

OCTOBER 2025 ONLINE SAFETY UPDATE

For this month's online safety update, our theme is: Disinformation.

Disinformation refers to the deliberate sharing of false or misleading information in order to deceive or influence people. This could be in the form of false facts, made-up statistics or AI-generated videos made to look as if someone is saying something they haven't.

Disinformation is often shared particularly to further a political or discriminatory agenda. The person sharing knows the information is false but wants to mislead others to join their cause, or agree with them. It can appear on social media, in online videos, games, or chat groups, and may look very convincing.

For teenagers with additional needs, the risks can be higher because they might trust online sources more readily, find it harder to tell fact from opinion, or rely on online spaces for learning and friendships.

Disinformation can lead to confusion, anxiety, and poor decision-making - for example, believing false health advice, being drawn into scams, or following harmful online challenges. It can also be used to manipulate opinions or isolate people from support.

What you can do:

- Model critical thinking by openly asking questions such as: "I wonder if that's true?" or "Hmm, does that sound like it's real..?" or "I wonder why they would like people to believe that?"
- Talking openly with your child about what's real or fake online: You can show them AI-generated videos and talk through how we know it's fake. E.g., "look at their hands, do they have all of their fingers?", "Do their eyes look like real people's eyes..?"
- Encourage your child to tell you if they come across anything online that makes them feel sad, scared or angry.

Remember, the pastoral team are here to support you with any online safety concerns. Just call them on 0121 569 7089.

