



CONNECTED SAFELY

A Toolkit for NGOs to Support Parents
and Children to be Safe Online



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER

OVERVIEW OF THE TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed for parents, caregivers, and their children (13–17) in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), and is built on a participatory, evidence-informed Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) framework.



PURPOSE, APPROACH, AND GOALS

This toolkit is designed to support non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to empower caregivers with the information, skills, and confidence to protect their children from technology-facilitated child sexual exploitation and abuse (TF-CSEA), and equip children and adolescents with the knowledge they need to recognize risky situations, make safer choices, and speak up if they encounter online or offline exploitation or abuse. This includes enhancing caregiver and children's abilities to respond effectively when they face harmful and unwanted online and offline experiences.

Delivered together, this toolkit aims to **inspire sustainable action to combat online violence in target communities!**

APPROACH

This toolkit is designed for parents, caregivers, and their children (13–17) in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), and is built on a participatory, evidence-informed Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) framework.

What does that mean?

Social and Behaviour Change -or SBC - is an approach that uses scientific insights about why people behave the way they do to help communities adopt safer, healthier, and more positive practices.

SBC looks at the full picture - our beliefs, social norms, and environments - because change doesn't happen from information alone. For example, we don't just tell people "online exploitation is wrong"; we explore why some behaviors are accepted, what pressures children face, and how we can shift attitudes and environments that allow harm.

This toolkit therefore blends research evidence with community realities — drawing on what parents and young people in Kurdistan have told us about their challenges online — to create locally appropriate, practical interventions.

The goal is not to lecture, but to engage — to help families think, discuss, and act together toward safer digital behavior.



NOTE

Implementation outside the KRI requires adaptation to ensure it aligns with the lived experiences and social context of the local community.

WHY A TF-CSEA-SPECIFIC APPROACH MATTERS

In a rapidly digitized world, ongoing technological innovation and growth has fundamentally changed how the exploitation of children is taking place, including:

- Incidents and reports of abuse of children online have dramatically increased. Iraq consistently ranks among the countries with the highest incidence of TF-CSEA.
- Digital tools (e.g. apps, AI, anonymity) are enabling offenders to groom, exploit, and hide at scale. Technology allows perpetrators to hide their identity and avoid capture.
- The speed, reach, and sophistication of TF-CSEA requires tailored, evidence-based responses—that respond to the comprehension of vulnerable communities and the environment in which they live. Not every country has established effective protection frameworks, laws, and authorities, leaving victims without formal protection and support.

CONTENTS AND STRUCTURE

This toolkit is designed to both prime NGO facilitators to deliver targeted awareness sessions on TF-CSEA for caregivers and children, including critical knowledge and skills required to answer and respond to questions and requests for support, and provide a package of ready-to-deliver session materials for primed facilitators to deliver in their communities. This toolkit contains:

1. Facilitator primer
 - Key definitions
 - Impacts and challenges
 - TF-CSEA in Kurdistan
 - Community engagement
 - Overcoming stigma & adapting for cultural sensitivity
 - Managing disclosures
 - Referral pathways
 - Monitoring & evaluation
 - Facilitator Standards for Effective Delivery
2. Facilitator guide and session slides for caregivers awareness sessions
3. Facilitator guide and session slides for children's awareness sessions (mixed)
4. Facilitator guide and session slides for children's awareness sessions (girls)
5. Facilitator guide and session slides for children's awareness sessions (boys)

This toolkit employs activity-based learning, including role-play, gamification, and case studies, and visual learning techniques.

GOALS

This toolkit aims to enable NGOs to deliver evidence-based, community-informed interventions that:

- Raise awareness among caregivers and children about online and offline risks of TF-CSEA
- Strengthen caregivers' confidence and ability to protect and respond effectively
- Empower children and adolescents to recognize danger, choose safer behaviors, and speak up when facing exploitation
- Enhance parent-child communication, fostering trust and openness to ensure children feel safe disclosing concerns
- Equip NGOs with comprehensive knowledge on TF-CSEA, as well as practical tools and guidance, to help them identify, assess, and safely refer children and caregivers to appropriate local services, ensuring a coordinated and effective response to protection needs.



NOTE

While this toolkit has been designed with a multi-session approach in mind—two sessions for children and two for adults—its core strength lies in its flexibility. These materials are designed for adaptation to suit the unique needs of every child and caregiver, including those with disabilities, as well as with varying literacy levels, baseline knowledge, and other diverse needs.

We encourage facilitators to actively adapt the content to ensure accessibility and safety for all participants, including the organization of sessions by gender and age to meet community and cultural norms and standards. However, please note that while the toolkit is built to be inclusive, it cannot account for every specific individual requirement. Facilitators must assess their audience's unique needs and supplement the materials with specialized support where necessary to ensure true inclusion.

WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY

- **WHO:** The toolkit is designed for NGOs raising awareness amongst parents, caregivers, and young people aged 13–17 — but it can also inform teachers, community leaders, and youth mentors who engage with families.
- **WHAT:** It focuses on Technology-Facilitated Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (TF-CSEA) — helping families understand how online grooming, blackmail, and manipulation happen, and how to respond. It uses a Social and Behaviour Change approach, meaning it's interactive, reflective, and rooted in real community experiences.
- **WHERE:** Sessions can be delivered wherever caregivers and youth gather — community centres, schools, local NGOs, or even informal group settings. What matters most is that it's safe, comfortable, and private enough for open discussion.
- **WHEN:** The sessions can be delivered as part of ongoing community programs or as short workshops. The toolkit is modular, so facilitators can adapt the content to time available.
- **WHY:** Because as access to smartphones, gaming, and social media grows in Kurdistan, so do the risks of online grooming, harassment, and exploitation.
- This toolkit helps communities move from awareness to action — building knowledge, empathy, and confidence to prevent and respond to TF-CSEA in everyday life.

The “why” is also about empowerment: giving families tools to talk, connect, and protect — not through fear, but through understanding and trust.

CHAPTER

FACILITATOR GUIDE TO THE TOOLKIT

This toolkit focuses specifically on TF-CSEA, while recognizing that it sits within the wider landscape of online violence.



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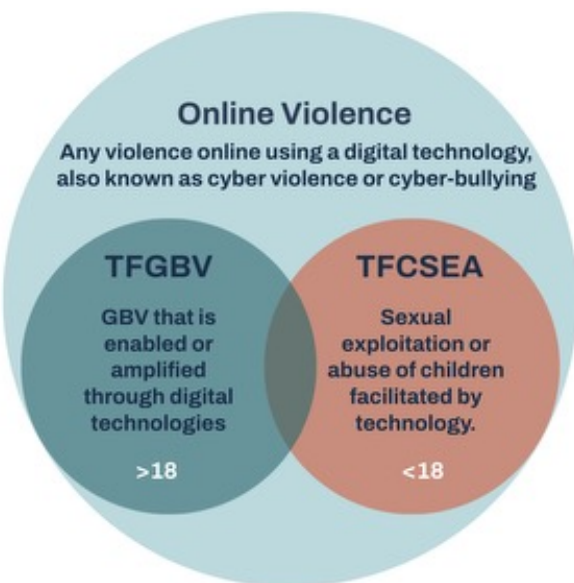
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SECTION A

FOUNDATION & CONTEXT

KEY DEFINITIONS

Online Violence



Online violence, also known as cyber violence, refers to any form of harm or abuse that occurs through — or is enabled by — digital technology, such as phones, apps, or social media platforms.

Within this broad category, there are several subcategories that describe who is most affected and how the violence takes shape. Two of the most common subcategories are:

- **Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV):** Gender-based violence that is enabled or amplified through digital technologies, affecting adults (18+). This can include behaviors such as online harassment, non-consensual image sharing, or gendered hate speech.
- **Technology-Facilitated Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (TF-CSEA):** A broad category encompassing a range of harmful online activities targeting children, all with sexual connotations. This can include grooming, coercion, sexualized extortion (“sextortion”), and the production or distribution of sexual content involving minors.

These two subcategories can overlap, as both may involve threats, manipulation, or the misuse of personal content — but they differ in who is targeted and how the law classifies the harm.



OBJECTIVES OF SECTION A

Facilitators should:

1. Understand key concepts and terminology related to online violence, including Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) and Technology-Facilitated Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (TF-CSEA).
2. Recognize the forms and examples of TF-CSEA, including Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) and other online exploitation methods such as grooming, sextortion, and live-streamed abuse.
3. Differentiate between TF-CSEA and other online harms, such as cyberbullying, highlighting differences in intent, legality, and impact.
4. Identify the impacts of TF-CSEA on children, families, and communities, including emotional, behavioral, social, and legal implications.
5. Understand the prevalence and local context of TF-CSEA globally and in Iraq/Kurdistan, emphasizing the scale of the problem and the importance of prevention and response.
6. Apply survivor-centered language when discussing child sexual exploitation and abuse, ensuring clear, accurate, and legally appropriate communication.

This toolkit focuses specifically on TF-CSEA, while recognizing that it sits within the wider landscape of online violence.

Technology-Facilitated Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (TF-CSEA)

It is any sexual abuse or exploitation of children that happens through the use of technology.

Technology does not cause the abuse, but it can enable it. TF-CSEA includes both material and interactive forms of abuse: creating, sharing, or accessing sexual material involving children (like CSAM), as well as online grooming, sextortion, live-streamed abuse, or other ways children are manipulated or abused via phones, computers, or the internet.

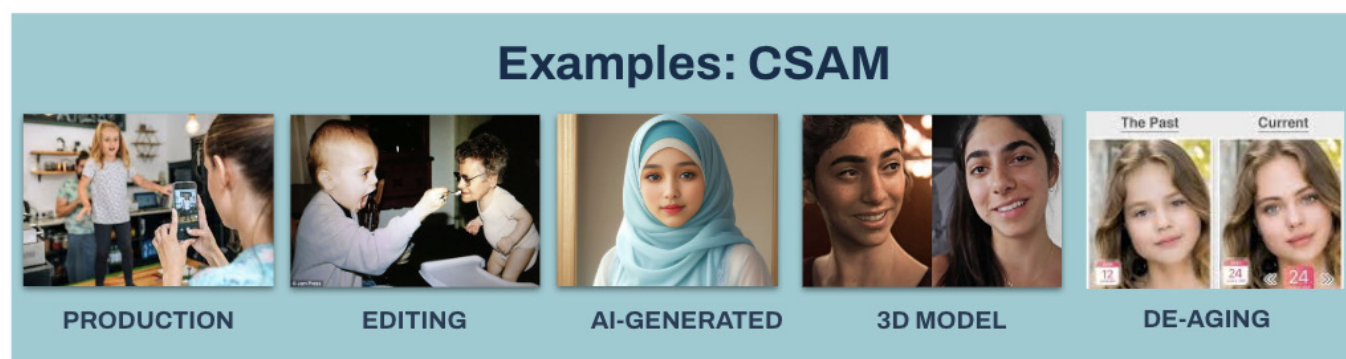
Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)

Definition: CSAM (Child Sexual Abuse Material) refers to any image, video, audio, text, or drawing that shows a child (under 18) in a sexual way. (Note: international law defines a child as under 18)

Why it matters: CSAM is abuse in itself—the child is harmed the moment the material is created and every time it is shared.

Forms of CSAM:

- Photos or videos of abuse.
- Edited images or “deepfakes” of real children.
- AI-generated or 3D material that depicts children sexually.
- “De-aging” images to make someone look like a child.



Difference between CSAM and CSEM:

- **CSAM** - Child Sexual ABUSE Materials: created for the offender’s sexual gratification.
- **CSEM** - Child Sexual EXPLOITATION Materials: involves an element of exchange (money, goods, or favors).

Key clarifications:

- Even if AI or 3D models do not involve a real child, they are still illegal because they fuel demand and normalize abuse.
- If the person has grown up or passed away, material created when they were under 18 is still CSAM.

