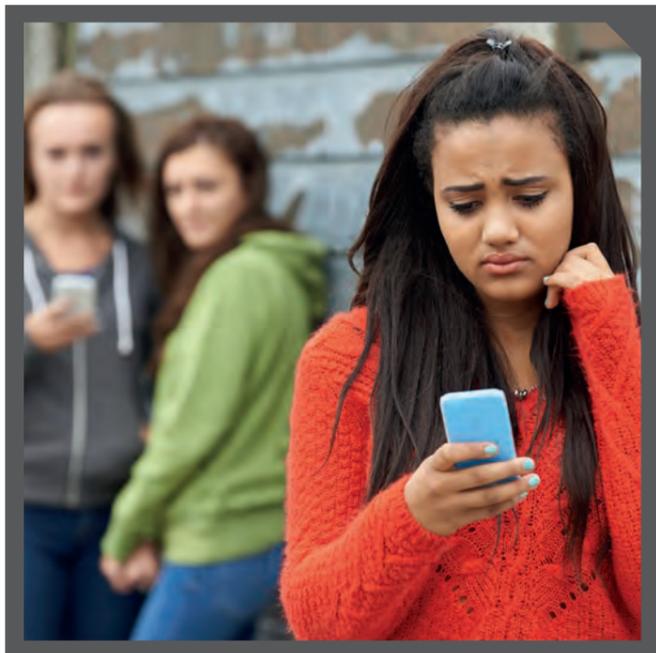
- at school
- with my family
- with my true friends
- at home
- in an online group
- at a club
- in my country
- in my community
- anywhere else I feel included, safe and happy.

# Bullying

Bullying is when a person or a group of people try to hurt you on purpose.



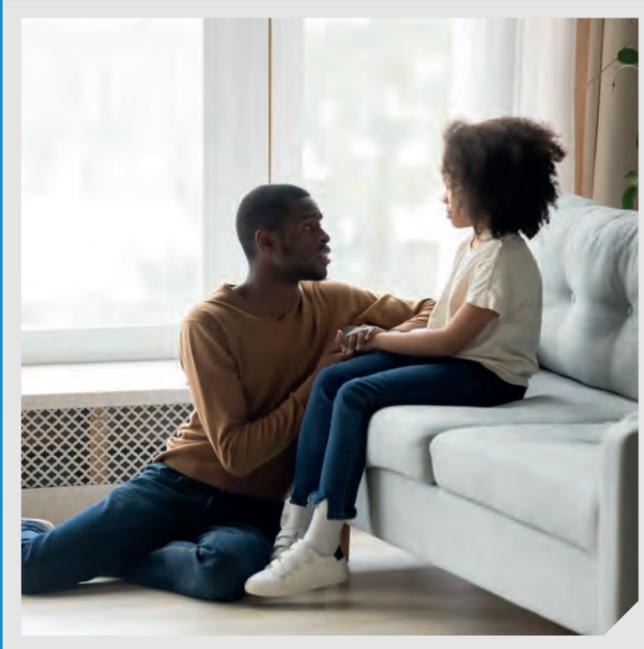
This can be saying something hurtful, trying to physically hurt you, asking you to do things you don't want to do or stopping you from joining in.



## Activity

### Things to do if you feel you are being bullied:

1. Tell your **parent or carer**



2. Tell your **teacher or adult at school**



3. Tell a **friend**



4. Tell the bully to **stop**



5. If the bullying is online, you can **block or delete** them.



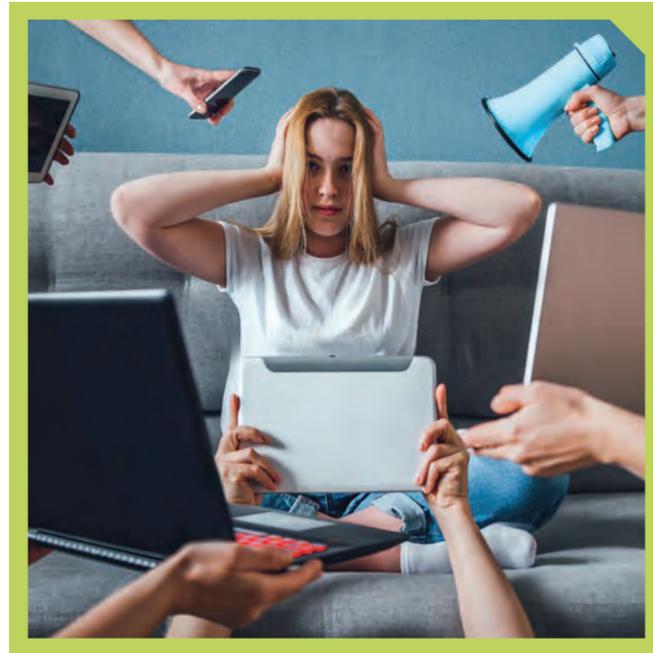
- I've told my **parent or carer**
- I've told a **teacher or adult at school**
- I've told a **friend**
- I've told the bully to **stop**
- I've **blocked or deleted** the bully online.

**Bullying is not ok and bullying needs to stop.**

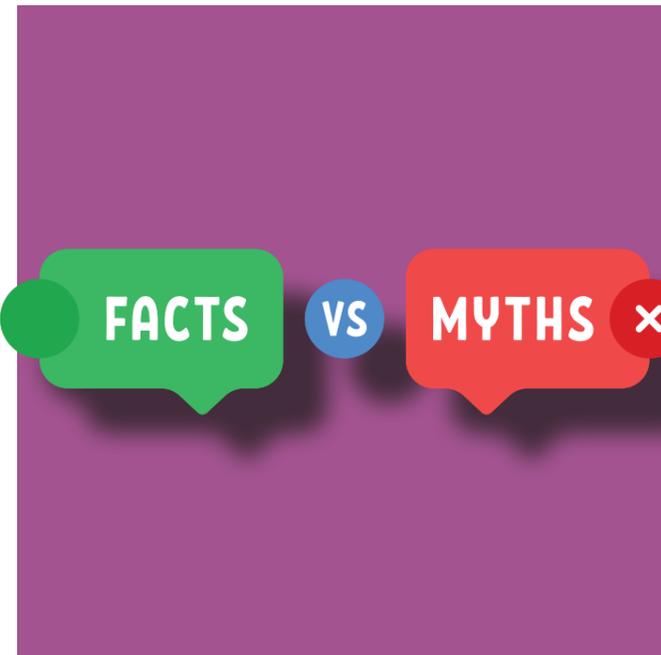
# Conspiracy theories

A conspiracy theory is when someone offers a simple but alternative explanation for an event or situation to those provided by the government or reliable, official sources.

