TLA ONLINE

Year 6 Digital Amnesty at TLA

For this year's digital amnesty we focused on finding a screen time balance, phones, age restrictions and group chats.

During the morning we talked about:
- The tricks that devices and apps use to encourage us to pick them up.
- Why companies want you to use their devices and apps.
- Why too much screen time can be a problem.
- How we can help build better screen time habits and improve our digital wellbeing.
- Why apps and sites have age restrictions.
- Group chats and how to keep them safe.
- Privacy and Security settings and how to use them.
- Chatting to strangers.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) and our data.

The children were encouraged to bring in their own devices and were given access to the internet. They were then allowed to use apps and play games. This gave us the opportunity to talk to them about what they like to use their devices for, the apps, social media and games they use. It also allowed us to check that their privacy settings were set up correctly.

A copy of the slide presentation can be found on the school's website here. It contains all the information shared with the children as well as lots of helpful, informative videos.

'Sticky' Technology

Have you ever found yourself just reaching for your phone and then forgetting why you wanted to look at it? Or find yourself spending hours just scrolling social media?

If your answer is yes, this is probably because you have developed a habit of constantly looking at your phone without any real purpose. But once you look, you could be stuck scrolling, scrolling and scrolling...

Devices like your phone and tablet are designed to keep you interested. They are designed to be 'sticky', hard to put down. This is because the more you use your phone, the more data companies can gather about you and make money from. The data collected is then used by advertisers to target you with specific products at the right time, so you are more likely to click and buy them.

There are many tricks and methods that devices and apps use to encourage you to keep using them. Some are incredibly simple like being colourful, attractive and interesting to look at. Others are tricks you might not have even thought about such as auto-playing videos, so you get caught up watching funny videos of cats for hours!

Too much screen time can cause: sleep problems, make you more anti-social when around others, prevent you from doing something more productive, keep you distracted and make it harder for you to concentrate for a long period of time, make you feel pressured to always be available to others, leave you with a sense of FOMO (fear of missing out).

There are things you can do to help cut down your screen time and promote better digital wellbeing. Keep reading for tips on cutting down your screentime.

Digital Wellbeing

The best way to improve your digital wellbeing is to use your phone/devices less. There are a few things you can try to break yourself of the habit of using your phone/device too much.
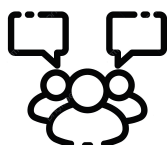
1. Turn off push notifications and only allow those where someone is directly trying to contact you.
2. Greyscale your phone, this turns your phone into black and white, it makes it quite unpleasant to use!
3. Move the 'time wasting' apps (those with endless scrolling and videos!) and put them on a different home screen, so you have to search for them on your phone/device.
4. Use the digital wellbeing tools on your phone/ device and set a screen time limit.

Play, learn and go touch grass

5. Don't use your phone/ device in the hour before bed (if you can't manage an hour, how about starting with just 15 minutes?)
6. Try to think before you pick up your phone/ device and decide if it is really worth your attention - are you going to do something productive?
7. Find something else to do instead! - Go outside and play, go for a walk, talk to someone face to face, read a book, write something, do some drawing, play a board game, complete a puzzle, grow something, bake something - and anything else that doesn't require a screen!

Group Chats

Group chats can be really fun and helpful, they allow you to talk to more than one person at a time. There are lots of apps and social media sites that you can do this on, the most popular one at Trevithick is Whatsapp.

Chats are often created for close friends or family to use so that they can stay in touch, however some group chats can have hundreds of people in. This means that you could potentially be talking to strangers, which is obviously a serious problem we all want to avoid.

Group chats can be used to socialise with others, share hobbies, discuss schoolwork and organise events.

Parents need to be aware of the negative aspects of group chats in order to help their children navigate them.
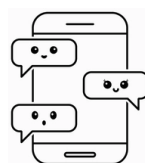
Children may end up in chats with people they don't know (both children and adults), this puts children at risk of sharing private information with strangers as well as sharing photos and video chats.

Another problem with group chats is that they have the potential to turn nasty, especially those with lots of people in. Children might send nasty messages, send inappropriate pictures, exclude someone and it could lead to cyberbullying.

