Inappropriate content teaching scenarios

The following scenarios are designed for use with students to start skill-building conversations and with teachers for professional learning.

Integration across learning areas

Target Audience

- Level – middle primary, upper primary, lower secondary, middle secondary
- Keywords - online safety practices, emotional awareness and regulation, critical thinking, privacy awareness, using technology safety, emotional awareness and regulation, critical thinking, the law, understanding sexual harassment, understanding gendered violence, critical thinking.
- Type of resource – facts and scenarios

Australian Curriculum

- Key learning areas – Digital Technologies, Health and Physical Education, Humanities and Social Science
- General Capabilities – ICT Capability, Personal and Social Capabilities
- Curriculum connections – Online Safety

Prevent and manage exposure to inappropriate content

Build student skills to prevent and manage exposure to inappropriate content.

From Early Years to Year 2 – students should build skills in:

- identifying online behaviours that make them feel safe and unsafe
- identifying and describing emotional responses people may experience in different online situations
- removing themselves from unsafe online situations if they come across inappropriate content
- describing strategies to help them search for safe, reliable information on safe search engines and websites.



Years 3 to 6 – students should:

- develop an awareness of situations that might increase their exposure to inappropriate content online
- examine primary and secondary online sources to determine origin, purpose and reliability, and describe and apply strategies that can be used to reduce and manage exposure to harmful content
- question what they encounter online and begin to think critically about issues including body image, gender identity, racism, fake news and democracy
- investigate support services such as **eSafety** and **Kids Helpline**
- consider ways to setup their devices and apps to minimise accidental exposure to inappropriate content, for example, using **screen time** tools.

Years 7 to 10 – students should:

- evaluate online sources for their reliability and usefulness and select from appropriate primary and secondary online sources
- use **critical thinking** and questioning skills when consuming online content
- have strategies for making informed decisions when they encounter disinformation (false or misleading information distributed with the purpose to deceive)
- recognise the laws that govern online interactions and explore challenges such as ways of sustaining a resilient democracy and cohesive society, given the impact and implications of online technology
- explore app features that can be used to control what they see in their feed.

How to use the scenarios

These scenarios are designed to be used with students to start skill-building conversations or with teachers for professional learning.

Using the scenarios in professional learning

- Cut the individual stories out and discuss the scenarios using the questions as a basis for discussion.
- Work in groups and identify where students can be taught skills to protect them from this risk.
- Use the scenarios for parent information evenings to build parent skills and knowledge.
- These scenarios will include discussions about online safety incidents. As with child protection training, this material is important for you to know about, and you are encouraged to take care of yourself and others and reach out to school and/or sector support services as needed.

Using the scenarios with students

- Give students scenarios to read, either individually, in pairs or groups.
- Students look at the scenario from the character's perspective and answer the questions provided.
- Once the students have read the scenario, ask students to reflect on their own skills in managing this type of risk online.

Scenarios

1. What was that?

Name: George | Age: 5

George was watching videos of dogs playing on his older brother's device. His brother's YouTube was set to autoplay. It kept recommending new videos for George. After watching several cute videos, a video appeared showing someone throwing stones at a dog. George loves dogs and was very confused and upset by what he saw.

What should George do if he sees a video that makes him feel upset or confused? How can George reduce the chance of accidentally seeing this type of content in the future?

Possible responses:

- George could stop watching, exit the app, put down the device, or turn it off.
- George could talk to his parents or teachers about ways to prevent this from happening again.
- George could talk to an adult about how the video made him feel.

Teachers can help George and other students be prepared to deal with this online risk.

- Teach students that seeing content accidentally is not their fault, and they don't have to look at content that upsets them.
- Teach students how to separate themselves from content they find upsetting. For example, stop watching, exit the app, put down the device, or turn it off.
- For students in lower primary school (George's age), use the school newsletter to share eSafety's information about **parental controls** to minimise exposure to upsetting content.
- For students in upper primary and secondary school, let parents and carers and students know about **The eSafety Guide** which has clear information about how to use app settings to protect from inappropriate content.
- Gain support from the school's ICT staff to ensure student use of devices complies with the school and/or school sector's codes of conduct, policies and procedures.



2. Check this out

Name: Phoebe | Age: 13

Phoebe was sent a text from a classmate asking her to check out a link to a website. The site had links to entertaining videos, games, and memes. Phoebe clicked on a link that led to sexually explicit material which had not been properly age restricted.

In class, Phoebe's teacher notices she seems distracted, and upset. When her teacher asks if she is okay, Phoebe asks to talk with her teacher after class and tells the teacher what happened. Phoebe discloses what she did, explains she is worried about getting in trouble, and that she can't get the image out of her mind.

What could Phoebe do in this situation? How can Phoebe reduce the chance of seeing this type of content in the future?

Possible responses:

- If Phoebe had not done so already, she could tell a trusted adult about what happened.
- Phoebe should not share the website link with anybody else, even if her intention is to raise awareness among her classmates.
- Phoebe could tell her classmate that the link they shared contained inappropriate content that should not be shared with anyone else.
- Phoebe and/or a parent/carer could make a complaint to eSafety about the website not meeting online safety standards given that it exposed under 18s to age restricted material.

Teachers can help Phoebe and other students be prepared to deal with this online risk.

- Acknowledge that students' curiosity can sometimes override their ability to exercise caution.
- Teach students to **identify strategies to avoid viewing inappropriate content**. For example, not clicking on unfamiliar links, using safe search settings, exiting the app quickly, adjusting privacy settings, adding content filters, blocking the website.
- Discuss the impact of sharing age-inappropriate sexually explicit and/or violent content.
- Teach strategies to seek help when content makes someone feel, uncomfortable, upset, or unsafe.
- Explain how students can access support if they don't feel comfortable talking to a teacher. For example, **Kids Helpline**, a school counsellor or student wellbeing leader. And repeat this at regular intervals.
- Share eSafety's **Young People** webpages with students and encourage them to explore the content so they always have access to reliable advice.
- Support parent/carer education related to distressing content by sharing the eSafety **Parents** webpages.
- Work with families to build consistent online safety messages across home and school.

3. Dangerous activities

Name: Amira | Age: 16

Amira has friends who have been interacting with people in an online forum. The forum promotes dangerous and violent activities, and Amira's friends have been searching for other sites where this content is shared. The content begins to appear in Amira's social media feeds, and she finds it distressing, but the content keeps coming.

How can Amira avoid being exposed to content she finds upsetting?

Possible responses:

- Amira could revise her settings to see fewer posts from those friends. **The eSafety Guide** has information about how to do this for common platforms and services.
- Amira could use **screen time** settings to control how much time she spends online and balance this time with other activities she likes doing.
- Amira could talk with a trusted adult (teacher, wellbeing leader or parent) who could provide suggestions for keeping safer online.
- Amira could access eSafety **Young People** webpages and explore the advice there.

Teachers can help Amira and other students be prepared to deal with this online risk.

- Acknowledge that students' curiosity can sometimes override their ability to exercise caution and teach social emotional regulation skills in student wellbeing lessons.
- Use eSafety's classroom resources, for example, **The YeS Project** to encourage young people to act as positive leaders and supportive friends in online spaces.
- Share eSafety's **Young People** webpages with students and encourage them to explore the content so they always have access to reliable advice, including about **how to curate their social media feeds**.
- Ensure students feel comfortable talking to a trusted adult to help problem-solve online issues.
- Have students explore a range of reliable and publicly accessible support services that can provide advice and support. eSafety's **counselling and support services** webpage would be a good starting point.