Sometimes they explain it as a secret, with lots of hidden signs that can only be spotted by people who know the secret. These can be things like secret clubs in charge of the government, believing the earth is flat, or believing that information on the news is fake, and performed by actors.



The stories can be misleading or blame certain groups or people for things they didn't do. People who believe the stories sometimes say that people who don't believe them are 'stupid' or call them 'sheep'. Often people who believe the story will say that people who don't are 'lying', or 'hiding the truth'.



If people are calling you names, you can ask a grown-up at school or at home for help.



If you hear information or an explanation that sounds shocking or is very different to what you have heard before or what most people believe, question if it can be true. Ask an adult you trust and do some more research.



You don't want to be tricked into believing something that is false!



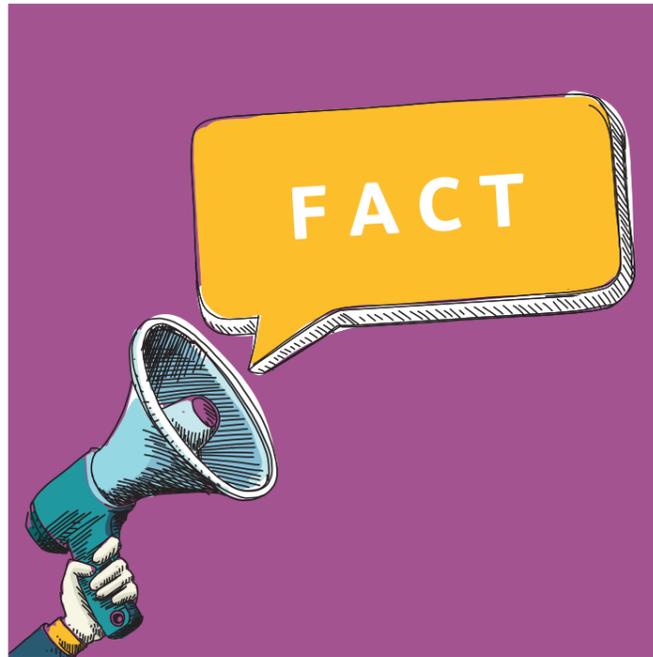
Top tip

'If something is misleading it could be giving you the wrong idea about something.'

## Extreme beliefs

An extreme belief is when someone might think or tell you something which seems shocking, dangerous, or the opposite of what most people might think.

**A belief is not a fact and not always based on factual information.**



An extreme belief can often be described as black or white – **this means that there is no other way of thinking about it** – you either believe it or not believe it.

**This is not a good thing as no belief can be completely true or not true without any debate or discussion.** Black and white thinking tries to accentuate division and difference, and exploit people's fears based on ignorance or prejudice.

Examples of extreme beliefs might be thinking that hurting someone is ok; or not liking certain groups of people just because of who they are or what they believe in; or thinking that someone is bad because of what they look like. There are many others.

Some people get together in groups to share their extreme beliefs and then find it very hard to listen to anyone else's beliefs or to discuss those beliefs. These groups often try to get other people to believe that their beliefs are right and recruit them into their groups. **This is not a good thing and it is not a good choice to be a group member.**

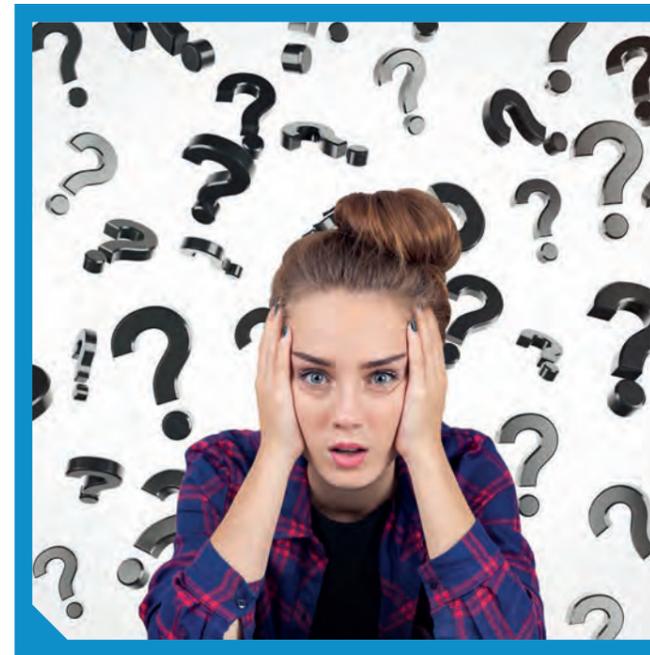
Someone with extreme beliefs might ask you to do something to hurt someone, or to give them information to help them or to share the extreme beliefs. **This is not a good thing and it is not a good choice to do these.**



**I can get in trouble if I share extreme beliefs or join an extremist group.**

Our Government defines extreme beliefs as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

This means that extreme beliefs can make us unhappy, unsafe or upset, and to express an extreme belief can be against the law.