Understanding CSAM helps us recognize how technology enables abuse, and also ensures we use accurate language - many people mistakenly say <child pornography,> but that term is harmful and misleading.

Other Ways Children are Exploited Online

Now that we have a clear understanding of CSAM—what it is and why it is harmful—we can look at other ways children can be exploited online. These risks often happen alongside or lead to CSAM, and include things like grooming, sextortion, live-streamed abuse, or being pressured to share sexual content. Understanding these risks helps us see the full picture of technology-facilitated abuse and equips us to better prevent it and support children.

- **Grooming:** When someone builds trust with a child online (pretending to be a friend, peer, or benefactor) to persuade them into sexual activity in real life.
- **Sexual Extortion:** Blackmailing children with private or sexual images, obtained through different means or generated, to get more images, money, or control.
- **Live-Streaming of Abuse:** Sexual abuse of children broadcast live online, often involving direct instructions by paying viewers.
- **Self-Generated Content:** Children pressured or manipulated into taking sexual photos or videos of themselves.

HOW TF-CSEA DIFFERS FROM CYBERBULLYING


TF-CSEA:	Cyberbullying:
Sexual in nature – Always involves sexual content or actions targeting children.	Usually not sexual – Can include insults, threats, or rumors without sexual content.
Adults exploiting children – Often adults or strangers manipulating children online.	Peer-to-peer – Usually between children or young people targeting each other.
Criminal acts – Clearly illegal with serious legal consequences.	Harmful, but not always illegal – Can be wrong or hurtful without breaking the law.
Planned and repeated – Often part of ongoing exploitation, not random acts.	One-time or repeated – May happen once or continue over time.

It is important to note that offenders are not always strangers or people with a sexual preference for children. Many cases involve individuals known to the child, such as teachers, coaches, faith leaders, or family members, who exploit positions of trust or authority.

Using the Right Language: Key Terms for Child Protection


Clear, accurate, and survivor-centered language helps us communicate effectively about child sexual exploitation and abuse. Using the right terms ensures we do not shift blame onto children and that our work aligns with international standards. We recommend the following:

- **ECPAT Terminology Guidelines:** Developed by a global Interagency Working Group, these guidelines provide updated, survivor-centred, and precise language to describe sexual exploitation and abuse of children — helping professionals, policymakers, and the media use words that protect rather than harm.
- **SEED TF-CSEA Lexicon:** List of key terms derived from the ECPAT Terminology Guidelines that have been translated into Sorani and Arabic.

 **NOTE**


While these are technically accurate terms, we must always adapt our language and/or find ways to describe key terms in language that is understandable to our target audience - including being mindful of level of literacy, direct vs. nuanced translation, and ensuring contextual and cultural limitations and norms.

ECPAT Terminology



The image shows a QR code on the left and the cover of the 'ECPAT Terminology Guidelines' book on the right. The book cover is yellow and blue, with the title 'ECPAT TERMINOLOGY GUIDELINES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND SEXUAL ABUSE' and 'SECOND EDITION' visible.

Facilitator Handout 1: SEED's Key TFSCEA terms



The image shows a QR code on the left and the cover of the 'Facilitator Handout 1' document on the right. The document cover is white with a blue header and contains a table of key terms in English, Sorani, and Arabic.

IMPACTS & CHALLENGES

Impact of TF-CSEA on Levels of Society

TF-CSEA doesn't just harm individual children, its impact ripples outward, touching families and entire communities. Understanding these layers of impact helps us respond with care, build stronger protections, and break cycles of harm.

On the child

- **Emotional harm** – Children may feel scared, ashamed, anxious, or deeply sad. Some develop long-term trauma, including PTSD.
- **Behavioral changes** – Affected children might pull away from others, show anger or aggression, or take unsafe risks.
- **School and health** – They may struggle to concentrate at school, see grades fall, or develop problems with sleep and eating.
- **Relationship Strain** - Online exploitation can cause tension and mistrust within families. Parents may blame or shame the child out of fear or misunderstanding, even though the child is never responsible for the abuse.
- **Learned or Repeated Harmful Behaviors** - Exposure to manipulation or abuse online can lead some children to imitate what they've seen - repeating harmful behaviors toward others without fully understanding the impact.

On the family

- **Strained relationships** – Parents and siblings may find it harder to communicate or trust each other.
- **Emotional stress** – Families often feel guilt, fear, and constant worry about their child's wellbeing.

On the community

- **Fear and insecurity** – People may feel less safe in public spaces or online.
- **Stigma and isolation** – Survivors and their families may face gossip, blame, or exclusion from others.
- **Ongoing harm** – Abuse materials can keep circulating, and the violence may continue in other forms — including harassment, exploitation, or further abuse in person.

Challenges in Addressing TF-CSEA in KRI

While TF-CSEA has devastating effects, tackling it remains complex. Children may not feel safe to disclose abuse, and even when they do, professionals may lack the tools or information they need, and offenders often exploit legal loopholes or technological advances to avoid detection. Recognizing these barriers helps us see why coordinated, well-resourced responses are necessary.

- **Disclosure challenges** – Children may feel unsafe to report abuse, especially if they are experiencing multiple forms of harm.
- **Limited data and research** – Lack of local studies makes it hard to understand the scale and nature of TF-CSEA.
- **Cross-border issues** – Offenders, victims, and digital evidence may be in different countries, making investigation and prosecution complex.
- **Limited legal frameworks** – Laws and enforcement may be unclear or not fully equipped to handle online sexual exploitation.
- **Limited awareness and capacity** – Families, communities, and some professionals may not recognize risks or know how to respond.
- **Technology challenges** – Rapidly changing online platforms and encrypted communications make detection and monitoring difficult.

TF-CSEA IN KURDISTAN

Prevalence Globally

Online child sexual exploitation is a global problem, affecting millions of children every year. The numbers are staggering and only represent a fraction of the real situation, since much goes unreported.

- **Industry Reports:** According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) 2024 Report¹ there were over 21 million reports globally of CSAM in 2024. This is a decrease compared to previous years, largely due to improved automated detection systems, not because the problem is decreasing.
- **Public Hotlines:** Data from INHOPE, a global network of public hotlines, shows that reports have more than doubled in recent years. This demonstrates both increased awareness and ongoing risk.
- **Global Research Estimates:** Research estimates that over 300 million children are affected annually worldwide by some form of sexual exploitation. This includes abuse that may not be captured in official reporting systems.

Together, these data sources show that online child exploitation is a vast, underreported, and growing threat underscoring the importance of NGOs, educators, community leaders and others to understand digital risks, prevention, and response measures.

Prevalence in Iraq

Understanding the scale of TF-CSEA in Iraq helps explain why prevention, awareness, and family communication are so important. High numbers of reported cases don't only show risk — they also show that more harmful content is being detected and reported, reflecting both a growing threat and stronger global monitoring systems.

- In 2024, Iraq had 588,225 reports of CSAM submitted to NCMEC. This ranks Iraq 8th globally and represents nearly 3% of worldwide reports.
- Iraq ranks highest in the Middle East in reported material, highlighting both the scale of the issue and the increasing visibility of online abuse in the region.
- **Trend / population context:** In 2023, there were 749,000 reports, which accounted for about 1.78% of Iraq's population. While reports decreased slightly in 2024, this still indicates a significant and ongoing risk.

These numbers show that online child sexual exploitation is a serious, measurable problem in Iraq, reinforcing the need for awareness, prevention, and response efforts tailored to the local context.

NOTE

To deliver this toolkit effectively, facilitators must stay informed about the rapidly changing digital environment. This includes monitoring new trends in online violence, understanding shifts in popular platform usage among youth, and mastering the latest privacy and security controls. By committing to ongoing learning, you ensure that the guidance provided is not only theoretically sound but practically applicable to the real-world risks and tools your audience encounters today.

1. National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), OUR IMPACT: 2024, <https://www.missingkids.org/ourwork/impact>

SECTION B

USING THE TOOLKIT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Most organisations working with families and children already practice community engagement — building relationships, holding awareness sessions, and listening to local needs.

Yet when addressing Technology-Facilitated Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (TF-CSEA), engagement takes on a deeper meaning. Because the topic is sensitive and often misunderstood, trust, respect, and genuine dialogue are essential for lasting change.

Community engagement means more than information-sharing. It is the collaborative process of building trusted partnerships with groups of people — whether connected by geography, shared identity, or common concerns. It involves two-way communication, where community members are informed, consulted, and empowered to act on issues that affect their well-being.

For TF-CSEA prevention, this approach is especially important. Sustainable social and behaviour change depends not only on strong systems and laws, but also on the awareness, confidence, and participation of families and communities.

This section of the primer provides practical guidance on how to:

- Build and maintain trust with communities;
- Engage effectively with parents, caregivers, children, and other key members; and
- Deliver sensitive, culturally appropriate messages that promote safety and respect.

GAINING AND SUSTAINING COMMUNITY TRUST

Trust is the foundation of effective delivery of Connected Safely. It is not a single step to complete but an ongoing process woven through every interaction. When working on TF-CSEA, trust is especially critical — families are unlikely to discuss such sensitive issues unless they feel respected, safe, and confident in your intentions.



OBJECTIVES OF SECTION B

1. Use the TF-CSEA Facilitation Toolkit effectively to deliver participatory, age-appropriate sessions with caregivers and children, adapting activities to local contexts and literacy levels.
2. Engage communities safely and respectfully by applying culturally sensitive approaches that build trust, reduce stigma, and encourage open dialogue about online safety and exploitation.
3. Respond appropriately to sensitive disclosures by applying trauma-informed, survivor-centered practices and following established referral pathways across protection, legal, health, and psychosocial services.
4. Promote positive behavior change among caregivers, children, and community influencers by modeling empathy, accountability, and safe digital practices during facilitation.
5. Contribute to evidence-based programming by monitoring participation, documenting feedback, and supporting ongoing evaluation of outcomes to strengthen prevention and response efforts.
6. Equip facilitators with the professional standards and practical tools needed to deliver this Toolkit effectively.

Trust grows through consistent, transparent, and respectful actions over time.

HOW TO BUILD TRUST	AVOID THESE APPROACHES
<p>Be Humble: Community members are the experts on their own lives. The facilitator’s role is to listen, guide discussion, and share information — not to instruct or judge.</p>	<p>Never Make Promises You Can’t Keep: This is one of the quickest ways to destroy trust.</p>
<p>Show Unconditional Respect: Honor people’s time, culture, and knowledge. Demonstrate cultural sensitivity in words, appearance, and behavior.</p>	<p>Never Make Assumptions: Don’t assume you understand people’s needs or views.</p>
<p>Be Transparent: Be clear about the Toolkit’s purpose, activities, and how information will be used. Openness builds credibility and shared ownership.</p>	<p>Never Push Your Own Agenda: Keep focus on community wellbeing, not organizational goals.</p>
<p>Adopt a Long-Term Perspective: Show genuine interest in participants’ wellbeing beyond a single session or project.</p>	<p>Never Take Advantage of the Community: Avoid treating participation as a box-ticking exercise; communities must see benefit and respect.</p>
<p>Listen As Much As You Speak: Value the lived experience and perspectives of all participants.</p>	<p>Inconsistent Presence: Engaging only when you need participation undermines trust — especially on sensitive topics like TF-CSEA. Maintain visibility and communication before, during, and after activities.</p>

EFFECTIVELY ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Delivering sessions on TF-CSEA requires more than a venue — it requires the right environment and people. Effective engagement starts with choosing safe, familiar spaces and identifying trusted figures who can support open discussion.

This section focuses on two key questions that will help you set up your session successfully:

- **Where do people feel safe coming together?** (e.g., community centres, schools, parent groups, youth clubs, or other familiar spaces)
- **Who do people trust and listen to?** (e.g., teachers, religious leaders, youth mentors, or local influencers who can encourage participation)



By answering these questions early, facilitators can ensure sessions are accessible, comfortable, and culturally appropriate — creating the conditions for trust, participation, and meaningful discussion around this sensitive topic.

