Conversation Starters - Online Imagery and Pornography

If you are a teacher or work in education, it is important to have ongoing conversations about the online world. When talking to children and young people about online harms, remain positive about the internet and respect their opinions and experiences. Conversations regarding the use and risks of social media should be frequent and incorporated into the day-to-day of school routine. Keep the conversation natural and include opportunities for discussion both in the classroom and in informal spaces. Take time to listen and keep judgement and criticism out of the conversation.

Building trust and encouragement

- What is your favourite thing to do online?
- Can you tell me how your favourite game works?
- Who do you like following on social media? Could you tell me why?
- What kind of content do you share on social media?
- How do you think social media could negatively affect someone's mental or physical health? What are some ways we can avoid this?
- Do you follow any accounts that focus on posting positive or uplifting content? What are your favourites?
- Have you ever felt sad or unhappy when you have been online? What did you do? Would you do anything differently now?
- What does online bullying look like to you? What's the difference between bullying and joking around?
- What advice would you give to a friend who was being bullied online? What support could you offer them?
- What would you do if one of your friends was bullying someone else?
- What does being an "active bystander" mean? How could you do this safely?
- How is an online friend different from an offline friend?
- How do you tell if someone really is who they say they are online? How can you identify a fake profile or social media account?
- Why would someone pretend to be someone else online?
- Have you ever had someone contact you online in a way you didn't like? What did you do?

Pornography

- Do you feel comfortable speaking about this topic with me? Is there another trusted adult you would feel more comfortable speaking to?

- How does pornography differ from intimacy in real life? Do you think pornography is realistic?
- Have you ever accessed or stumbled across pornography online?
- If you had questions about pornography, sex or bodies, where would you go for answers?

Intimate images

- Do you feel comfortable speaking about this topic with me? Is there another trusted adult you would feel more comfortable speaking to?
- Why do you think some people send nude images or videos of themselves to others online?
- Have any of your friends sent nudes? What did you think? Can you think of any risks?
- What advice would you give to a friend if they were being pressured to send a nude of themselves?
- What advice would you give to a friend who has had their nudes shared without their consent?
- Have you heard of deep fake images? Do you think sharing deep fakes is more or less harmful than sharing real images?

Safeguarding

- If any information triggered safeguarding concerns, liaise with your DSL and follow any safeguarding policies in place at your organisation.
- You need to consider a report to Children's Social Care.
- Record information factually and consider extra layers of risk.
- Reassure the student there are services and support agencies that can help and encourage them to seek support.