**It is important that I think carefully about any extreme beliefs that I see or hear from the people around me or online. To keep myself safe I will think carefully about what I see or hear and share my concerns about anything that I am asked to do or share.**



**If I am worried about this or what someone is telling me, I can tell my parents or carers, my teachers/lecturers, or if it's online I can also block or delete them.**



**This will help to keep me and others safe.**

# What is freedom of speech?

Freedom of speech means that you have the right to voice your opinion or ideas.



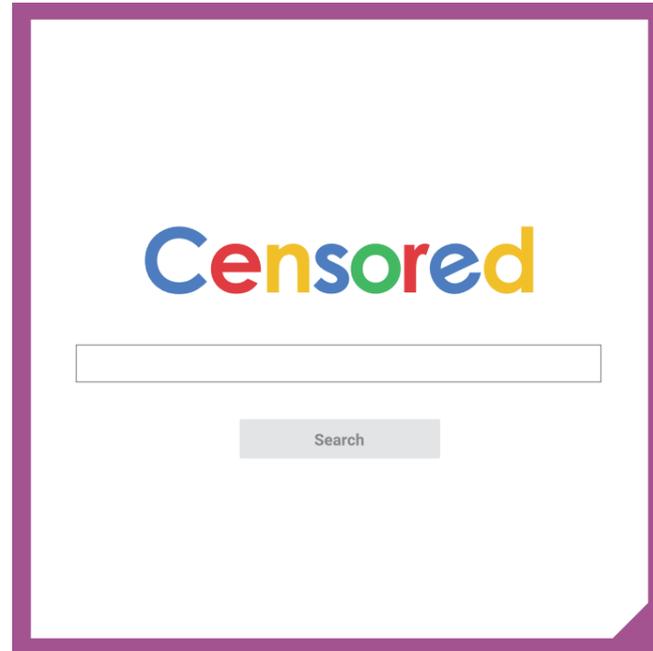
Freedom of speech also means that we have to think about what we say and act responsibly and consider other people's feelings. Sometimes what we want to say can be offensive or upsetting to other people.

We don't want to upset someone or make them angry because of what we think. We can get upset or angry when someone says something that upsets us.

**Sometimes we can get into trouble if we say what we think (in person or online) without considering how it makes other people feel.**

Sometimes our opinions or ideas – or the opinions or ideas of other people – can be described as against the public interest or the rights and reputations of others. This can be called **hate speech**. This means that what we or others might say, upsets other people and changes the way they can live their lives or they way they feel about themselves.

People who live in different parts of the world and in different cultures don't always have the same rights to freedom of speech as we do. In some places around the world people would be breaking their country's laws if they expressed all their opinions and views.



In the United Kingdom there are some things that we should not express or share, such as views that criticise other's religious beliefs, or views that are obscene and upsetting, or that make people unsafe and present a danger to the public.



**I can enjoy having freedom of speech and being able to express my opinions and ideas.**

It is important that I think carefully about what I am saying and sharing. This will show that I am acting responsibly by thinking of other people's feelings before I share my opinions or the opinions of others.



**If I am worried about something I have seen, heard or am asked to share, I should talk to a parent or a teacher/lecturer, or I can report it to someone in authority like the police if I think it is against the law.**



# Friends

**A friend is someone you can talk to and rely on.**

Sometimes we make friends in real life; sometimes we meet them online.

Remember, it can be hard to know who people are if you cannot physically see them.

Occasionally people pretend to be someone different when they are online.



**A friend is someone who is kind and you can trust. They do not want to hurt you or others.**

Sometimes people may seem kind, but they may want you to do something for them.

**If someone in real life or online asks you to do or say something you think may hurt you or someone else, they are probably not really a friend.**



**If someone in real life or online asks you to do or say something that worries you, they may not be a real friend.**



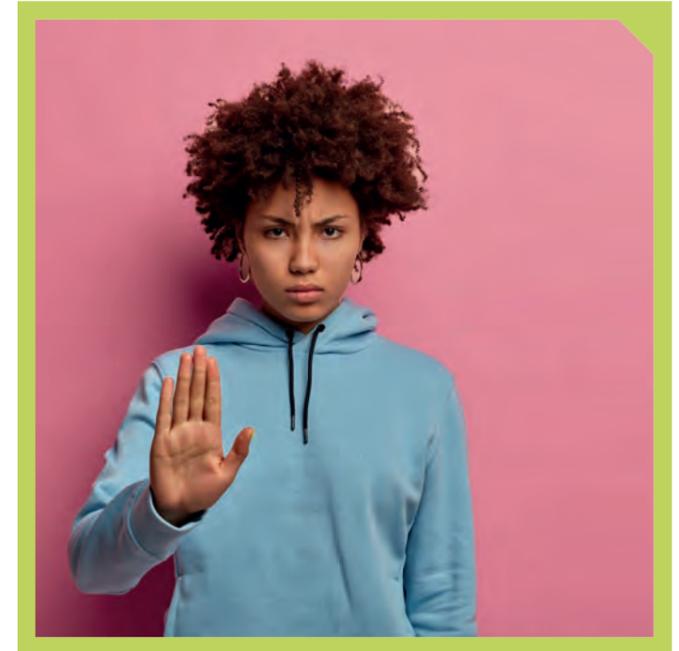
If you think someone is not behaving like a real friend in person or online you can try to talk to an adult. **An adult will be able to help you to check whether the person is a real friend and can help you to decide what to do next to keep everyone safe.**



If you think someone is not behaving like a real friend online you can block them. This means they will not be able to send you messages any more.