Where do people come together?

This is a crucial question to community engagement to understand the community's social landscape and identify the natural hubs where community life unfolds. These are the places where relationships are built, information is shared, and the community's pulse can be felt.

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

1. Look for both formal and informal gathering places. Your presence in these locations is the first step toward visibility and trust.
 - a. **Formal hubs:** Places of worship, schools and educational centers, community halls and government service centers, health clinics and hospitals
 - b. **Informal hubs:** Local markets or weekly pop-up bazaars, parks and recreational areas, local tea shops/cafes/restaurants, transportation terminals, or even water collection points in some areas.
2. Use these locations to progressively build your relationship with the community.
 - a. **Be present and visible:** Your initial goal is simply to be seen as a consistent, non-demanding presence.
 - i. Spend time in these hubs when you are not asking for anything.
 - ii. Attend a local market, a community event, or religious services (if appropriate)
 - iii. Accept offers of hospitality, for example, sharing tea. These small social rituals are essential for relationship-building.
 - b. **Observe and learn:** Once you are a familiar face, focus on understanding.
 - i. Aim to listen most of the time.
 - ii. Ask open-ended questions about the community – their strengths, concerns, hopes for the future. Do not lead with your own agenda.
 - iii. Focus on their assets, not just their problems. Ask:
 1. What is working well here?
 2. Who are the people who always get things done?

- c. Conduct listening sessions: After building a foundation of trust, you can use these hubs for more formal consultations. This is where you can dive deeper into the community's realities, values, and beliefs regarding sensitive topics like TF-CSEA.

3. Ask the critical question: "Who is not here?". The people who gather in public spaces may not represent the entire community. The most vulnerable are often the least visible. In every listening session and consultation, you must actively ask:
 - a. Who is not in this room?
 - b. Whose voice are we not hearing?
 - c. Are there groups that may have been excluded?

Actively seek out and create safe, accessible ways for these individuals to participate. Advocate for them. Vulnerable or marginalized populations may include:

- persons with disabilities
- ethnic or religious minorities
- economically disadvantaged families
- single-parent households
- people living in remote or hard-to-reach areas
- children, youth, or the elderly who may be overlooked

Facilitator Handout 3: Observation Checklist!



Who do people listen to?

For sensitive topics like TF-CSEA, sessions are more effective when introduced or supported by trusted and respected community figures. These individuals can help you gain access, encourage participation, and reassure families that the sessions are safe and worthwhile.

When preparing to deliver the Toolkit, consider:

- Who are the people that parents and youth trust most?
- Who can help you invite participants and create a comfortable space for discussion?

Influence in a community can take many forms:

- **Formal leaders:** Religious figures, school principals, or local officials who can endorse the sessions or provide venues.
- **Informal influencers:** Teachers, youth mentors, respected parents, or active community volunteers who can encourage others to attend.

Engaging these figures doesn't mean launching a large community campaign — it's about leveraging existing trust to support your sessions.

Practical ways to do this:

- Ask local partners or schools who families trust most.
- Invite a respected community member to welcome participants or introduce the session to set a positive tone.

- Provide these supporters with a brief explanation of the session's purpose, so they can speak confidently and accurately about it.
- Always thank them for their time and acknowledge their role publicly.

By involving the right voices, facilitators can build credibility quickly, reduce hesitation around a sensitive topic, and create a sense of community ownership over the learning process.

GUIDANCE ON DELIVERING MESSAGES TO PREVENT TF-CSEA

Delivering messages on a topic as sensitive as TF-CSEA requires a carefully planned, empathetic, and action-oriented approach.

Effective messaging is not just about the information you provide but how you frame it, who delivers it, and the actions it inspires. The goal is to challenge the community to act, not induce fear or shame.

What principles should guide my messaging?

When addressing TF-CSEA, the way we communicate is as important as the information itself.

Sensitive topics require care, accuracy, and empathy to ensure that messages inform and empower without causing fear, shame, or blame.

Facilitator Handout 4: Checklist for Inclusive Community Participation!



This tool is designed to guide formal engagement activities (i.e., listening sessions, FGDs, or consultations) that are accessible, respectful, and representative of the entire community.

The following principles will help facilitators and partners communicate about TF-CSEA safely, respectfully, and effectively:

1. **Do No Harm:** Your messaging must never blame survivors or parents. Always frame TF-CSEA as a crime committed by perpetrators, not as a failure of the child or family.
2. **Encourage, Don't Scare:** Avoid fear-based messages that make people feel helpless. Focus instead on practical steps families can take — emphasize safety, awareness, and shared responsibility.
 - Separate groups by gender and/or age, if preferred or appropriate for the community in which you are operating. Gender and other social norms can influence an individual's ability to openly communicate, share experience, and express emotions in the presence of the other gender or people of much older or younger ages. If mixed age or gender groups are likely to negatively impact your ability to effectively engage the community, or otherwise risk harm to participants, opt for single gender groupings.
 - All activities are optional, if a group is experiencing shyness or is part of a more conservative community, opt out of activities which may seem confrontational.
3. **Use Simple, Local, and Clear Language:** Avoid technical jargon. Explain terms in ways that make sense locally.
 - Instead of “online grooming”, say “How strangers on phones and computers trick children into becoming friends and harm them.”
 - Instead of “sextortion”, say “When someone threatens to share private photos of a child to force them to do something they do not want to do.”
4. **Account for Differing Literacy Levels:** In some communities, participants may struggle with written materials. If you rely solely on text-heavy slides or handouts, your key messages may be lost.
 - Preparation: Assess literacy levels prior to the session.
 - Delivery: All handouts are optional. If necessary, prioritize verbal communication and visual aids.
 - Goal: Ensure the message is clear and heard by all participants, regardless of reading ability.
5. **Make it Actionable:** Every message should link to a clear, achievable action — for example, talking to children regularly about who they interact with online, or knowing how to report abuse.
6. **Be Culturally Grounded:** Connect messages to existing community values such as family honor, faith, or collective duty to protect children. This builds trust and makes prevention a shared goal.

7. **Use Trusted Messengers:** The credibility of your message depends on who delivers it. Work with teachers, religious figures, health workers, or respected community members who can explain it in their own words.
8. **Challenge Harmful Gender Norms:** TF-CSEA affects all children, but gender expectations can silence victims or reinforce blame.
 - **Fathers:** Encourage open communication and shared responsibility for children's safety.
 - **Mothers:** Support mothers to act with authority and without fear of blame.
 - **Girls:** Emphasize that responsibility always lies with the perpetrator, not the victim.
 - **Boys:** Reinforce that boys can also be targeted and should feel safe to speak without stigma.

How do I choose the right approach for the right message?

Once trust has been established and the community understands who you are and why you are there, the next step is to prepare the ground for your sessions.

Before delivery begins, facilitators need to share clear, reassuring, and culturally appropriate messages that explain what the Toolkit is about, who it is for, and why it matters.

This outreach phase helps turn awareness into participation — ensuring that parents, caregivers, and community members feel informed, respected, and ready to take part in discussions about keeping children safe online.

1. Interpersonal Approach

- a. **What:** Personal conversations with parents, caregivers, or families — for example, during a home visit, parent-teacher meeting, or after a community event.
- b. **When:** Use this approach when families are hesitant, unfamiliar with the topic, or need reassurance that sessions will be safe and appropriate. It's ideal for building trust and addressing sensitive questions.
- c. **How:**
 - i. Choose a private, comfortable space where the person feels at ease.
 - ii. Keep tone conversational and empathetic — listen first, then share.
 - iii. Emphasize that the sessions are about helping families protect children online, not assigning blame.
 - iv. Offer a short flyer or key message card with simple information (date, purpose, what to expect).

2. Group-Based Approach

- a. **What:** Brief discussions or mini-presentations with existing community groups — such as caregiver groups, youth clubs, school committees, or women's associations.
- b. **When:** Use this approach to generate awareness and interest, answer common questions, and invite participation before sessions begin.
- c. **How:**
 - i. Ask a trusted community figure or teacher to introduce you.
 - ii. Keep the focus positive: protecting children, strengthening families, and preventing online risks.
 - iii. Allow time for open discussion or questions.
 - iv. If possible, demonstrate a small interactive activity (e.g., a quick scenario discussion) to show the participatory style of the Toolkit.
 - v. Always thank participants and share how they can sign up or help spread the word.

3. Community-Wide Approaches

- a. **What:** Introducing the sessions publicly — for example, during a community event, religious gathering, or through local radio or announcements — to encourage broad understanding and acceptance.
- b. **When:** Use this approach when you need to build general support or reduce stigma before smaller group sessions begin.
- c. **How:**
 - i. Coordinate with local leaders to make brief, supportive announcements.
 - ii. Keep messages simple, hopeful, and collective — e.g., “Together we can help our children stay safe online.”
 - iii. Avoid detailed discussion of abuse or individual cases in public spaces.
 - iv. If using radio or printed materials, use clear, local language and avoid graphic or technical terms.
 - v. Reinforce that the Toolkit is part of a broader effort to protect, not shame families.



ACTIVITY:

Build A Message

1. Select a target audience (e.g., “parents of young teens,” “adolescents,” “teachers,” or “community leaders”).
2. Using a blank version of the Message Builder Tool complete 3 key components only (Target Audience, Core Message, and Desired Behavior Change).
3. Reflect and compare with colleagues!

Facilitator Handout 5: Message Builder Tool!



OVERCOMING STIGMA AND ADAPTING FOR CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Once trust is established, facilitators may still face barriers rooted in stigma, shame, and cultural sensitivities that prevent families from speaking openly or acting on protection messages.

To be effective, NGOs must recognize these sensitivities and adapt their language, examples, and framing in ways that resonate locally while still prioritizing children's safety.

In this section, facilitators will learn how to:

- Identify the behavioral and cultural drivers that influence responses to online risks;
- Understand how concepts of honor and reputation shape family decisions and conversations;
- Recognize cultural sensitivities during sessions and adapt accordingly to maintain comfort, participation, and safety.

UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIORAL DRIVERS

Addressing stigma and cultural sensitivity requires understanding the drivers that shape how families, communities, and young people respond to online risks. These drivers are not obstacles — they are the context in which protective behavior either flourishes or falters. Recognizing them helps facilitators adapt toolkit messages so they resonate locally and support sustainable change.

Cultural Factors

Individual Factors

Environmental Factors

Cultural factors influencing online behavior

Culture deeply influences how families and communities interpret technology, safety, and risk. Facilitators should understand these dynamics to frame messages that align with values of care, protection, and family honor, rather than challenge them directly.

Family Influence

Family dynamics determine how young people engage with technology and disclose concerns.

- **Authority and decision-making:** Identify who influences digital rules — fathers, mothers, older siblings, or extended relatives — and involve them appropriately.

- **Supervision norms:** Some families value close monitoring; others emphasize trust and independence. Acknowledge both perspectives while reinforcing shared responsibility for safety.
- **Communication patterns:** Where open discussion is rare, use indirect approaches such as storytelling or examples to introduce sensitive topics.
- **Conflict resolution:** Some families address disagreement privately or via extended relatives. Model respectful dialogue to show safer ways to discuss online behavior.

Community Expectations

Broader social norms shape how families and children use — and are judged for using — technology.

- **Reputation and honor:** Many families manage online risks to protect social standing. Framing sessions as protecting family dignity and safety together helps reduce defensiveness.
- **Gender roles:** Girls may face scrutiny, while boys are encouraged to take risks. Provide gender-balanced examples that highlight equal vulnerability and responsibility.
- **Peer pressure:** Young people face social consequences for breaking norms. Facilitate activities that encourage empathy, confidence, and healthy boundary-setting among peers.
- **Authority figures:** Elders, teachers, and religious leaders often set moral boundaries. Their endorsement can legitimize conversations around online safety.

When introducing the toolkit, use locally accepted values — protection, respect, and family harmony — to position online safety as an act of care, not criticism.

