

Cyber Safety in Action – Teacher’s resource

These scenarios and activities are designed to reinforce Internet Safe Education key messages. Gender neutral names are used in the scenarios. Please assign pronouns if that works better for your students. (Provision made for single gender schools).

Key Messages

- The internet is PUBLIC and PERMANENT
- My identity is mine to protect
- Online contacts remain strangers
- Online rules and laws are real
- My choices today impact my future



1 - Quinn has been accused of online bullying by the school. The messages indicate they were sent during school hours and show students in uniform, in the bathroom. Quinn and their parents have been called to the school. How do you think Quinn would feel about this?

The scenario does not indicate that Quinn intended to bully anyone. Acknowledge mature responses to how Quinn is likely to feel. Not all bullying is intentional. This is an opportunity to discuss how different people receive humour and how written texts do not provide tone of voice and can be read in different ways. Quinn’s intention to bully is irrelevant if the other person felt bullied. This can be a difference in perception that is useful discussion as most conflict and misunderstanding starts when two people see things differently and interpret the behaviour and words differently. Unintentional bullying requires some insight and empathy to respond appropriately and compassionately.

How should Quinn respond? The important issue is how Quinn responds. Quinn can either act out of self-defence or grace – open to understanding the other person’s perception of what happened. ‘What is the kindest thing I can do here?’ Move from ‘I’m right’ to ‘I’m all right’.

Quinn should –

- Listen without interrupting so the other person feels heard.
- Apologise without condition. That is, don’t apologise by explaining how the other person got it wrong. It’s not about whether Quinn intended to hurt the other person. The other person was hurt therefore it is kind and mature to apologise. Harm requires a resolution. There is likely something to be learned by both parties. Quinn can explain their intention and what they have learned from the experience, after they have acknowledged their part.
- Delete the content where possible.

Quinn should seek support and release the heavy/hard feelings. This might be as simple as going for a long run after school or talking to a counsellor or parent. Don’t fall into the trap of blaming others when mistakes have been made. It is all of our jobs to contribute to creating a safe space.

44% of Australian young people reported having a negative online experience in the last 6 months, this includes 15% who received threats and abuse online¹ This is a complicated issue that has cost many lives. Seek assistance from adults you trust. Matters can be reported online to eSafety and there are 24/7 helplines.

2 - Joanna is invited to a party by someone she doesn't know, via a social media message. Several of Joanna's friends at school have been invited, including several of the boys. Some of Joanna's friends think it will be fun to go. They plan to tell their parents they're at a party of one of the kids from school. What are Joanna's options here?

- Joanna's options are likely to include -
 - Ignore the invite and not go. This is likely to raise some concerns regarding how she will be perceived by her peers (feeling judged, disappointing her friends, or rejected by her friends). Parents saying no is a good reason to provide to save face. Lying to parents is pretty much always against the family **rules**.
 - Encourage her friends not to go because they have no idea about the people holding the party. (Be the Mum friend and the voice of reason.)
 - Tell a trusted adult about the invitation and the plan.
 - Go to the party, if only to look out for her friends. (An option – not a good one.)

What are the risks of going to the party?

- The invitation has come from a stranger. They have no idea about the hosts or the location. The hosts might be adults who provide access to substances or have other poor intentions. Why was the invitation sent to you? What was their intention?
- The location may not be the host's home and they are also inadvertently trespass.
- They can't be confident about the safety of the food or drink provided at the party.
- They can't be confident about who else has been invited.
- Adults would be ill advised to attend a party in this way so it's a particularly poor idea for teens.

Would any of the responses change if it was John rather than Joanna?

- There can be a perception that boys are somehow safer in these situations. They are not.

Teenager's brains are not yet fully formed to understand the potential consequences of their choices, so it is best to have talked through the consequences prior to facing a situation. People online are real people and strangers. Would they accept the invitation from a stranger on the street?

3 – Ash has a job mowing lawns and has regular clients. Ash uses online banking and purchases things online through websites and apps. What pieces of information are apps or online shopping sites likely to request when Ash makes a purchase?

- Identity credentials. Any piece of information about you that can be used to 'confirm' your identity.
 - Name, DOB, phone number, email address, mother's maiden name

¹ Source: [The digital lives of Aussie teens](#), eSafety Commissioner (2021).

- Card details – number, expiration date, Credit Verification Value (CVV) / Card Verification Code (CVC)
- Account details – name, BSB, account number
- Teacher further information – particularly valuable pieces of your identity include your birth certificate, passport details, medicare number, Centrelink customer reference number (CRN), ImmiCard, driver's license, student card, passphrases, and passwords. Don't share these online. Think critically if you're ever asked to share them. Get curious about why they are needed.

7 out of 10, 14 – 17 year olds are likely to shop and bank online. (eSafety 2021)

What are some of the things to be aware of when shopping online and how might Ash protect himself?

- Preferred responses
 - Don't save bank or card details in your device. Enter each time at checkout.
 - Set up a PayPal account as they keep your account details separate from the purchase transaction. Problem = must be 18 to set up a PayPal account. Signing up for PayPal is a binding contract and under 18s can't legally do this. You can however use a parent's PayPal account with their permission.
 - Check the site has the lock and 'https' – the 's' indicates improved security with a SSL certificate.
 - Check the URL of the site you're using and make sure the spelling is accurate. Replica sites of well-known brands can be very convincing.
 - Use a prepaid card to purchase online. This limits amount available and if it is stolen, they only get what is left on the card.

What do you do if your identity is stolen or compromised online? Or how do you help an adult if they find out their identity has been stolen or compromised?

- Preferred responses
 - Stay calm.
 - Log out of every account on all devices. This will log the other party out too.
 - Reset all passwords/passphrases. Change devices if you think one has been compromised by malware.
 - Check all accounts – has anything happened that you can't explain? This may include emails that are suspicious or from organisations you won't usually use.
 - Screenshot and report all suspicious activity. Report cybercrimes to [Australian Cyber Security Centre \(ACSC\)External link](#). Scams to [ScamwatchExternal link](#) ²



5 - What do you do if something upsets you or makes you uncomfortable online?

- Preferred responses – (encouraging strong self-regulation practices. Online problems are the same as physical world problems. Get offline to feel better.)

² <https://www.esafety.gov.au/young-people/protecting-your-identity> accessed 19/11/2024

- Same as when anything else upsets you, regardless of whether it is online.
- Think of 3 things that make you feel lighter or happier or more peaceful. Do one of those.
- Talk to someone you trust. Cuddle your pet. Listen to music and dance and sing. Colour in. Shoot some hoops. Go for a ride or a swim. Read a book you love. Do something that makes you feel happier or lighter. You can change your day when you change your mood.
- Play Tetris or poyo poyo = therapeutic impact on trauma³
- Deliberately choose to do things that make you feel better and ask for a hug from someone in your family when you need one.
- Everything is easier when you feel better and there is help – you just need to ask.



³ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7828932/> 2020 Journal of Psychiatry and Neuroscience