**If you are not sure if someone is a real friend in person or online you can try to talk to an adult who will be able to help you check this.**

**If you think someone is not behaving like a real friend in person or online you can ask them to stop. You can say 'no' if they ask you to do something that makes you uncomfortable.**



Top tip

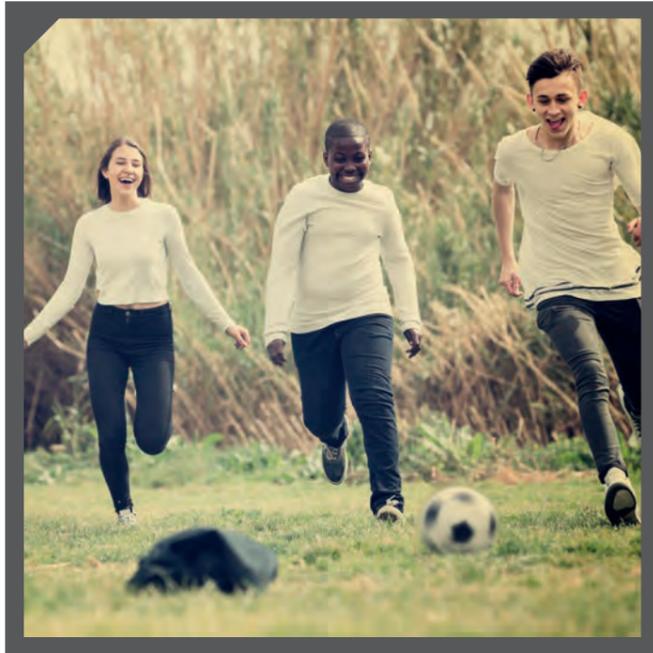
If someone isn't behaving like a **real friend**, you can:

- talk to an **adult** you trust (such as your **parent/carer** or **teacher**)
- ask them to stop
- block or delete them online.

# Group identity

Group identity is when we feel a sense of belonging to a particular group. Belonging means feeling accepted.

We might get along with other people and feel a sense of belonging because we share similar interests such as playing the same sport and being in the same team, or we might like the same computer games and play these together and belong to a club or group for this.



At school we might like spending time with a group of people at break or lunchtimes who like the same music or television programmes or have other shared interests. This might also give us a sense of belonging and group identity. We might also meet up out of school, in our free time.



People in the group might help and support each other or they might work together to help others. This is a positive part of belonging to a group.

Being part of a group can give us more support, opportunities to socialise, or increase our self-esteem as we feel we belong and have something in common with others.



When we are in a group, we might learn something from the others in the group, but we can also be influenced by them when we listen to their views and ideas.

Some of these ideas might be good ideas, but others - if we follow them or act on them - could lead us into difficult situations, or into trouble if our actions hurt or harm anyone else, or even break the law.

It is important to think carefully about what we are seeing and hearing in these groups and what we are being asked to do. We can keep ourselves safe by thinking carefully about the group activities that we get involved in.



If you are worried about something you have heard or seen in your group, you should talk to a parent or a teacher/lecturer to get advice on what to do.



# Propaganda

Propaganda is the name for media that people use to try to influence our feelings, behaviour or opinions.

Propaganda is sometimes used in adverts, and it was even used by the Nazis in the war to make people believe in one person's viewpoint, even when it isn't true.

You can see it on social media, on the tv and in newspapers.



It has been used at lots of different times and is used by lots of different groups.

Propaganda uses different techniques to make you believe something – they might describe a group of people using negative words or use pictures or words to make us fear them or to feel angry.



Question what you see or are told – you can ask an adult you trust (like your parent, carer or teacher). Ask yourself:

- What do they want me to believe?
- How does it help them?
- Does it help me?
- Will anyone be hurt by this?



If you are worried that something you have seen is unkind or untrue, tell an adult that you trust about it.



Top tip

When you read something, think about how it makes you feel.

Does it make you feel angry? Scared? Sad?

Why might this be?

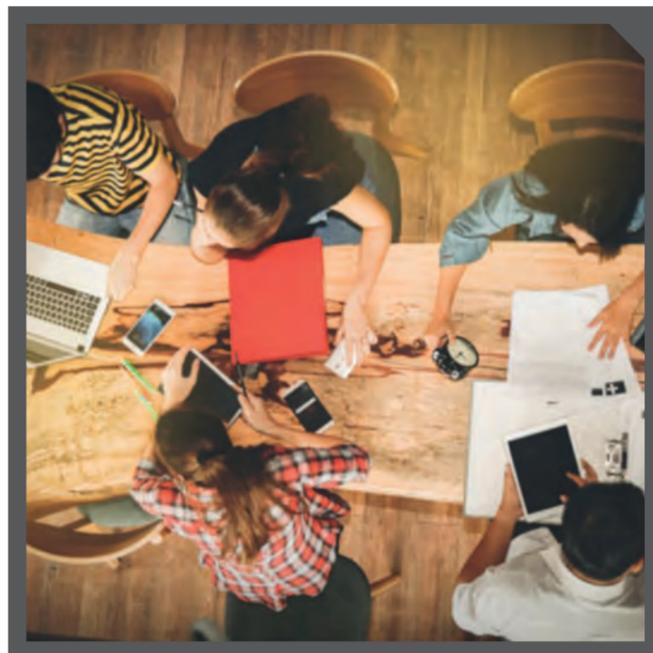
# Sharing online

There are lots of ways to talk to people online.

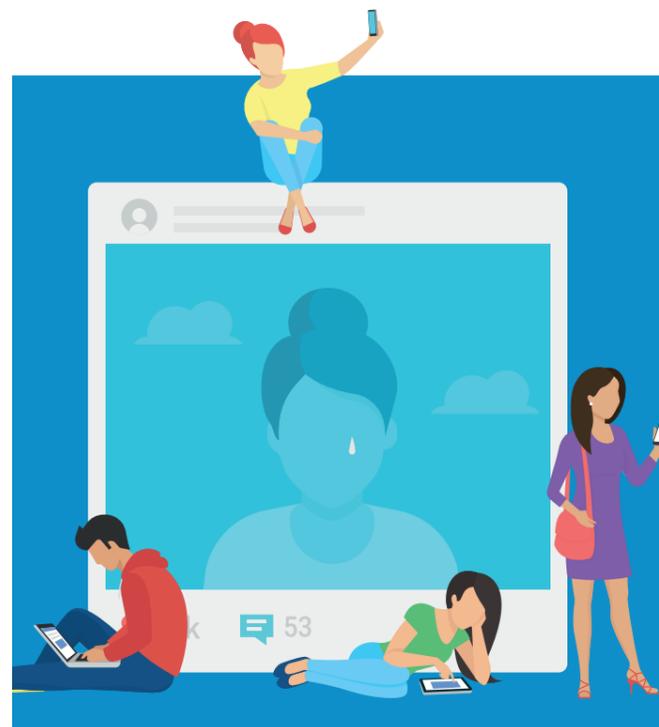
When people talk online, they often share information. Sometimes this is information about themselves and sometimes it is about things they are interested in.