Individual factors

Adolescence is a time of identity formation, emotional change, and growing independence. In digital spaces, this process happens publicly and under social pressure. Facilitators should understand these dynamics to create sessions that feel validating, not judgmental.

Identity development

Young people balance traditional expectations with digital culture.

- Online spaces allow self-expression but also exposure to risk.
- Youth may feel torn between peer loyalty and family approval.
- Public visibility (e.g., posting photos, sharing opinions) can clash with local norms of modesty or obedience.

Toolkit Link: In the Children's Mixed Session we use the Spectrum of Online Violence and scenario discussions to explore how boys and girls experience these pressures — without assigning blame. Encourage reflection on what “safety” and “respect” mean in their context.

Coping mechanisms

How children and youth respond to online pressure or harm depends on learned patterns of help-seeking and problem-solving.

- **Help-seeking norms:** In some cultures, asking for help from outsiders implies weakness. Normalize support-seeking as strength and smart decision-making.
- **Problem-solving:** Youth may rely on friends or siblings before adults. Encourage open communication and identify trusted adults in exercises.
- **Emotional expression:** Boys may suppress vulnerability; girls may internalize blame. Facilitate discussions that normalize emotional responses and self-care.

Frame self-protection as wisdom and maturity, not fear. Help youth see that asking for help protects dignity and autonomy.

Environmental factors

Technology use is shaped by the environment — access, privacy, infrastructure, and social support. Facilitators must tailor activities and examples so they are realistic in participants' daily lives.

Technology access and use

Economic and spatial factors affect how children experience online life.

- **Shared devices:** Children often use family phones, limiting privacy. Emphasize open communication over surveillance.
- **Limited internet or space:** Many lack private areas for safe use. Encourage safety habits that fit these realities (e.g., using public content settings, logging out, avoiding sharing personal information).
- **Generational differences:** Parents may feel left behind technologically. Offer practical demonstrations (e.g., privacy settings, parental controls) that reduce fear and build confidence.

Social support systems

Support extends beyond parents — extended family, religious institutions, and community networks shape responses to online harm.

- **Extended family:** Aunts, uncles, and grandparents often influence technology rules or reputational responses. Acknowledge their role and encourage collective responsibility for protection.
- **Community structures:** Religious or social leaders can reinforce messages about compassion, accountability, and protection.
- **Access to professional support:** Availability of services varies. Facilitators should be aware of referral systems but focus their sessions on prevention and awareness, not case management.

Adapt safety discussions to participants’ realities — avoid assuming privacy, personal devices, or formal reporting access. Focus on achievable steps families can take within their means.

CONTEXTUALIZING HONOR WITHIN ONLINE VIOLENCE

Why Honor Matters in Online Safety

In many communities, family and community honor are closely tied to behavior—especially that of women and girls. Online activity can therefore become a new arena where questions of reputation, modesty, and control arise.

For facilitators, understanding these sensitivities is critical to delivering the Technology-Facilitated Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (TF-CSEA) Toolkit effectively. Sessions must create a safe space for reflection without judgment. Cultural sensitivity means working within community values to promote protection and dignity—not accepting harmful practices or silence.

When cultural beliefs conflict with safety, facilitators prioritize the child’s wellbeing while maintaining respect for participants’ perspectives and decision-making autonomy.

Honor-based concerns affect how families interpret online behavior, risk, and responsibility:

- Families may equate online interactions with moral conduct, especially for girls.
- Parents may fear gossip or reputational damage more than digital harm.
- Restrictive “protective” responses (e.g., removing internet access) may unintentionally increase isolation or vulnerability.

Understanding these perspectives helps facilitators:

- Anticipate emotional or defensive reactions during sessions.
- Frame prevention as a shared duty to protect family reputation through safety, not through silence or punishment.
- Reinforce that safety protects both honor and wellbeing.

HOW HONOR INTERSECTS WITH ONLINE VIOLENCE	KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR FACILITATORS
Victim blaming: Girls may be blamed for “causing” harassment by their online presence or behavior	Recognize that honor concerns are real and valid for participants
Reporting barriers: Fear that seeking help will bring shame to the family or community	Normalize help-seeking as protective not exposing: “Getting advice early keeps families and children safe” BUT understand that family reactions may pose genuine safety risks
Fear of Isolation: Girls may be restricted from online activities as a “protective” measure	Avoid dismissing cultural values while prioritizing participant safety
Secondary victimization: The response to online violence may cause more harm than the original incident	Frame online safety as protecting rather than challenging family honor

Balancing safety and cultural sensitivity

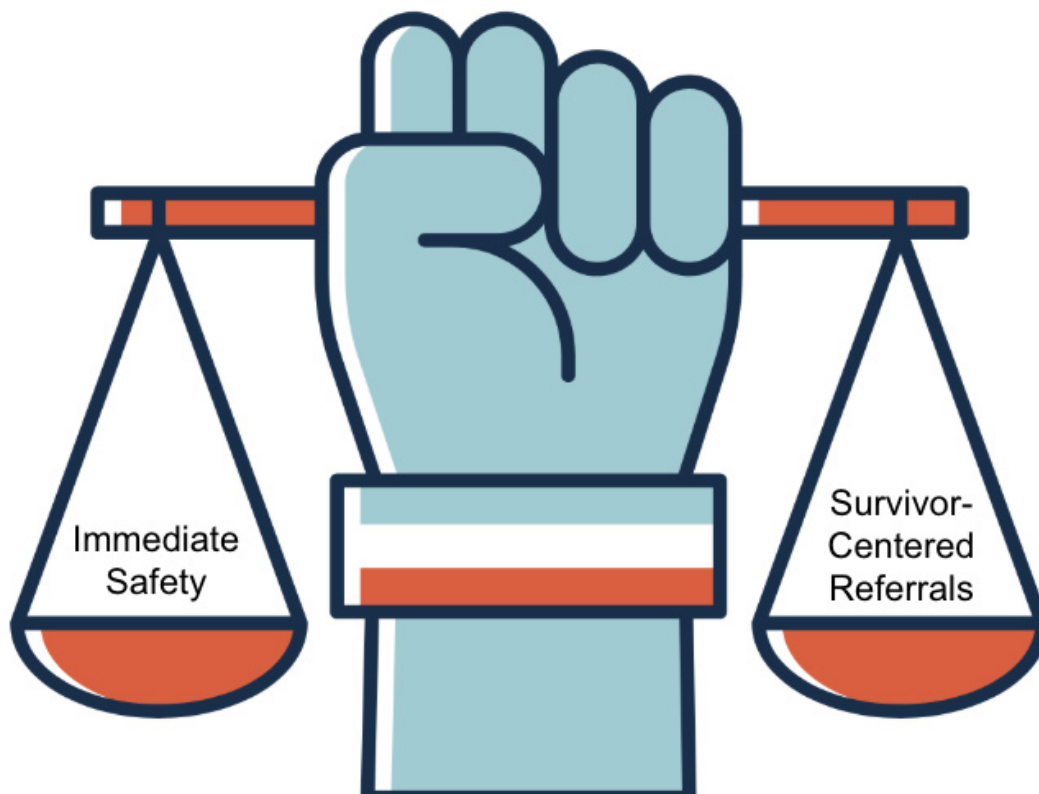
Speaker notes: Facilitators using the Technology-Facilitated Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (TF-CSEA) Toolkit may encounter moments when participants share personal experiences or express distress related to online violence. In these situations, the facilitator's role is not to investigate or provide counseling, but to respond supportively, protect confidentiality, and ensure participants' safety and dignity remain the priority.

Balancing cultural sensitivity with safety means recognizing that family and community reactions may carry real implications for participants — including fear of blame, shame, or social isolation. Facilitators must approach such situations with empathy and respect, while never allowing cultural pressure to override a participant's right to protection.

To maintain this balance:

- **Stay grounded in the toolkit's purpose:** Your role is to raise awareness, model supportive communication, and link participants to help — not to resolve individual cases.

- **Prioritize participant safety:** Cultural values should be acknowledged, but they cannot justify harm or inaction.
- **Respect participant agency:** Never pressure a participant to share more than they are comfortable with. Empower them to decide what next steps feel safe.
- **Be prepared, not reactive:** Before sessions begin, facilitators should know their organization's referral pathways, protection focal points, and emergency procedures in case someone discloses risk.
- **Model calm, compassionate responses:** A simple, validating statement — such as “Thank you for sharing; that was brave. We can talk privately after the session to make sure you're safe.” — helps maintain trust and sets the tone for referral follow-up by trained staff.



HOW TO IDENTIFY CULTURAL SENSITIVITIES

Facilitators don't need to be cultural experts — but they do need to notice how culture shows up in the room. Understanding cultural sensitivities means paying attention to what people say, how they respond, and what they avoid discussing. These cues help you adjust your approach so that participants feel respected, safe, and heard.

Before and during sessions, look and listen for the following signs.

Observational indicators

Language and communication patterns:

- Notice if participants use polite, indirect, or coded language when talking about sensitive issues (for example, “bad pictures” instead of “private photos”).
- Watch for hesitation, nervous laughter, or silence when certain topics are raised.
- Pay attention to who speaks most — are younger people, women, or others holding back? That can signal social hierarchy or discomfort.
- Look for non-verbal cues like lowered eyes, fidgeting, or tension that may indicate anxiety.

Content-specific sensitivities:

- Take note of topics that cause strong reactions — such as relationships, phones, or privacy — and slow down if needed.
- If a question goes unanswered, that may mean participants feel it's too private or risky to discuss.
- Requests for confidentiality show that trust is being built but also that the topic is sensitive; reassure participants about privacy limits.
- Listen to how people talk about family expectations — whether they express fear, respect, or worry about upsetting relatives — to understand pressure points.

Participant feedback mechanisms

Direct assessment methods:

- Anonymous feedback forms asking about cultural comfort levels
- One-on-one check-ins to discuss individual concerns privately
- Safe space for questions about how content relates to their specific context

Indirect indicators:

- Attendance patterns: Drops in participation after certain topics
- Engagement levels: Reduced participation in discussions or activities
- Peer interactions: Changes in how participants relate to each other
- Follow-up questions: What participants ask about privately

Adapting your language

Use culturally appropriate framing:

- Wisdom-based framing: «Making informed choices that keep everyone safe»
- Community-centered approach: «Contributing to a safer community for all girls»
- Respect-based messaging: «Honoring your values while staying safe»

Session structure:

- Allow more time for processing culturally sensitive content
- Include breaks after difficult topics to allow for emotional regulation
- Offer individual consultation time for culture-specific concerns

Group dynamics:

- You may want to separate groups by age or gender if it helps people feel more comfortable sharing.
- Be aware of family members in the same group — this can make open discussion harder for some participants.
- Encourage peer support and teamwork, reminding everyone that the goal is to learn from each other.
- Notice if some voices dominate or others stay quiet — gently make space for everyone to speak.

Red flags requiring immediate attention:

Keep an eye out for signs that someone might be feeling unsafe or under pressure because of cultural or family issues. If you notice any of the following, pause, check in privately

after the session, and inform your supervisor or protection focal point.

- A participant says they are worried about their family finding out they joined the session.
- Someone shows visible distress when topics about family or community reactions come up.
- A participant asks to leave or stop attending due to discomfort with cultural expectations.
- You hear about family conflict or arguments linked to participation in the program.
- There are concerns about honor-related threats or violence connected to a child's or family's reputation.

MANAGING DISCLOSURES

Effective engagement and awareness raising can empower parents and children to speak out about their experiences. But with this opportunity comes responsibility. A disclosure of harm may occur unexpectedly, and how it is handled will determine whether the survivor feels supported or further silenced.

This section equips facilitators with clear guidance on the do's and don'ts of handling disclosures, including confidentiality, trauma-informed and survivor-centered practices, and sensitivity to local norms. It also explores the social barriers that prevent survivors from disclosing, such as stigma and honor-based violence, and offers strategies to overcome them.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES WHEN RESPONDING TO CHILD ABUSE

There are several fundamental guidelines to follow to ensure that disclosures from children are managed safely and appropriately.

