Gooseberry Alert 26
Digital Friendships

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Gooseberry Student 'Discussions' of the week

Did you know that on average, in the past week, two in five young people reported feeling anxious or worried about something that had happened online?

Communicating and connecting online should be fun but it **MUST BE SAFE**. Using technology to connect with others provides challenges for you, your family and teachers. It can put us all at risk and make us feel unhappy.

Using your technology wisely can help protect and keep you safer online. Behaving respectfully and responding sensibly to a problem online can help too.

Discuss the following questions:
- How do you connect and communicate online?
- How can being online affect your mood?
- What do you do to make yourself feel better if someone upsets you online?
- Do you agree, that communicating your feelings is easier online? Explain your thoughts.
- Who is responsible for your safety online?
- **Do your family and teachers always understand the importance of your online life?**
- **How would you like your families and school to support you with your online life?**

Key Messages:
Everyone online has a responsibility to make it a kind, respectful and supportive environment.

We must all lead by example and demonstrate positive and respectful behaviour online ourselves.

Create content that is fun and enjoyable. Connect safely online and report content that is bullying, offensive or upsetting.

Your generation must lead the way and create a better online world for us all.

Please share with students.

Gooseberry Teacher 'Thoughts' of the week

Although we are now better informed about the negative effects of a life online, this has not prevented technology becoming central to young people's relationships. In many respects, the use of technology to create, connect and communicate online is a positive phenomenon.

Young people typically make use of a variety of methods and platforms to communicate with others online, make new friends, share experiences and support each other emotionally.

But, the **'Digital Friendships' report**, published by the UK Safer Internet Centre (2018), states that 'more than two in five young people reported feeling anxious or worried in the past week about something that had happened online'.

These new norms for communicating and forming relationships, whilst largely positive, clearly still present numerous challenges for young people, their families and schools. For some, exclusion and meanness have become commonplace in young people's lives online.

What perhaps is surprising and thankful is that, according to the report, **young people recognise these challenges and desire the support of their families, schools and peers in creating a safer, happier and more respectful internet for all.**

Regarding your school:
- **How do you teach your students and their parents, to help recognise the risks online?**
- **What opportunities do you provide to safely practice and demonstrate independence, decision making and positive behaviours online?**
- **How do you support your students and their parents when there is a problem online?**

Please share with staff.

Gooseberry **Parent** 'Thoughts' of the week

Do you know what is going on in your child's online world?

As a parent, you have a vital role to play in supporting and managing your child's online relationships.

Children and young people want our support and help navigating and exploring a life online. This doesn't have to mean knowing every detail of how they use the internet and the World Wide Web to communicate and make friends, but rather just being there as a source of support if they encounter any concerns, knowing what to do if they have and being proactive in helping them.

- **Focus on the positive aspects that a life online can bring to your child's social life.**
- **Help them to create a positive online identity and digital footprint.**
- **Support them with challenges that they may face with their online life.**

Please share with parents.

In the news… In the news… In the news… In the news… In the news…

'Deepfakes' - Face-swapping software

How would you feel if your face suddenly no longer belonged to just you?

The BBC have reported on an alarming new technology and App called '**Deepfakes**'. This algorithm driven technology enables creators to edit, manipulate and exploit a person's facial features. The App allows a person's original facial image to be digitally replaced with that of another for any purpose and within any context. Most alarmingly, without their knowledge or consent.

This presents new challenges and risks for us all when choosing if and how we share our unique personal image and identity, online.

Without permission, 'Deepfakes' has already been used to exploit and misuse the facial images belonging to 'celebrities', to create 'fake porn'. Although the content has been banned on **some** websites for this reason, there is no clear piece of legislation that covers the act of non-consensual face-swapping.

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Find out more and read the report:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/technology-43118477/deepfakes-the-face-swapping-software-explained

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