

Cyber Safety in Action – Teacher’s resource



These scenarios are designed to help to create conversation starters during class after Internet Safe Education has presented.

Key Messages

- The internet is **PUBLIC** and **PERMANENT**
- My identity is paramount
- Online contacts remain strangers
- Online rules and laws are real
- I take action when things go wrong online

1 – John continually makes sexist comments on several social media and web sites. His opinions are often offensive and sometimes threatening. He uses a common name across platforms. How does his choice to share his opinions potentially impact his employability and online reputation?

- Discussion points
 - Social media profiles are seen as tools to decide cultural fit. The Australian employers have an obligation to the **health and safety** of their staff under Australian law. Expression of sexist comments in a workplace may lead to harm of co-workers who feel offended or threatened. **Discriminatory behaviour** is unlawful, and an employer will not risk John becoming a workplace problem. Even if this is all words and John’s actions do not indicate such beliefs, his social media profile will be sufficient to make him a risk not worth taking.
 - John’s views may alter by the time he matures. The content could still be found.
- **Can John stop a potential employer from seeing his social media posts?**
 - Settings can be used to secure an account and improve privacy settings so that only friends or specific people can see the content of their accounts however there are things an individual can’t control. For example, where they are tagged by someone else. Often people use settings well in one app but poorly in others. Consistent poor online behaviour will usually appear.

2 – Sam decides to apply to the Air Force Gap Year. How can Sam use the internet to prepare for the recruitment requirements and learn about the Forces?

- Discussion points
 - Research – application process, alternate pathways to entry, alternate roles in the Air Force, physical requirements for recruitment.
 - Connection – connect to accounts related to the Air Force to stay up to date and learn a little about the culture. Reach out to family and family friends who may be serving or have served to ask for guidance and learn about their experiences.
- **How might Sam’s digital history impact success in recruitment? What sort of things are likely to flag in a social media background check?**
 - Social media checks are looking for evidence of toxic, illegal, inappropriate, discrimination (race/gender/religion/sexuality) and potentially discriminatory beliefs/actions. Bad

mouthed teachers or other employers or inappropriate sharing of information. Too frequent posting online. An individual's online identities are used to check more broadly on the internet for further evidence of beliefs and conduct, such as friend's accounts.

- Illegal activity such as drug use, underage drinking, sexualised images, links to pornography.

NB – no gender given in the above scenario. Play it out to see if they make assumptions and whether the applicant's gender might change what the students believe matters to the employer.

3 – Six in 10 teenagers in Australia (in 2021) have seen content online that is harmful, such as violence, drug taking, suicide, and violent sexual material. Year 12 students are given an assignment to create a short video for year 7 students to show them how to be safe and avoid accidental exposure to harmful content. What would you include/omit in the video?

- Discussion points
 - How to cover it in a way that doesn't make them go looking for it and therefore increase exposure. Does gender matter? What 3 things would they want the year 7 students to remember at the end of the video? What do they wish you had known/done?
 - Protective and supportive actions – how they can be safe online. What to do if they see something that worries or upsets them. How to say 'no thanks' when put in a potentially difficult situation, such as someone showing you something 'bad'.
 - Online addiction takes many forms – social media, gaming, gambling, shopping, pornography. It often begins through initial accidental exposure.
- **What do you think is more valuable to middle school students – a presentation from older peers, classroom activities about safe practices, or open family discussions and rules at home?**
 - The senior students have a role to play as leaders in the school. It also improves empathy for them to have to stand in a teacher's and parent's shoes on these issues. Encourage them to think about how they can be a positive influence and not accidentally cause harm.

4 – Terry and Grace have been dating. Terry sends Grace a sexually explicit picture and asks Grace to do the same. What should Grace do? How does consent factor into this situation?

- Discussion points
 - Remember that images are for ever and today's relationships are tomorrow's potential problem. Images are permanent and people can use images to extort further action or embarrass or shame in the future.
 - Grace did not consent to receiving the image. Sending the image is disrespectful and possibly causes harm, distress and/or fear. It is equivalent to indecent exposure.
 - Grace is the ONLY one who can decide to say no. Any further pressure indicates Terry's lack of respect and care.
 - **Research indicates about 1/3 of girls who are asked eventually send the picture, and most instantly regret it. Don't be one of the 1/3. Don't believe 'everyone' is.¹**
- **What does the law say about taking inappropriate pictures of children that may be considered child exploitation materials?**
 - It is against the law to take, store or share them. (The age of 'child' differs between states.)

This may feel uncomfortable to teach however it is happening and it's best to get in front of the conversation. Give them the tools to not do it or stop doing it. Seeing the parallel to the physical world example can shock and refocus the perception of 'everyone is doing it' and what 'it' really is. When it's digital, it is potentially accessible everywhere... Forever.