1. Best Interests of the Child

- Always prioritize the child's safety, wellbeing, and development.
- Consider the short-term and long-term impacts of decisions. Is this truly in the best long-term and short-term interest of the child's safety and wellbeing?

2. Participation and Voice

- Respect the child's right to be heard.
- Give them age-appropriate opportunities to express their views and preferences.
- Actively listen and validate what they share.

3. Non-Discrimination

- Ensure all children are treated equally, regardless of gender, age, ability, ethnicity, religion, or background.
- Pay special attention to vulnerable groups (e.g., children with disabilities, displaced children, marginalized minorities).

4. Confidentiality and Privacy

- Share information only on a need-to-know basis and explain clearly what will and will not remain confidential.
- Respect the child's dignity throughout the process.

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR HANDLING DISCLOSURES

Only a small number of children voluntarily disclose abuse. In most cases, abuse is identified accidentally or when an adult notices changes in a child's behaviour, language, or physical appearance.

When a child does disclose abuse, it must be taken seriously. Proper handling of the disclosure is crucial for the child's well-being and to avoid compromising any potential legal action against the abuser.

Facilitators are not investigators — your role is to respond calmly, respectfully, and safely in the moment, then connect the person to your organization's protection focal point.

A caring response can make the difference between silence and healing.

DO'S	DON'TS
Believe the child or young person, and validate their experience.	Interview, interrogate, or decide if the child is telling the truth. Instead, listen impartially, stick to facts, and record the child's statements and observable details without adding interpretations.
Acknowledge how hard it was for the child to speak up and affirm that they did the right thing by coming to you.	
Use supportive language to make sure the child understands that what happened is not their fault.	Ask leading questions or suggest language for the child to use.
Listen calmly and objectively to what they have to say.	Make assumptions, speculate, or jump to conclusions.
Give the child space to share in their own words and at their own pace.	Place a child in a posture or environment that can make them feel powerless. For example, avoid seating them on the opposite side of an office desk, as this may create the impression of being questioned or interrogated.
Reassure them that the information cannot stay a secret, but explain that only the necessary adults will be informed.	
Save any possible evidence (e.g., screenshots, emails, texts, online chat logs) when relevant.	
Write down accurate notes immediately after the conversation to capture details clearly.	
Report the abuse promptly to the appropriate authorities (school staff, child protection services, police) so swift action can be taken.	Attempt to deal with the situation yourself.
Connect the child or young person with support services they would like to know more about.	Make promises you cannot guarantee (e.g., saying you will keep it a secret or that the situation will never happen again).
Ensure the child or young person has the opportunity to add, change, or otherwise revise their evidence after their initial disclosure.	
Where it does not place the child at risk, inform their parents or carers, and do so before involving the police.	Ask the child to wait until another person can be present to witness the disclosure.
Thank the child or young person for trusting you with their experience.	

Immediate Response

ALWAYS PRACTICE THE SURVIVOR-CENTERED APPROACH

- Maintain the survivor's confidentiality and respect their wishes.
- Provide accurate and comprehensive information about available services and support for TF-CSEA survivors.
- Obtain informed consent; when decisions are made by family or guardians, ensure the child's best interests are prioritized. Preferably, the accompanying adult should be chosen by the child.
- Facilitate access to medical care for survivors of rape within 72 hours.

PHRASES AND QUESTIONS TO AVOID

The way we ask questions matters. Certain questions can unintentionally shift blame onto survivors, reinforce stigma, or cause further harm. To maintain a survivor-centered and trauma-informed approach, facilitators must avoid language that suggests responsibility lies with the survivor rather than the perpetrator.

Survivor-blaming is any language or behaviour that suggests a child or young person is fully or partly responsible for the abuse or harm they have experienced. This can happen intentionally or unintentionally, including questions like:

- Why did you do that?
- Why did you break the rules we set?
- Why didn't you come forward sooner?
- What did you expect would happen?
- You should have known better.
- That was a dangerous choice.
- You put yourself in danger by...

Why is it harmful?

- Survivor-blaming damages children and young people and may prevent them from seeking help.
- When they fear they will get into trouble, they are less likely to speak up or share concerns.
- To prevent negative outcomes, young people should always feel safe to talk with trusted adults and be reassured that they will be supported.

RESPONDING TO A DISCLOSURE THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF APPROPRIATE APPROACHES

1. **A child-centered approach** places the rights, needs, and best interests of the child or young person at the heart of every decision and action. It recognizes that children have the right to be heard, protected, and supported in a safe and respectful way. The goal is to minimize harm, empower the child, and ensure their safety and wellbeing throughout the response process.

A child-centred approach is essential for the protection and empowerment of each and every child and to ensure the fulfilment of their rights and their potential.

- **Responding effectively matters:** Children benefit most when responses are trauma-informed, compassionate, holistic, and focused on healing and recovery.
- **Timing of disclosure varies:** A child may speak up while abuse is still occurring, immediately after, or even weeks, months, or years later.
- **Organisational responsibility:** Responses should always prioritise the child's best interests, ensuring care, sensitivity, and protection.

2. **A Trauma-Informed Care (TIC)** is an approach that recognizes the widespread impact of trauma on children and young people and integrates this understanding into all aspects of care and response. When responding to child abuse, TIC ensures that children are supported in ways that minimize re-traumatization, empower them, and promote safety and healing.

SHOULD PARENTS BE NOTIFIED ABOUT REPORTING ABUSE?

Deciding how and when to inform parents can be challenging, especially if they are suspected of abuse or neglect. Telling the family before authorities are involved can sometimes put the child at further risk. In some cases, families may try to remove the child or leave the area.

However, if the family has a positive relationship with your organization, informing them can help them understand that reporting is meant to protect and support the child, not punish the family.

Abusive or neglectful families often isolate themselves, which makes it difficult to predict how they will respond to a report. If you are unsure, it is best to contact the relevant local authority for guidance. The most important priority is always the immediate safety and protection of the child or young person.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL BARRIERS TO DISCLOSURE

Even when harm occurs, many survivors and families face barriers to reporting it. These may include fear of shame, mistrust of institutions, or concern for family honor. Understanding these barriers helps facilitators respond with empathy and work to create safer pathways for disclosure.

- **Lack of vocabulary or understanding:** Children may not have the words to describe what is happening or may not recognize that they are being abused online.
- **Normalization of the behaviour:** Children might perceive abusive messages, images, or online interactions as normal or part of everyday online activity.
- **Confusion about the experience:** They may not comprehend that what is happening to them is abuse or harmful.
- **Feelings of guilt or self-blame:** Some children may feel they caused or encouraged the abuse, even though they are never responsible.
- **Not wanting to burden others:** Children may hesitate to tell adults, thinking they are too busy or would not care.
- **Trust and relationship barriers:** Children are more likely to disclose to staff they trust and who show genuine interest and care. If adults seem rushed, unapproachable, or uninterested, children may not try to disclose again.
- **Fear of judgment or not being believed:** Children may worry that adults will react with anger, disbelief, or blame.
- **Lack of safe or private opportunity to speak:** Physical or logistical barriers (e.g., busy schedules, inaccessible spaces) can prevent children from finding the time and place to talk.
- **Limited awareness of reporting options:** Children may not know it is okay to report online abuse or may not understand the process for getting help safely.

Barriers to Disclosure for Children Experiencing Online Abuse - Girls

- **Honor-based violence:** Fear of bringing shame or dishonor to the family may prevent reporting. Includes threats of punishment, forced marriage, deprivation of education, or social exclusion.
 - **Fear of Stigma:** Worry about being judged, blamed, or talked about by peers, family, or community.
 - **Cultural norms:** Some communities normalize or minimize certain abusive behaviours, making children unsure if what happened is wrong.
 - **Fear of threats or retaliation:** Concern about threats from family members, perpetrators, or community actors if abuse is reported.
- Barriers to Disclosure for Children Experiencing Online Abuse - Boys
- **Honor-based pressures:** Fear of bringing shame to the family or community.
 - **Fear of stigma:** Worry about being judged as weak, homosexual, or a future abuser.
 - **Cultural and masculine norms:** Pressure to “be strong” and not show vulnerability. Pressure to appear strong, self-reliant, or unemotional, making help-seeking feel unacceptable.
 - **Isolation by family:** Restricted freedom, limited access to safe spaces, or controlled internet use.
 - **Lack of male-focused services:** Counseling and treatment often focus on female survivors.

These honor and cultural related practices create strong social and cultural barriers, discouraging children from disclosing online abuse or seeking help.

REFERRAL PATHWAYS

Once a disclosure has been received and the participant is safe, the next step is to ensure they get the right help from trained professionals. Facilitators are not expected to handle cases themselves — but they do have a vital role in initiating the referral process through their organization's protection focal point.

Referrals are how we turn a caring response into real protection. They make sure survivors can access the right services — whether that's medical care, psychosocial support, legal aid, or safety planning — while maintaining dignity, confidentiality, and cultural sensitivity.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE STEPS

When a child, caregiver, or community member discloses an incident, follow these steps to seek help.



1. **Child's Safety and Security:** If the child's safety is at immediate risk or there is a life-threatening situation, contact the relevant authorities (police, security actors, safe shelters) or other appropriate emergency services.

In the Kurdistan Region of Iraq:

- a. **Child Protection Helpline (116)** – A toll-free number operated by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA) to report urgent child protection concerns.
- b. **Police (104)** – For immediate threats, danger, or criminal acts.
- c. **Directorates of Labor and Social Affairs (DOLSA)** – Regional offices in Erbil, Sulaimani, Duhok, and Halabja that provide child protection services and referrals.
- d. **GBV Helpline (119)** – A 24/7 hotline offering counseling, referrals, and psychosocial/legal support for survivors of gender-based violence, including cases of technology-facilitated abuse of children.
- e. **Department of Combating Electronic Crimes (DOCEC – Asayesh)** – A specialized unit investigating online threats, blackmail, harassment, and other technology-related crimes.

In Federal Iraq:

- a. **Central Emergency Number (911)** - A toll-free line that consolidates 26 previous hotlines into this single number, which receives reports from citizens and residents in multiple languages, including Arabic, English, Turkish, Persian, and Kurdish.
- b. **Regular Police (104)** – To request assistance and protection.
- c. **Community Police (497)** - To request assistance in cases of domestic violence.
- d. **Directorate of Family and Child Protection (139)** - To report the harassment against women and adolescent girls and cases of torture.
- e. **National Security Office (131)** - To report electronic extortion.

1. **Removal of Harmful Content:** Online platforms provide dedicated reporting mechanisms for harmful content, which should be utilized to protect children and uphold their rights. When submitting a complaint, it is essential to first identify the platform where the content is hosted and access its designated reporting procedures. Reports should include clear, concise information detailing the nature of the content and explaining why it is harmful, to ensure effective review and timely removal in line with child protection obligations.

a. Most social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, WhatsApp, and X/Twitter) allow you to report harmful or abusive content. While the exact steps may change, the process usually looks like this:

- i. **Find the content** – Open the post, message, or video you want to report.
- ii. **Look for the menu or options button** – Often shown as three dots (...) or a share button.
- iii. **Select “Report”** – Choose the option to report the post, message, or account.
- iv. **Choose a reason** – Platforms will ask you why you are reporting (e.g., sexual exploitation, harassment, bullying, impersonation).
- v. **Block or restrict the account (if needed)** – Most apps let you block the person so they cannot contact you again.
- vi. **Submit the report** – Send it to the platform for review.

b. **Tip:** Reporting harmful content is important, but it may take time for platforms to act. If a child is in immediate danger, always contact local protection services or the police in addition to reporting online.