What can go wrong?
1. Tone- people can easily misinterpret messages.
2. FOMO (fear of missing out)
3. Bullying
4. Leaving someone out - this is a form of bullying
5. Overwhelming - chats can become confusing and hard to follow if lots of people are chatting at once.
6. Screenshotting can be weaponised - they can be shared between different chats/ apps and be kept as proof of what has been said.
7. Oversharing - these chats form part of your digital footprint.
8. You could be added to a chat which has people you don't know/ like in.
9. Invisible audience - think about who else may see your messages (teachers, parents, friends), they're never as private as you think!

How to Keep Chats Friendly
- Keep it real - remember that talking face to face is always better than using a screen.
- Be aware of how you use emojis and gifs - they can easily be misinterpreted.
- Make introductions- before adding someone new to the chat, ask permission from others.

Mrs S. Tully   2

Write a welcoming message so everyone knows who they are.

- Put feeling first - don't dismiss banter that hurts or embarrasses someone as 'just a joke'. Make sure to apologise for any upset you caused.
- Take a break - leave/mute the chat if you feel uncomfortable.

More information can be found on these websites:

- https://www.childnet.com/blog/group-chats-the-new-digital-etiquette/
- https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/11_18/lets-talk-about/socialising-online/group-chats/
- https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/social-media/chat-apps

Smartphones Safety Advice

Are you looking to get your child a phone or has your child already got a phone that you're not sure you have set up properly?

If so, Internet Matters has lots of information on setting up a smartphone for children as well as a checklist to ensure the device is set up safely.

If you are a parent of a child in Year 6, they also have lots of information about moving to secondary school and what to expect from children's online lives and how these might change as children get older..

https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/moving-to-secondary-school-online-safety-guide/

Here's a helpful checklist of things to consider before giving your child a smartphone.

https://www.waynedenner.com/3-things-parents-wish-they-had-considered-before-giving-their-teen-a-smartphone/

It's really important that the device is set up properly before it's given to the child. Think about privacy and security settings and parental controls. Internet Matters has a helpful guide to setting up Android phones and Apple devices.

Google also has a really helpful guide to their app called 'Family Link' which allows parents to control android devices from their own phones.

Privacy and Security Settings

Privacy settings are controls within online services that let users manage how their data is collected, used, and shared with others. They offer a way to limit who can see your posts, photos, and personal information, enhancing your digital privacy.
Here's a more detailed breakdown:

- **Controlling Visibility:** Privacy settings allow you to decide who can see your profile, posts, and other information on social media and other online platforms.
- **Data Collection and Use:** You can also control how your data is collected and used by adjusting settings related to location tracking, personalized ads, and browsing history.
- **Sharing Restrictions:** You can limit who can share your content, tag you in posts, or send you messages.
- **Platform-Specific Settings:** Different platforms (social media, search engines, etc.) have their own privacy settings, offering various levels of control.

You can normally find privacy controls in your device/app settings. Normally these appear as 3 dots ⋮ 3 lines ☰ or a cog ⚙.
It's important to read and check through each setting, making sure you understand what each one does. You should have your settings on the most secure option.

These settings are changed regularly. It's important to check your accounts at least every 6 months to make sure all the settings are still correct.

For more information visit:
https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/a-parents-guide-to-privacy-settings/

TLA Online

Chatting to Strangers

We've had a few instances this year of children searching and using sites like Omegle. These are sites where you are randomly paired with strangers to chat, either on camera, voice chat or text.

Omegle was closed down in 2023 because of the problems users were having whilst visiting the site. Users were exposed to abuse, inappropriate content and grooming. The founder of Omegle was facing several lawsuits and closed the site because they recognised the risks it posed to users.

Unfortunately, sites similar to Omegle have since popped up and children are still using them.

Using **any** adult platform puts children at **extreme risk** of many things including:
- Abuse
- Seeing inappropriate, disturbing and disgusting things.
- Talking to dangerous people
- Being groomed

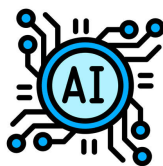These sites should be strictly used by people over 18.

If they are being used, you should:
- Never use your camera.
- Never share private information.
- Never use them on your own.
- If the site has privacy settings use them.*
- If the site has reporting/ blocking tools use them.*

*If any website or app does not have these, you seriously need to question why you are using it.