When online, people might want to share information that they believe, or think is shocking or fun.



However, it is important to think about what information we are sharing and the effect this could have on others, or the consequences it could have for others and the person sharing information.

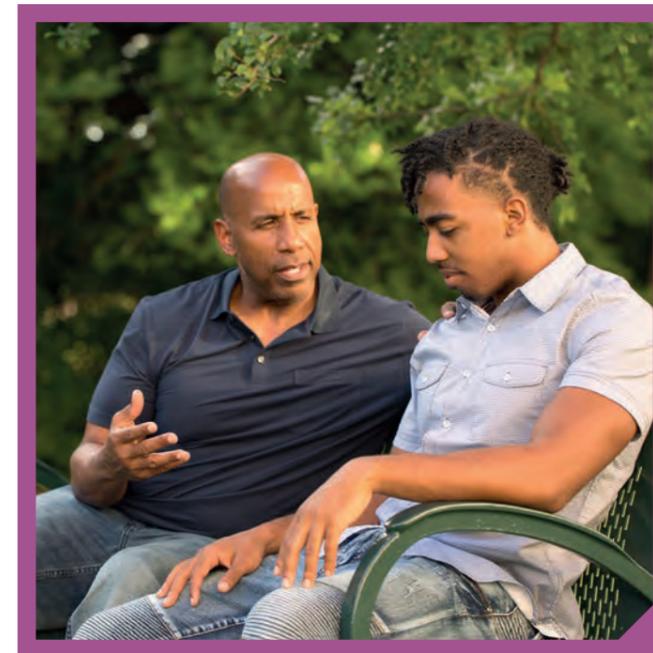


For example:

- Is it true?
- Could it hurt someone's feelings?
- Could it make someone angry or upset?
- If it is hateful (e.g. racist, homophobic, sexist or discriminates against someone because of a disability), it could even break the law.



Most parents can help with this or a teacher/lecturer at school/college.



To keep myself safe it is important to stop and think about what I am about to share. It is good to check the information is true and do more research before sharing it.

# Stereotypes

A stereotype is when you think something about a whole group of people before you know them individually.

Stereotypes can be positive or negative.

Examples of stereotypes:



“All girls are bad at football.”  
Some girls are very good at football and play for their country.



“Men are stronger than women.”  
Some women are stronger than some men.



“Everyone with autism is good at Maths.”  
Some autistic people are good at Maths, some are not good at Maths.



“Old people are grumpy.”  
Some old people may feel grumpy sometimes, but some old people may not.

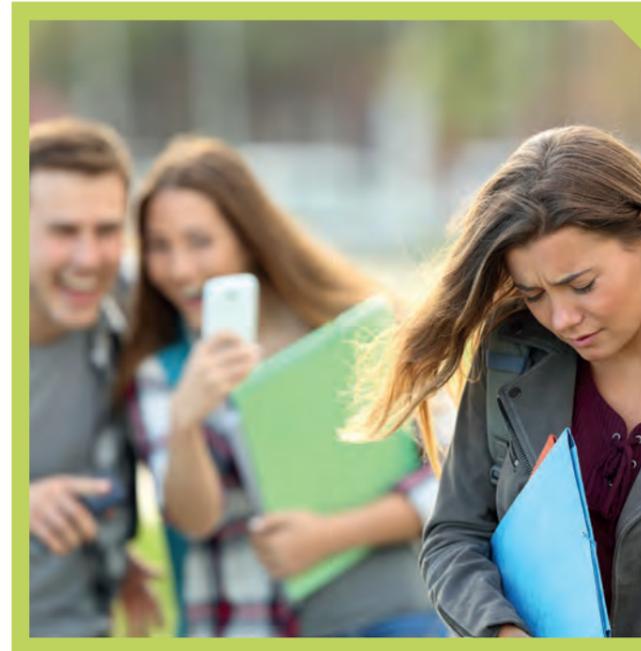
Stereotypes can make us think we know a person when we don't. Stereotypes can stop us from thinking about people as individuals.

Sometimes we think these things because of the things people have told us, or things we read online or see in the news.

Our families and friends can even make us think these things.

However, not everyone is the same just because they belong to a certain group and sometimes these opinions can make people feel sad.

Stereotypes can lead to people being bullied or groups feeling like they don't belong.



It's good to get to know people individually, what they like and don't like and what they are good at and not so good at, rather than assuming we know them because of the group they belong to.

## Activity

### Different types of people

With your grown up, look at these images and think about the people in them? Are they good or bad stereotypes?



Biker gang



Doctors and nurses



Football fans

# Things to think about to stay safe online

## There are lots of ways to go online:

Lots of people online meet online. Some people who meet online have met before as they already know each other and some people meet online for the first time.