2. **Urgent Medical/Health Care:** When online violence results in offline medical consequences, ensure the child has prompt access to appropriate medical care. Emergency

HIV treatment should be provided within 72 hours, while emergency contraception and prevention of sexually transmitted infections should be administered within five days, in accordance with established clinical guidelines.

RESPONDING TO OTHER SERVICES:

When a case of child sexual exploitation or abuse is identified, different services may need to be involved to provide full support. These include:

- **Case Management Services**
 - Case managers work with the child and family to assess needs, make referrals, and ensure coordinated support. They help follow up on safety, wellbeing, and access to services.
- **MHPSS (Mental Health and Psychosocial Support) Services**
 - Specialized staff or counselors provide emotional support and therapy to children and families affected by abuse. These services help reduce trauma, strengthen coping, and support recovery.
- **Legal Assistance Services**
 - Lawyers and legal aid organizations can support children and families to understand their rights, report crimes, and pursue justice through the legal system.
- **Medical and Health Care Services**
 - Health professionals provide urgent medical treatment, ongoing healthcare, and forensic examinations when needed. They also ensure the child's physical wellbeing and address any health consequences of abuse.

Responding To Online Violence: A Practitioners Guide



See the Iraq National Online Violence Task Force's Practitioners Guide, designed to serve as a guidance note to support case managers, frontline responders, and protection actors when addressing online violence cases in Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

SUSTAINABILITY MECHANISMS

The impact of Connected Safely depends not only on what happens during sessions — but on what continues after them. To create lasting change, families and communities need ongoing spaces to practice, discuss, and reinforce safe online behaviours.

Caregiver Circles are one way to achieve this. They bring together small groups of parents or caregivers who meet regularly to share experiences, discuss challenges, and support one another in keeping children safe online. These circles strengthen community ownership, reduce stigma, and help families turn knowledge into action over time.

As facilitators, your role is to help set up these groups in a way that feels natural and community-led — identifying existing networks, providing light-touch guidance, and encouraging peer-to-peer learning rather than formal training.

In this section, we'll explore how to:

- Establish and support Caregiver Circles in your context.
- Provide simple discussion tools and follow-up prompts.
- Encourage sustainability through local leadership and shared responsibility.

CAREGIVER CIRCLES

Caregiver Circles are small, supportive, parent-led groups where caregivers come together to share experiences, learn from each other, keep up to date with latest tech trends, and find solutions together to support their children's safety online. Your goal is to empower parents to eventually run the group themselves, becoming fully self-sustained, giving them a sense of ownership, and creating a long-term support network that doesn't depend on an external person or organization.

Your goal is to empower parents to eventually run the group themselves for these circles to be fully self-sustained, giving them a sense of ownership and a long-term support network that doesn't depend on an external person or organization.

- If they already have a group: They can start incorporating these discussions right away using our resources.

- If they want to start one but aren't sure how: We can journey with them at the beginning. We'll help facilitate the first few sessions and eventually hand it over to them so they can run the group independently.
- Emphasize that this is a highly encouraged OPTIONAL activity for their community group.
- If they are thinking of forming a new group to start this circle, your role is to be a mentor and trainer, not just a guide. You'll introduce the circle's purpose but your primary focus will be to model good practices, gradually hand over responsibilities, and coach the members to take charge.

Here are the main aims of these circles:

- **Lead and Decide:** Circles are parent-led and fully self-sustained; parents set the schedule, topics, and format.
- **Create Safety:** Circle is a small, supportive, non-judgmental space for sharing experiences and concerns.
- **Learn Together:** Parents learn from each other, share practical ideas, and stay informed about tech and online safety trends.
- **Solution-Focused:** Circle is a space focused on building on strengths, shifting conversations on what works well, keeping up to date with latest tech trends, and using these resources to better support your children.

HOW TO START AND SUSTAIN CAREGIVER CIRCLES

These steps are designed to help you start small, build confidence, and gradually hand over responsibility to parents so that the group becomes self-sustained.

The process works best when it's simple, flexible, and community-owned. You don't need a perfect setup — what matters is consistency, participation, and trust. Your role as facilitator is to guide, model, and mentor — not to lead forever, but to empower others to lead.



Step 1: Organize the Group - Building a group that lasts

- **Organize Core Group and Schedule:** Form a committed core group of 2 to 3 parents which will lead and decide on a regular meeting schedule.
- **Recruit Group Members:** Put together a manageable group size (7 to 10 parent participants per group). You can form several groups if possible and/or needed at an early stage. However, it is recommended that you focus on one group and replicate as you see progress.
- **Be Mindful of Logistics:** Settle on a consistent time, day, and location that works for everyone.
- **Decide on Venue:** The location should be accessible for all participants. Keep in mind the necessary requirements for them to be able to participate (i.e., transportation, time, family obligations, and other responsibilities)

Step 2: Be a Model Facilitator

Using the handout given, it should help you conduct engaging circles.

- **Clarify Circle Objectives:** Using Tool 1: Group Agreements and Ground Rules, be clear about the objectives of the circle that is sharing experiences, learning from each other, and finding solutions to support their children's wellbeing. Circles should encourage parents to share experiences with their teens, practical tips they have learnt or updates on new technologies their children are using, and simple online safety strategies.
- **Structuring the Session:** Using Tool 2: Sample Session Guide, in the handout, this will help you set up a clear agenda for a constructive caregiver circle discussion.
- **Enhancing Engagement:** Using Tool 3: Facilitation Tips, in the handout, use the facilitation tips to support active listening, ask solution-focused questions, and maintain a respectful, safe space.
 - **Facilitate Sharing and Guidance:** As you facilitate, explain your process. For example, say: "I'm making sure everyone gets a chance to speak because all voices matter."

- **Maintain Supportive Environment:** Keep discussions safe, open, and non-judgmental; celebrate small successes to motivate other parents and encourage them to come back and stay connected with the circle.

- **Closing the session:** Using Tool 4: Closing Activities Suggestions will help you close the discussion and create excitement for the next session.

Step 3: Gradually Hand Over Tasks - Guide the group to run itself

- **Delegate Small Tasks:** Once the group has developed rhythm, start assigning small tasks. Ask a different person each week to handle a part of the meeting, such as:
 - Reading the ground rules and agreements at the beginning of the session
 - Leading group check-in and icebreaker
 - Taking a moment to celebrate a success at the end of the session
- **Introduce Facilitator Roles:** Over time you can introduce more formal roles for each meeting. This could include a timekeeper, a note-taker, or a "question-asker" who is responsible for one of the solution-focused questions.
- **Coach and Provide Feedback:** After each meeting, meet briefly with the group members who took on a role. Offer positive feedback and constructive suggestions. For example:
 - "I really liked how you made sure everyone shared. Next time, maybe you could try asking "What's one thing that helped?"

MONITORING & EVALUATION

Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning — or MEAL — are essential to understanding whether our collective efforts are creating meaningful change. Within this Toolkit, MEAL is not only about tracking activities or counting participants — it is about learning.

The goal is to understand:

- Are families and communities becoming more aware of online risks?
- Are they adopting safer, more supportive behaviours?
- Are our facilitators and approaches effectively building trust and participation?

By measuring what works and where challenges remain, organizations can continuously adapt their approach, strengthen accountability to the communities they serve, and ensure that every session contributes to safer, more informed environments for children.

MEAL also helps reinforce one of the Toolkit's core principles: Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) is a process, not a single event. Change takes time, trust, and iteration — and effective monitoring allows us to see progress, celebrate small wins, and make evidence-based improvements along the way.

MONITORING VS. EVALUATION

Both monitoring and evaluation are essential for ensuring that this Toolkit achieves its purpose — protecting children online through informed, community-based action. They work together but serve different functions:

<p>Monitoring = Tracking progress in real time</p> <p>Are activities on track? What's working today?</p>	<p>Evaluation = Understanding impact over time</p> <p>What changed? What difference did it make?</p>
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Monitoring is the process of tracking activities and progress in real time. It helps you answer:

- Are sessions being delivered as planned?
- Are participants attending and engaging?
- Are facilitators following the correct procedures (e.g., managing disclosures safely, using the tools appropriately)?

Monitoring provides immediate feedback that allows you to adjust course quickly — for example, changing session timing, revising examples that don't resonate, or providing extra facilitator support.

Evaluation, on the other hand, looks at impact and outcomes over time. It helps you understand:

- What changed because of these activities?
- Are caregivers more confident discussing online safety?
- Are children showing safer online behaviours?
- Has trust in local protection services improved?

Evaluation gives a bigger-picture view of effectiveness — showing what worked, what didn't, and how to strengthen future programming.

Together, monitoring and evaluation help transform short-term activities into long-term behaviour change — ensuring the Toolkit continues to meet community needs and improve protection outcomes.

CONNECTING ACTIVITIES TO CHANGE

Each part of your work contributes to a larger goal. Understanding the difference between activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact helps you see how day-to-day actions lead to long-term protection for children.



- **Activities** – These are the specific actions you take, such as delivering caregiver sessions, facilitating youth discussions, or distributing materials.

Think: What are we doing?

- **Outputs** – The immediate, tangible results of your activities — the products, services, or participation that can be directly counted.

Example: Number of sessions held, number of parents trained, number of children reached.

Think: Quantity — what was produced or delivered?

- **Outcomes** – The changes that occur because of your outputs. These reflect what's different for the people involved — such as new knowledge, skills, confidence, or safer online behaviours.

Example: Parents feel more confident talking about online safety; children report fewer unsafe interactions online.

Think: Quality — what changed for participants?

- **Impact** – The wider, long-term change that happens when many people and organizations work together.

Example: Communities that are more aware, resilient, and protective of children online.

Think: Mission — how did this contribute to a safer environment for all children?

Remember: Monitoring helps you track activities and outputs, while evaluation helps you understand outcomes and impact. Together, they show how your work with this Toolkit contributes to lasting, systemic change.



ACTIVITY:

Identifying and Measuring Change

This activity helps participants translate the logic of “Activities → Outputs → Outcomes → Impact” into a simple, usable tool for their projects or community sessions.

By building this tool together, facilitators and partners can clearly see how their daily actions link to the broader goal of keeping children safe online — and design ways to measure what matters most.

Purpose: To help NGOs identify each level of change (output, outcome, impact) and co-design a simple monitoring tool that fits their program and context.

Step 1: Start with the Goal (Impact)

Ask:

- What is the ultimate change we want to see in our community because of this toolkit?
- How will children and families be safer or more empowered?

Example: “Families communicate openly about online safety, reducing children’s risk of online exploitation.”

Step 2: Identify Outcomes

Ask:

- What changes in knowledge, attitudes, or behaviour do we expect to see in participants?
- What will they be able to do or think differently after the sessions?

Example: “Parents talk with their children about online safety.” “Young people can identify unsafe online situations and ask for help.”

Step 3: Identify Outputs**Ask:**

- What are we directly doing or producing that will lead to those outcomes?
- What can we count or document easily?

Example: “10 caregiver sessions delivered.” “80 children participated in the online safety activity.” “50 parents received follow-up safety handouts.”

Step 4: Design a Simple Measurement Tool


Together, use a flipchart or template to design a basic Output and Outcome Monitoring Table, such as:

WHAT TO MEASURE	LEVEL (OUTPUT/ OUTCOME)	HOW TO MEASURE IT	WHO COLLECTS THE DATA	WHEN
# of caregiver sessions conducted	Output	Session reports	Facilitator	After each session
Parents report increased confidence discussing online safety	Outcome	Post-session reflection cards	M&E officer	End of cycle

Keep the tool simple, specific, and realistic, using questions or indicators that can be observed, discussed, or recorded easily.

Measurement Suggestions:

- Surveys: Pre- and post-intervention surveys to measure changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors.
- Focus Groups/Interviews: Qualitative data to understand the how and why of change.
- Observations: Directly observing changes in behavior.
- Tracking Data: Collecting data related to the subject (e.g., increased number of victims reporting).