AI Deepfakes

Deepfakes are videos, photos, or audio recordings that use artificial intelligence to make it look or sound like someone is saying or doing something that is not real. It only takes 10-20 pictures and 3 seconds of audio to create a deepfake.

Deepfake Techniques
- Face Swapping: Replacing a person's face with another in a video or photo using AI.
- Voice Cloning: Using AI to mimic someone's voice.
- Lip Syncing: Making a person's lips appear to match different audio using AI.

The Dangers of Deepfakes

While deepfakes can be used for harmless or even educational purposes, they can also be used unethically in the following ways:
- **Identity theft:** Deepfakes can impersonate individuals in videos or audio recordings, potentially allowing criminals to commit fraud under someone else's name.
- **Threats/blackmail:** Deepfakes can create convincing footage or audio that puts the subject in a bad light, which can then be used to threaten or blackmail them.
- **Cyberbullying:** Deepfakes can be used to create embarrassing or hurtful videos or audio recordings of someone.
- **Propaganda/fake news:** Deepfakes can be used to create fake videos or audio recordings that trick people and sway their opinions on important topics.
- **Election manipulation:** Deepfakes can be used to make candidates look bad or confuse voters by creating fake speeches or interviews.
- **Nonconsensual Intimate Images (NCII):** Deepfake photos and videos that remove the subject's clothing without their knowledge or consent.

How to tell if it's a Deepfake?
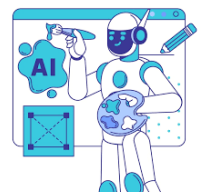
Detecting deepfakes involves looking for inconsistencies and anomalies in videos, photos, or audio recordings that may not be immediately apparent. It's important to note that deepfake technology is quickly improving, so **it may soon be impossible to tell a fake from something real.**

- **Question everything:** AI-generated content has already flooded the internet, so be

cautious. Always investigate if a suspicious image, video, or audio clip is real.

- **Look for the clues:** glitches and blurs, lip synch issues, etc.
- **Check the source:** be extra cautious with content from unknown websites or accounts.
- **Talk about it:** if you're unsure, share your concerns with trusted adults.
- **Get permission:** before using someone's face or voice when generating AI content.
- **Be transparent:** if you're creating an AI-generated copy of a person, clearly label your creation as AI-created.
- **Use your power for good:** be mindful of the potential impact of what you share or create.

We all need to be careful with images we are posting online as these could be manipulated by AI without us even knowing.

Be Internet Legend Assembly

KS2 have had access to another Be Internet Legends assembly. This contained information about:

- Age ratings
- Checking sources
- Passwords and privacy settings
- Blocking and reporting
- Seeking help

Here is a link to the assembly on YouTube for you to watch.

https://youtube.com/live/mtOsEu2q-uI?feature=share

TLA Tech Team Advice

- *Gracie - Set a timer for going online and then a timer for doing something else.*
- *Daniel - Don't stay on it for too long!*
- *Theo - Go outside and touch some grass!*
- *Mollie - Read a book instead!*
- *Robyn - Talk to your family!*

- *Zac - Set a timer, when the time is up go and play with your friends.*
- *Grace - Play outside.*

Put Down Your Devices - Maybe Do Something Else!

Like... (Also You Can Do More Things if You Think Of Anything Else)

Touching grass (I mean playing outside)

Write a song or sing a song

Read a book or make your own story

Dance or make a dance

Online Safety Videos

At Trevithick Learning Academy, we are committed to equipping parents and children with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the online world safely.

This year we have signed up to an initiative which includes a series of nine documents that we will share with you throughout the year. These documents include links to videos which address a key topic related to Online Safety.

Please check your emails if you haven't watched them so far.

Online Safety Weekly Update
Alan Mackenzie, Online Safety Specialist

How to report an incident

If your child tells you or shows you something inappropriate that they have seen online please report it. It could help prevent this from happening to someone else.

The first place it needs reporting is to the APP/ Website/Game it happened on.

If you are worried about online abuse or the way someone has been communicating online let **CLICK CEOP** Internet Safety CEOP know. You can report it by visiting www.ceop.police.uk/ or by clicking the button on our website. The website will guide you through how to make a report.

ChildLine 0800 1111 For further advice visit the School's website, visit the Childline website or call 0800 1111