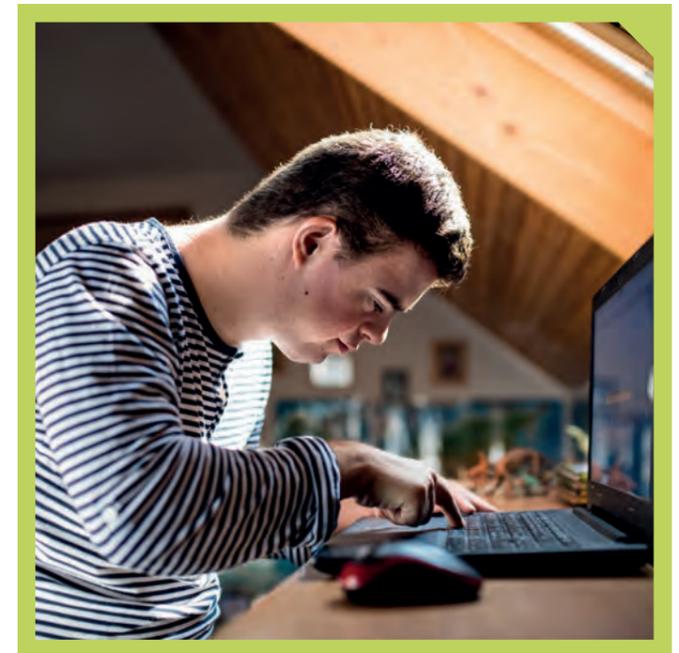


Meeting people online may be different to meeting in real life. When people meet in real-life, they can see what they look like including how old they are and how they like to dress. We cannot always tell what people are like when we meet them online.

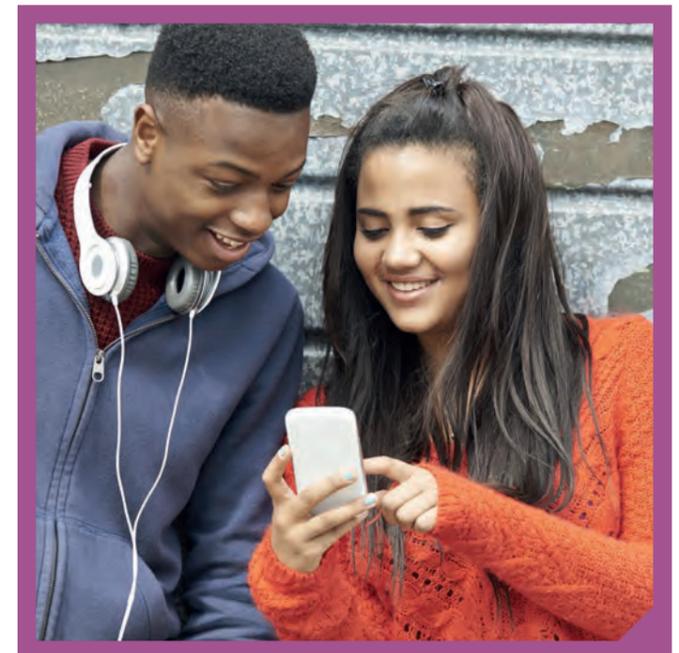
When people meet in real life, it is often easier to stay safe because they can see what other people are like. They can judge things like whether a person is a stranger to them. They can think about how they should behave and talk to people they know, and how they should behave and talk to people differently who are strangers. It is best to keep yourself safe and think about what you share or say with a stranger.



It is the same online. When we meet someone we do not know, we need to think about our own safety. We need to think about whether the person we are talking/communicating with is a stranger and what is safe to share with someone online.



I will try to think about keeping safe online following these guidelines. If I am worried or unsure, I will try and find help.



Parents may be good to talk to about staying safe online or teachers/lecturers at school/college. There is also lots of advice you can read to stay safe online.

Parents:  
you can look at  
[www.internetmatters.org/  
inclusive-digital-safety/  
advice-for-parents-and-  
carers/supporting-children-  
with-send](http://www.internetmatters.org/inclusive-digital-safety/advice-for-parents-and-carers/supporting-children-with-send) to help support  
your young person with this!



## How might someone get involved in actions that hurt others?

Growing up is difficult and at any point in your life, you might feel upset or angry. This could mean you are vulnerable to being groomed by someone that has bad intentions and is not a real friend. You may sometimes feel that your strong views are misunderstood, or that you can't talk about them or ask questions to your family and friends. This could cause you to look for advice and information in the wrong places online and you could potentially be groomed by extremists who do not have genuine or good intentions.

**'If someone is trying to get someone to understand them, but others don't listen they could get more and more angry. People say people with autism are inflexible, but sometimes no-one is trying to be flexible with them.'**

(Quote from a young person with an ASC).

You need to feel supported therefore to recognise when you may be vulnerable and have the opportunity to **discuss feelings in a safe and trusted environment**.

### Top tip

'Right and wrong isn't always **black and white**'.

Be open minded and compromise; is there an idea in the middle? There is something for everyone; options and choices.'

(Quote from a young person with an ASC).

### So, how do we talk about views that might be controversial, and how do we compromise?

Many people can have prejudices, and unfortunately **stereotype** people before actually getting to know them.



**"For instance, in The Little Mermaid, Ariel wants to be a human and marry the prince, but her father assumes all humans are bad, even though he doesn't know any!"**

(Quote from a young person with an ASC).

Similarly, not all young women want to be 'rescued' by a prince! Stereotyping can hurt people's feelings and often lead to arguments. It is OK to have different views to someone, as long as we listen and respectfully challenge, rather than just assuming we are right.