 **NOTE**

Collecting and documenting Informed Consent is critical for MEAL, communications and media, and compliance. Consent is the foundation of ethical programming and can be obtained in myriad ways depending on the context and audience. However, flexibility in collection does not mean flexibility in explanation or documentation. Regardless of how consent is gathered, NGOs must ensure it is free, reversible, informed, enthusiastic, and Specific, while maintaining rigorous records to satisfy MEAL indicators, reporting obligations, and legal compliance. Proper documentation serves as proof of accountability to beneficiaries and demonstrates the organization's commitment to best practice during audits. Ensure that every instance of consent is recorded in a secure, retrievable format that meets your organization's data protection policies and above all prioritizes the safety, security, and dignity of your participants.

FACILITATOR STANDARDS FOR EFFECTIVE DELIVERY

This section outlines the professional expectations for anyone delivering Connected Safely. Effective facilitation is built on who you are, what you know, and how you prepare.

To help you master this balance, we have put together the following sections:

- **Facilitator Competency Standards** to define the characteristics of an effective facilitator;
- **Know Your Content** to ensure that you have practical mastery of the toolkit content; and
- **Facilitator Readiness Checklist** and **Cheat Sheet** to manage mental and logistical preparations, and ensure that every session runs smoothly.

FACILITATOR COMPETENCY STANDARDS

The following standards define the behavioral expectations for lead facilitators. Use these to guide your professional growth and ensure consistent, high-standard delivery of Connected Safely.

Before defining the good, let's start with identifying what an **ineffective facilitator** is. Recall a time you were in a workshop or community session that felt unproductive or uncomfortable. What was the facilitator doing (or not doing) that caused that?

Ineffective facilitators are often those who dominate the conversation, ignore quiet participants, take sides, or arrive unprepared, among other things. When we talk about ineffective facilitation, especially in community-based context, we are not just describing someone who is "boring". We are describing someone who, perhaps unintentionally, acts as a barrier to the group's progress rather than a bridge to meaning-making.

If a facilitator dominates the conversation, they likely ignore participant input and stick rigidly to their script even when the room is confused. When they take sides in debate, judge wrong answers, or use jargon, participants will stop sharing their honest experiences. Finally coming unprepared, impacts the quality of the entire experience making the session feel like a waste of time.

So who is an effective facilitator? An **effective facilitator** is more than just a presenter - **they are a bridge between the content and the audience**. They balance technical expertise with deep human empathy to ensure the Toolkit's goals are met safely and inclusively.

Some of their qualities are:

- **Self-awareness and neutrality** or their ability to manage personal bias and remain a neutral guide even when participants disagree with them or some concepts discussed.
- **Active and compassionate listening** or their ability to listen not just with spoken words but more importantly the intent and emotions behind them.
- **Observation skills** or being able to read the room and non-verbal cues, and adjust the session or approach in real-time.
- **Adaptive communication** allows them to explain complex concepts with clarity and accessibility, especially for low-literacy cohorts.
- **Presence** or the use of physical movement, and appropriate tone of voice allows them to encourage participation and manage the room's energy.
- **Cultural humility and safety** keeps them respectful of cultural norms and creates a "Do No Harm" environment.
- **Objective-focused** or their ability to keep the group aligned with the core messages and goals of the session.

KNOW YOUR CONTENT

The success of Connected Safely depends on how well facilitators understand, internalize, and deliver it. Knowing your content is more than reading the materials — it means being able to communicate key messages confidently, adapt them to your audience, and model the values of safety, respect, and inclusion that Connected Safely promotes.

When you know your content well, you can:

- Deliver messages naturally and confidently, without reading word-for-word.
- Recognize which examples or activities may need adaptation for your audience.
- Anticipate sensitive reactions and respond calmly and consistently.
- Reinforce the central purpose of every activity: to keep children safe online while strengthening families and communities.

Why Knowing Your Content Matters in Social and Behavior Change

Facilitators are the bridge between the Toolkit and the community, you translate technical content into real-life meaning. Social and Behaviour Change is not about repeating sentences from slides. It is about influencing beliefs, norms, and decisions. To do that, you must understand the purpose of each activity. Your confidence reassures them that the information is accurate and important.

Preparation Prevents Misinformation and Harm

These sessions deal with sensitive topics. If you are unclear about definitions, referral steps, or boundaries, you risk spreading incorrect information or mishandling disclosures. Preparation means:

- Reviewing definitions before the session
- Knowing the referral pathway clearly
- Anticipating difficult questions
- Practicing explanations in simple language

Core Messages & Concept Clarity

- **Online risks are real and increasing:** Participants may underestimate risks, especially in close-knit communities. Your role is not to create fear, but awareness.
- **Responsibility lies with perpetrators, not children:** Victim-blaming beliefs may emerge during discussions. Facilitators must confidently redirect harmful statements.
- **Communication protects children:** Many sessions revealed breakdowns in family communication. Facilitators must reinforce that open dialogue reduces risk.
- **Think first, then choose what to do**
The goal is not to stop children from using the internet but to strengthen decision-making.
- **Seeking help is strength:** Help-seeking may be perceived as weakness or bringing shame.

Adapting Without Losing the Message

- **Adapting for literacy levels:** If caregivers struggle with written materials, shift to verbal storytelling or demonstrations.
- **Adapting for cultural sensitivity:** Role-plays or discussions may feel uncomfortable. Adjust the method while keeping the learning objective.
- **Adapting for time constraints:** If sessions must be shortened, prioritize core messages and interactive components that reinforce behavior change.
- **Maintaining Core Principles:** Even when adapting, you must:
 - Avoid misinformation
 - Maintain safeguarding standards
 - Follow official referral procedures

This activity helps you practice, personalize, and prepare — so you feel ready to guide discussions, manage sensitivities, and ensure the sessions have real impact.



ACTIVITY: It's Your Turn to Facilitate!

Step 1: Review the Materials

- Read each session guide, handout, and activity carefully.
- Identify the core message of each material. Ask yourself: If participants remember one thing from this tool, what should it be?
- Note the facilitation techniques and activities (e.g. role-play).

Step 2: Practice Delivering

- Choose one handout or activity. Imagine you are delivering it to a group of parents or adolescents.
- Speak out loud as if you are introducing it — practice the opening sentences, instructions, and wrap-up message.
- If possible, practice with a colleague or friend who can play the role of a participant.

Step 3: Adapt for Your Context

- Ask yourself: What might make this material difficult for participants in my community? (e.g., literacy level, cultural sensitivities, language).
- Write down at least one adaptation that would make it more relatable and accessible.

Step 4: Anticipate Questions and Challenges

- Think of 2–3 tough questions or reactions you might get (e.g., “This doesn’t happen in our community,” “My child doesn’t need this,” “Talking about online safety will only give kids bad ideas”).
- Practice short, calm, and clear responses.

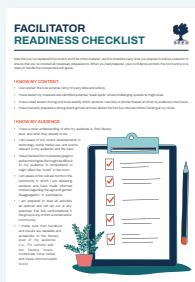
Step 5: Reflection Questions (to check readiness)

- Can I explain the purpose of each material in one sentence?
- Do I feel confident introducing at least one handout/activity without reading directly from the guide?
- Can I adapt an example in the material to fit my own community context?

Step 6: Use the Facilitator Readiness Checklist

- Use the checklist every time you prepare to deliver a session to:
 - Mentally prepare yourself and have a sense of control and confidence, and
 - Ensure that every cohort receives consistent knowledge and experience.

Facilitator Handout 6: Facilitator Readiness Checklist



Facilitator Handout 7: Facilitator Cheat Sheet



GROUP AGREEMENTS AND GROUND RULES

To get started, we recommend facilitating a group agreement and setting some ground rules at the beginning of every session. A suggested format is provided in this section to help guide you.

Objective: To be delivered on the first meeting to create a shared set of values and behaviors that will help everyone feel safe, respected, and engaged throughout the sessions

Duration: 10 minutes

Methodology: Large group activity

Materials Needed: Flipchart or large poster paper, markers, sticky notes (optional)

Steps:

Say: “Before we begin our sessions, let’s create a group agreement together. This is a list of behaviors we all agree to follow, to make sure everyone feels safe, heard, and respected. This is our agreement, and everyone has a say in it.”

Ask:

“What do we need from each other to feel safe and comfortable in this group?”

“What helps you learn and participate well in a group setting?”

Write down answers on a flipchart. Add suggestions if needed.

Common examples:

Respect each other’s opinions

One person speaks at a time

Keep what’s shared in the group confidential

Be open-minded and non-judgmental

Ask questions — there are no wrong questions

Be on time and participate fully

Listen actively

No phones or side conversations during activities

Go through the list with the group, and reorganize them to come up with Ground Rules (see Suggested Ground Rules)

Ask if everyone agrees or wants to change or add anything.

Make sure everyone understands the meaning of each point.

Once finalized, say: “This is our group agreement. We all commit to following it and helping each other respect it.”

Option: Ask for verbal agreement or a group gesture (thumbs up, nod, etc.). Display the Agreement. Keep it visible in the room for future sessions (on a wall, flipchart, or printed out).

Suggested Ground Rules

The rules below are suggestions that can be added or taken out as the group takes shape during the group agreement session. Group rules should be collaboratively formed and agreed by all group members in the first meeting.

GROUND RULES

These rules create a safe and respectful environment. As a facilitator of the circle, you will explain the purpose of each rule and have a different group member read them out at the start of each session. Teach the group to not only recite them but also to understand why each is important for their children's wellbeing.

Confidentiality	What is said here, stays here. We create a trust circle where everyone feels safe to share without fear of judgement. No one should feel that they are betraying themselves, their children, and their families by sharing the struggles they have inside the home and in the community.
Focus on Strengths and Solutions	We acknowledge the challenges of screen time but our main goal is to find solutions. We will share what works in our families to manage devices and protect our children.
Respectful Listening	Listen with an open mind to understand. We are here to support not to fix or judge. Everyone's experience is valid. We won't judge a family's screen time or device usage rules. Instead, we will ask "What is the positive intention behind those rules?" to create a supportive environment.
"I" Statement	Speak from your own perspective and experience. Instead of saying, "Mothers are always so tired," you can say, "I feel so tired a lot of the time", and instead of "All kids are at risk from having online friends", you can say "I feel concerned about my child's online friends".
Share the Space	Be mindful of how much you are talking. Ensure everyone has a chance to contribute if they wish to, especially when they have a relevant solution or success story about managing their children's devices. We'll ask "What did you do that helped?"
No Unsolicited Advice	This rule is crucial for digital safety. Instead of saying "You should just take away their phone", we'll ask, "What is one small step you've already tried to address this?" and focus on building on that effort.

Facilitator Handout 4: Checklist for Inclusive Community Participation!

FACILITATOR HANDOUT 4

CHECKLIST FOR INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

CHECKLIST FOR INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The purpose of this checklist is to guide facilitators in preparing activities, FGDs, or consultations that are accessible, respectful, and representative of the entire community.

Planning and Logistics
<p>Venue Selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location (Is the venue centrally located, well-known, considered neutral and safe by all community groups?) Physical Accessibility (Is it accessible for people with disabilities, the elderly, parents with strollers) Cultural Appropriateness (Is the space culturally and religiously appropriate for everyone you are inviting?)
<p>Timing and Scheduling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time of Day (Does the time conflict with common work schedules and/or other obligations - farming, market hours, household duties, daily prayers? Have you consulted community members on the best time?) Duration (Is the session reasonable and respectful of attendees' time?)
<p>Financial and Practical Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation (Have you offered to cover transportation costs or arranged for group transport for those living far away?) Compensation for Cost (For 10 daily wage earners, have you considered offering a small, culturally appropriate stipend to compensate for lost income?) Children (Is there a designated, safe space with a trusted caregiver for children so that parents, especially mothers, can participate fully and without distraction?) Refreshments (Will food and drinks be provided? This shows respect and is often a cultural expectation.)
<p>Invitation and Representation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach methods (Are you using multiple channels to invite people - community leaders, radio, posters, direct outreach - to ensure the message reaches everyone?) Targeted invitations (Have you personally reached out to leaders of marginalized or underserved groups to ensure they feel welcome and know their voice is valued?) Community mapping (Have you confirmed that your invitation list reflects the community's diversity - age, gender, ethnicity, economic status, etc.)



