

**Gauging  
Information  
Risks**

# **Guide for Parents**



**To understand how to  
assess new content online  
and the associated risks**

# Overview

As soon as children start going online, they are faced with information. Some of it is educational and supportive, but some of it can be risky.

In this lesson, children learn how to assess the risk of new content and information they see online. Is someone trying to sell something? Or are they trying to change people's beliefs? How harmful could this information be if users believe it?

Help support your child's learning at home after the lesson is complete with the information and tips in this guide.

## What you need to know

**25%**

children aged 8-17 are **confident but not able** to identify influencer endorsements on social media

**46%**

of teens report seeing **content which discusses harming specific groups**, with 36% saying they've taken part

**16%**

of UK children aged 9-17 have **seen content promoting dangerous stunts or challenges**

**Research shows**

that children can recognise clearly labelled advertising but might **struggle to identify influencer videos** which try to sell something

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# Review your child's learning

In their lesson, your child learned the importance of thinking 'below the surface' when it comes to new information or content. They used an iceberg to model the idea that 'on the surface', content might seem positive. However, 'below the surface', things might look more negative.

Your child was provided different examples of information which they needed to assess using an iceberg model. This can help children pause when they see new information before believing it or taking part in challenges or purchases.

**Use one or both of the following activities to test their knowledge.**

## Activity 1

Discuss the 'Iceberg' activity they completed in class. For Key Stage 2, they used the iceberg to think more deeply about scenarios and to think about why people post certain content online. For Key Stage 3, they went deeper in their analysis and identified which scenarios were most risky based on their assessment of the content. Ask your child to share what they learned and anything that they struggled with (or think others might struggle with).

## Activity 2

Quiz them using the questions below. The **highlighted** options are the correct answers, which you can share with your child at the end, along with the additional provided information.

1. What is the likeliest reason behind someone featuring a product in their video?
  - a) Because they like the product and want to share it
  - b) The product company is paying them to share it**
  - c) Because their followers were asking about the product

### Explanation:

Usually, videos or social media posts which are sponsored need to let viewers know. This might include using #ad in their post or using a label that says 'sponsored'. Or, the creator might pause in the middle of a video to introduce

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the sponsor of the video. However, not all content creators do this. They might talk about a product as if they use it themselves or like others were interested in it, when really they have been paid by a company to promote it. That's why it's important to do your own research and avoid getting items simply because your favourite content creator has it.

**2.** When you see a thumbnail with 'FREE' in the image and bright colours to grab your attention, what might this be an example of?

- a) Clickbait
- b) Rage bait
- c) Phish bait

**Explanation:**

Clickbait uses images and colours that will stop people from scrolling by. Messages like 'free', 'buy now' and 'watch until the end' are meant to make people act quickly and this includes by clicking on a video thumbnail or watching a whole video. Clickbait is often used to help the content creators make more money.

**3.** Imagine you follow a video games streamer who you really like. One day, they share a discount code for a supplement they say they use to stay healthy. What's the best thing to do?

- a) Use the discount code to buy the product
- b) Decide to search for other health-related content
- c) Think 'below the surface' before taking any action

**Explanation:**

Creators might change the type of content they focus on to make more money, especially if their original content isn't bringing in many views. They might also do this to share their new beliefs or influence others' beliefs, which can sometimes lead to harm. So, if you're following someone and they start posting new content, think more deeply about why they might be doing this. Then consider if you should unfollow them, block their content or ask a trusted adult for support.

# Additional resources

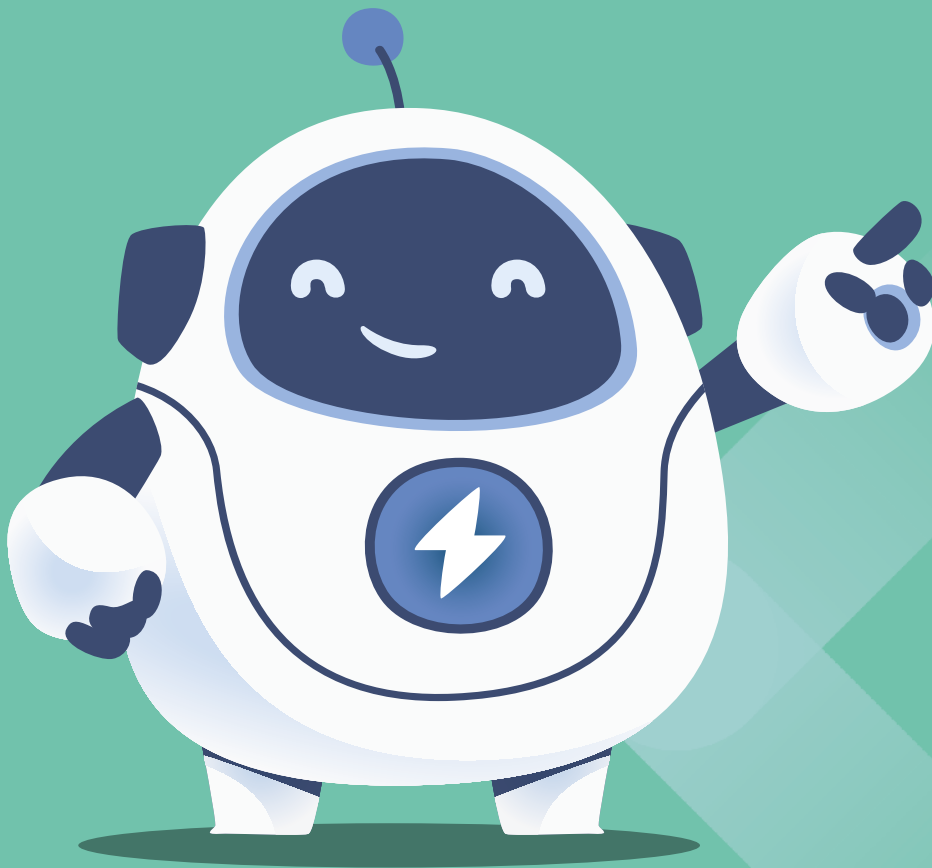
Learn more about mis and disinformation or find more activities you can do with your child using the resources below.

**Internet Matters: What is monetisation?**  
**Online safety guidance for parents**

**Internet Matters: Online critical thinking guide**

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