### Prejudice

**'An unfair and unreasonable opinion or feeling, especially when formed without enough thought or knowledge'** (Reference: The Cambridge Dictionary Online)

Is it important to share views in a positive way so that your voice is heard and taken seriously! For instance, through a campaign. Here are some links that direct you towards some positive ways to make a difference:

West Sussex Participation Wiki. Have your voice heard:

 [www.rixwiki.org/west-sussex-mmm/home/youth-participation-1](http://www.rixwiki.org/west-sussex-mmm/home/youth-participation-1)

UK Youth Parliament – use your voice to bring about real social change:

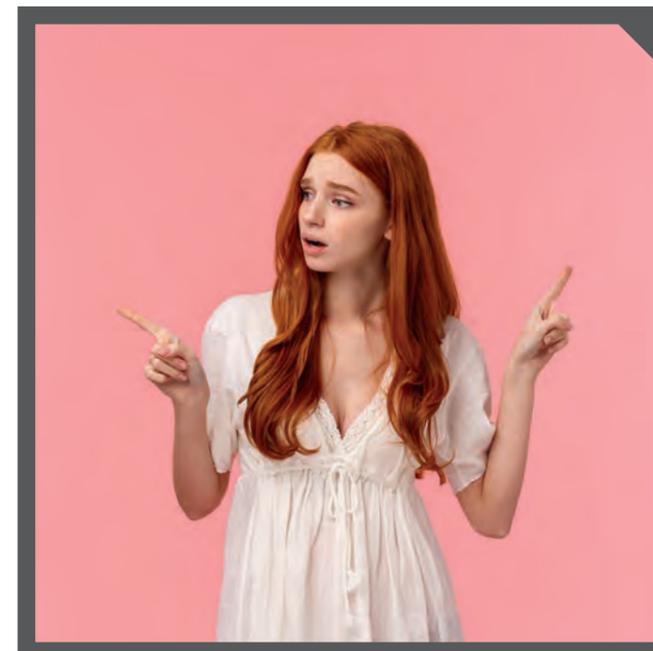
 [www.byc.org.uk/uk/uk-youth-parliament](http://www.byc.org.uk/uk/uk-youth-parliament)

Council for Disabled Children – comment constructively on the latest issues affecting young people with SEND:

 <https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk>

Democratic Society – making democracy work for everyone:

 [www.demsoc.org](http://www.demsoc.org)



### Manipulation

**'a certain tone, little chunks at a time, getting someone to do something. I have experienced that in some friendships' – Young person with an ASC.**



You could also look for youth sections of mainstream political parties that match your values and interests, or support national campaign groups and charities, for example:

 [www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/campaign](http://www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/campaign)

### How do we know who to trust?

It can be difficult to tell the difference between someone you can trust and someone you can't, particularly online! People might be able to **manipulate** ('to control something or someone to your advantage, often unfairly or dishonestly' Cambridge Dictionary Online) you so that you end up doing something that you don't necessarily understand or want to do.

In particular, when you are online, especially in multi-player gaming situations (remind yourself what this is in **Section 2** of this document), you may be speaking to people you do not know in real life.

## Illegal vs Legal

If something is **illegal** it breaks the rules that we all have to follow in our country (just like you might have rules you have to follow at school, college or home).

If you do something that is **illegal** or help someone to do something that is **illegal** you could hurt someone else, or get into trouble yourself.

If something is **legal** it is OK and means you are following the rules that have been set.

## How do you know these people are who they say they are, and that you can trust them?

Have a look at the Social Narratives in **Section 4** of this Toolkit to help you recognise who you may not be able to trust and **what you can do to keep yourself safe**.

You can also have a look at the resources below to help you:



Childnet – resource that has been developed to help you think about the trustworthiness of content and people online: [www.childnet.com/resources/star-send-toolkit/t-for-trust](http://www.childnet.com/resources/star-send-toolkit/t-for-trust)



Books Beyond Words: [www.booksbeyondwords.co.uk/ebooks/making-friends](http://www.booksbeyondwords.co.uk/ebooks/making-friends)



Kidscape, Friendship and ‘frenemies’ – how to tell the difference: [www.kidscape.org.uk/advice/advice-for-young-people/friendships-and-frenemies](http://www.kidscape.org.uk/advice/advice-for-young-people/friendships-and-frenemies)



## Case study

Breck Bednar was a 14 year old boy who was manipulated and groomed by a 19 year old man when playing games online.

If you are ever worried about what someone is telling you online, then you can block them and tell someone you trust.

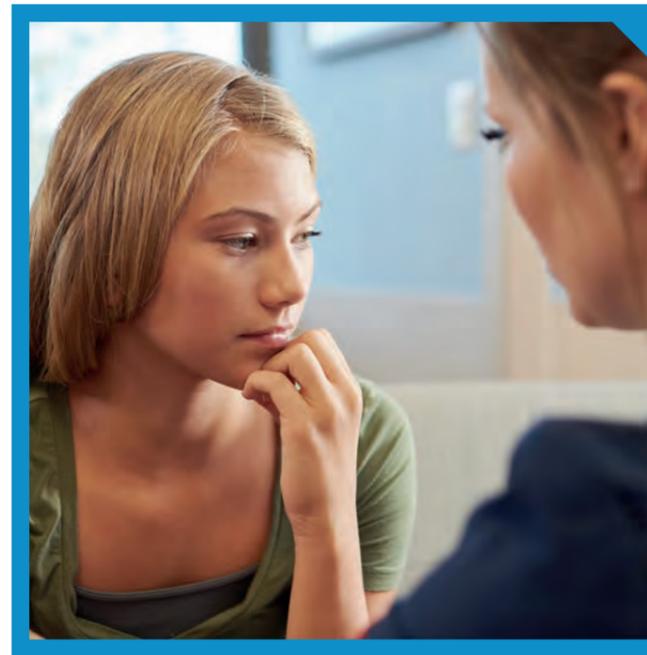
**Remember: it is more difficult to tell if that person is telling the truth online!**



## How might someone get involved in actions that hurt others?

The following diagram (**page 60**) shows you how someone can get involved in actions that could break the rules that we need to follow, or even do something that could result in other people being harmed.

If you are at all worried that you could be involved in actions that hurt others, or you are worried about one of your friends, **then tell an adult you can trust!**



## You can also call:

- Childline: **0800 1111**
- ACT Early Prevent Advice Line **0800 011 3764**

## Radicalisation

When someone influences you (this could even be online) to **believe something extreme which could hurt yourself or others**.



# How might someone get involved in actions that hurt others?

If you are worried that you or someone you know might be going down this path, it is important you ask an adult you trust for help. Don't worry about getting in trouble or that people will think you are a 'bad person' – it is better that you are kept safe and get the support you need!

If you feel there isn't an adult you can trust, or you are worried about a friend, you can contact:

 Childline:  
0800 1111  
[www.childline.org.uk/get-support](http://www.childline.org.uk/get-support)

 ACT Early (Prevent advice line):  
0800 0113764  
[www.actearly.uk](http://www.actearly.uk)

Is it true or fake news?

## INTEREST

You might be really **interested** or fascinated by something.

Or you might be very **angry** about a particular thing (a grievance).



Can you talk to someone you trust about this?



Someone with bad intentions and motives (bad reasons for doing something) could realise you are interested in a particular topic.

Or they could know that you are angry about something in particular.

They could **manipulate** (use) you for their own gains.

## IDEAS

Your interest or grievance, together with other influences, could cause you to think the only way to improve things is by **hurting someone who disagrees with you, or by giving information to others.**

They might seem like they are real friends but **they could be using this information to harm other people.**

Are they a true friend or not?

**'Tell someone even if you have done something bad yourself, it is better to be honest than keep on carrying on and hiding it.'**

(Quote from a young person with an ASC).



## PLANNING

Your special talents and skills might mean you are able to help plan something that **hurts others or breaks the rules.**

You may research certain information or give someone the knowledge you have about something.

But that person may go on to cause harm with that information!

Are you worried about some of the things they are asking you to do?

Does something tell you that perhaps they are not really a friend after all?

## CHECKING

You may test things out to see whether they work.

Are you hiding things from your friends and family?

It isn't too late to stop and ask for advice and support from someone you trust.

## PREPARATION

You may get resources together or gather information that you will need.

Are you worried that what you are doing could be illegal or wrong?

## Illegal activities

You may end up doing something **wrong**, that **breaks the rules everyone has to follow.**

Or something that **harms another person** and gets you in trouble.



# Suggested reading

## For parents



Dealing with bullying – a guide for parents and carers:  
[www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/bullying/bullying/parents](http://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/bullying/bullying/parents)



Making friends – a guide for autistic adults:  
[www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/family-life-and-relationships/making-friends/autistic-adults](http://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/family-life-and-relationships/making-friends/autistic-adults)



NAS Past Conference: Offenders 2019; Pre-Conference Workshop – Think Protect Connect - Safeguarding Young People from the Risk of Radicalisation - John Khan.  
You are able to download the presentation here: [www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/professional-development/past-conferences/offenders-conference-2019](http://www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/professional-development/past-conferences/offenders-conference-2019)



Learning Disabilities, Autism and Internet Safety. A guide for Parents by Cerebra – Download it here: [cerebra.org.uk/download/learning-disabilities-autism-and-internet-safety](http://cerebra.org.uk/download/learning-disabilities-autism-and-internet-safety)



Learning Disabilities, Autism and Internet Safety – A Guide for Parents by Mencap and Cerebra:  
[www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/2016-11/Internet-Safety-web-2016.pdf](http://www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/2016-11/Internet-Safety-web-2016.pdf)

## For young people



Books Beyond Words – A range of books and resources that work purely through pictures. Books that may be relevant include those on ‘Belonging’, ‘Making friends’ and ‘Speaking up for myself’ There are also a range of free books and resources around Coronavirus:  
[www.booksbeyondwords.co.uk](http://www.booksbeyondwords.co.uk)



The New Social Story Book™ – Over 150 Social Stories That Teach Everyday Social Skills to Children and Adults with Autism and Their Peers by Carol Gray. You can find more information here: [www.carolgraysocialstories.com](http://www.carolgraysocialstories.com)



No Outsiders – a platform to ensure young people feel like they are included and belong, no matter their identity. The site features a range of book recommendations, aimed at KS1 and 2, (however could be used as a basis for discussion with a range of ages), and explores stereotypes, equality and diversity: [www.no-outsiders.com](http://www.no-outsiders.com)



# Suggested watching

## For parents



NSPCC – Parents worried about radicalisation:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOis5CFU8vs&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOis5CFU8vs&feature=youtu.be)



Helping young people manage their online identity created by Internet Matters:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=RnHOFlaxQtI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RnHOFlaxQtI)



Safeguarding Children with Autism on the Internet | NAS Conference 2015 – Explores the case study of a young boy with autism whose use of the internet led to an increased interest in violence, and explains the interventions that were put in place to safeguard this young person:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=1miGnog3OBI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1miGnog3OBI)

## For young people



STAR films – Four animated films aimed at young people with additional needs in KS3 & 4, covering key messages about online safety:  
[www.childnet.com/resources/star-send-toolkit/star-films](https://www.childnet.com/resources/star-send-toolkit/star-films)



'I'm Muslim but...' – Could be used to explore stereotypes further:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMQjyRc7eiY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMQjyRc7eiY)



Who am I? Celebrating my identity – A BBC Bitesize video which explains what our identity is and how it can change through time: [www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z7y3hbk](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z7y3hbk)



'Rio Paralympics 2016- Yes I can...' – Again could be a useful video to help explore perceptions and stereotypes: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=-cPakutgQZY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-cPakutgQZY)



How does fake news spread? – BBC Bitesize explains how fake news plays on our emotions and to think before we share: [www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z6kxxyc](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z6kxxyc)



The seven types of people who start and spread viral misinformation – This BBC Bitesize video explores the different types of people who spread misleading stories online, including conspiracy theories particularly around the Covid-19 pandemic:  
[www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zdb4vwx](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zdb4vwx)



Tips for spotting fake news online – Gives you four tips to check something online you're not sure about: [www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zrprj6](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zrprj6)



Impact - Preventing Radicalisation – A short clip which explores the story of an adult with additional needs being befriended by some people who may groom him into an extreme group:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=1I\\_Fp2GjCNk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1I_Fp2GjCNk)

# Parental toolkit