Facilitator Handout 5: Message Builder Tool!

FACILITATOR HANDOUT 5

MESSAGE BUILDER TOOL

MESSAGE BUILDER TOOL

Use this tool to structure your thinking in developing the message you want to deliver.

Component	Guide Question	Message for Parents of Young Teens	Message for Adolescents
Target audience	Who are we talking to? (Be as specific as possible)	Parents/Caregivers of children aged 13 to 17 who have access to smartphones.	Adolescents (13-17) who are active on social media and gaming platforms.
Core/key message	If the audience will remember one thing, what should that be? (Keep it under 10 words)	Your guidance matters - online and off.	Trust your gut. If it feels wrong, it is.
Key supporting information	What are 2-3 essential facts they need to know to understand the message?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Strangers can easily pretend to be kids online. Clipboard chat has things if they feel uncertain. Knowing that online friends is as important as knowing their real-life friends. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> People can lie about who they are online. Blocking and reporting someone is a way to protect yourself. Asking for help is a smart move, not a sign of weakness.
Tone of voice	How should this message feel to the audience?	Supportive, reassuring, and empowering. Not accusatory or blaming.	Direct, non-judgmental, empowering.
Desired behavior change	What is the single, specific action you want them to take after receiving this message?	Once a week, have a casual conversation with your child about who they are talking to and what they are doing online.	Immediately block and/or report anyone who makes you feel uncomfortable or scared online.
Motivation	Why should they do this? How does it connect to their interest?	Because you are your child's most trusted protector. Showing interest builds trust that will make them come to you when they are in trouble.	Because your online space is your space. You have the right to feel safe and respected in your space. Real friends don't pressure or threaten you.



Facilitator Handout 6: Facilitator Readiness Checklist

FACILITATOR READINESS CHECKLIST

Now that you've mastered the content and flow of the material, use this checklist every time you prepare to deliver a session to ensure that you've covered all necessary preparations. When you feel prepared, your confidence anchors the room and you're ready to handle the unexpected with grace.

I KNOW MY CONTENT.

- I can explain the core purpose (why) of every slide and activity.
- I have tested my materials and identified potential "weak spots" where challenging questions might arise.
- I have noted session timing and know exactly which sections can skip or shorten based on what my audience must know.
- I have mentally prepared a strong opening hook and can deliver the first five minutes without looking at my notes.

I KNOW MY AUDIENCE.

- I have a clear understanding of who my audience is, their literacy level, and what they already know.
- I am aware of any recent developments in technology, social media use, and events relevant to my audience and the topic.
- I have checked for unnecessary jargon and terminology that might be difficult for my audience to comprehend or might affect the "mood" in the room.
- I am aware of the cultural norms in the community in which I am delivering sessions and have made informed choices regarding the age and gender disaggregation of participants.
- I am prepared to treat all activities as optional and will opt out of any exercises that feel uncomfortable if the group is shy or from a conservative community.
- I made sure that handouts and visuals are readable and accessible to the literacy level of my audience (i.e., for partners with low literacy levels, incorporate more verbal and visual communication tools).



FACILITATOR CHEAT SHEET

In this section you will find the seven core competencies discussed earlier in this section, alongside guiding questions to help you reflect on your practice. Each core competency includes practical tips and suggested approaches to help you prepare and become a more effective and responsive facilitator.

Core Competency	Ask Yourself	Tips for Effective Facilitation
Self-awareness and humility	How do I react when a participant says something controversial or disagrees with me?	Instead of reacting, seek their input to understand why they disagree and use that information as a valuable learning moment for the whole group. Do not take it personally.
Active and Compassionate Listening	What is the participant actually trying to say?	Listen between the lines to address the underlying feeling and ensure that participants feel understood rather than just "heard". Follow the 10-second rule: After asking a question, wait at least 10 seconds before speaking again. Give participants the time they need to process the thought and find the courage to speak.
Observation Skills	Is the room still with me?	Watch for boredom, confusion, or tension. If the energy dips, be prepared to change the pace or take a break before using the group's focus.
Active Communication	How do I explain this without using a single "either/or"?	Use metaphors, visuals, and simple language. Be clear and accessible without being patronizing. Follow the 80/20 rule by ensuring that you talk no more than 20% of the time. If you understand this, you are reaching. The other 80% should belong to the participants' voices, activities, and discussions.
Presence	Am I pinned behind my laptop or podium? Do I sound monotonous?	Move among the people. Your physical presence should act as a tool to draw people in and maintain a dynamic atmosphere. Practice your tone of voice to keep the participants engaged.
Cultural Humility and Safety	Is this activity safe for this specific community?	Always prioritize the group's emotional safety. Be prepared to skip activities that may feel too confrontational for conservative or shy cohorts.
Objective-Focused	Is this discussion helping us reach our goal?	Gently move participants away from rabbit holes and back to the objectives without being disrespectful to the person speaking. If a participant goes off-track, use Validate and Redirect technique - acknowledge their contribution first (see why that's important), and then redirect them back to the goal. Let's park that on our list for now so we don't lose it when we focus on the specific activity) without being disrespectful.

Facilitator Handout 7: Facilitator Cheat Sheet





Scan QR for Slides



CHAPTER

TOOLKIT SESSION GUIDE FOR CAREGIVER SESSIONS

This guide is designed to compliment the session slides with additional information to equip and support facilitators to deliver the most engaging and impactful sessions. Each slide section involves the aim of the slide, the facilitator script, and notes to the facilitator.





LENGTH OF SESSION

- **Section A:** Digital Basics (40-minutes)
- **Section B:** How to Build Trust and Communications (45-minutes)
- **Section C:** How to Respond to Online Violence (30-minutes)
- **Section D:** Ensuring Sustainable Change: Establishing Caregiver Circles (30-minutes)



AUDIENCE SIZE

- 15 to 20 parents



MATERIALS NEEDED FOR THESE SESSIONS

- Slides
- Projector and screen
- Attendance and consent form for parent to sign for themselves and their child
- Printed copies of resources for participants (see Section E)



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

It is recommended to deliver Section A and B on one day, and Section C and D on another, to complement the structure of the -2part structure of the children's sessions.

SECTION A

DIGITAL BASICS FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS **46**

Content Breakdown from Slides 46

SECTION B

HOW TO BUILD TRUST AND COMMUNICATION **54**

Content Breakdown from Slides 54

SECTION C

HOW TO RESPOND TO ONLINE VIOLENCE **62**

Content Breakdown from Slides 62

SECTION D

ENSURING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE: ESTABLISHING CAREGIVER CIRCLES **71**

Content Breakdown from Slides 71

SECTION E

RESOURCES **76**

SECTION A

DIGITAL BASICS FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS



OBJECTIVES

- What is TF-CSEA? (Types, risks and impact i.e. honor violence, with particular emphasis on the differing impacts for boys and girls)
- Understanding platforms popular with Kurdish adolescents

CONTENT BREAKDOWN FROM SLIDES



Slide 3: Ground Rules



AIM

To establish a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment where all participants feel comfortable sharing their experiences. This collaborative process ensures that everyone understands the ground rules for interaction, fostering trust and active participation throughout the session.



MATERIALS NEEDED

Flipchart and Pens



ASK (OPTIONAL)

- What do we need from each other to feel safe and comfortable in this group?
- What helps you learn and participate well in a group setting?

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 8

GROUND RULES

RULES

1. What do we need from each other to feel safe and comfortable in this group?
2. What helps you learn and participate well in a group setting?



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Before we begin our sessions, let's create a group agreement together. This is a list of behaviors we all agree to follow, to make sure everyone feels safe, heard, and respected. This is our agreement, and everyone has a say in it.

**Write down answers on a flipchart.
Add suggestions if needed.**

Examples:

- Respect each other's opinions
- One person speaks at a time
- Keep what's shared in the group confidential
- Be open-minded and non-judgmental
- Ask questions — there are no wrong questions
- Be on time and participate fully
- Listen actively
- No phones or side conversations during activities



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Emphasize that these are our rules, not just the trainer's rules, to build a sense of shared ownership.
- If parents hesitate to speak up, gently prompt them by reading the examples and asking, «Does anyone else feel this is important?»
- Ensure «Confidentiality» is highlighted, as parents may be sharing sensitive family situations.
- If a suggestion is raised that contradicts safety (e.g., «We can judge others»), gently guide the group to rephrase it positively (e.g., «We will listen without judging»).
- Once agreed upon, briefly recap the final list and ask for a verbal confirmation (e.g., «Do we all agree to these?»).



Slide 5: Icebreaker - Most Used Apps by Adolescents in Kurdistan




AIM

To engage participants from the start and encourage them to reflect on their children's digital habits. This activity helps reveal how familiar (or unfamiliar) parents are with the platforms their children are using. It also highlights that online activity is broad, covering games, messaging, and social media.

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 5

MOST USED APPS BY ADOLESCENTS IN KURDISTAN

<p>SOCIAL MEDIA</p> 	<p>MESSAGING APPS</p> 
<p>ONLINE GAMES</p> 	<p>VIDEOS OR STREAMING</p> 



FACILITATOR TO SAY

To start, we want to do a quick icebreaker to understand what apps your children are using. Here are some examples of the most commonly used apps by children in Kurdistan. As I read each one, please raise your hand if your child uses it:

- **Social media:** TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat.
- **Messaging apps:** WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook Messenger, and Viber.
- **Online games:** PUBG, Fortnite, and Roblox.
- **Videos or streaming:** YouTube, TikTok Live, and Twitch.
- Any others?



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Keep the mood light and non-judgmental.
- Remind parents these are examples, not the full list. For example, some children may also watch videos on Facebook or play other mobile or computer games.
- Accept answers if parents name other apps.
- Avoid making them feel “out of touch”. Remind parents that new platforms and applications are launching everyday.



Slide 6: Opportunities and Risks



AIM

Help caregivers understand that the internet provides both opportunities and risks for children, recognize common areas of benefit and harm, and encourage balanced guidance — supporting safe use rather than total restriction.

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 6

INTERNET AND THE DIGITAL WORLD IS LIKE A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD WHEN IT COMES TO CHILDREN.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Access to information/ Education
- Creative expression
- Play and socialize

RISKS

- Exposure to violent, sexual, or inappropriate content
- Engage in violence, hate, or creation and distribution of violent, sexual, or inappropriate content
- Learn, engage or be exposed to gambling, fraud, scams, identity theft
- Using someone else's phone can expose your messages or account



FACILITATOR TO SAY

The internet and digital world are like a double-edged sword — they bring both positive and negative sides for our children.

On one hand, there are amazing opportunities:

- Children can learn new things, access information, and express their creativity.
- They can connect with friends, play games, and develop skills that help them in school and life.

But on the other hand, there are also risks we need to be aware of:

- They can be exposed to violent, sexual, or harmful content — even by accident.
- Some children are pressured to share private photos or join unsafe challenges.
- They may face scams, online fraud, or identity theft, especially when using new apps or games.
- Risks are not just from strangers but also from device sharing. Children may not control privacy settings when they use shared devices. Parents often unknowingly expose children (e.g., logged-in accounts, shared phones).

Our goal as caregivers isn't to stop children from being online — it's to help them use the internet safely and wisely. When we understand both sides, we can guide them better.



ASK: (OPTIONAL)

“What are some good things your child has learned or done online?”

“What are some things that worry you about their online use?”

Write their answers under two headings — Opportunities and Risks — to personalize the discussion.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Avoid blame. Remind parents that even careful children can come across inappropriate content — this is about guidance, not guilt.
- Emphasize family connection as the best protection — knowing what children do online, asking open questions, and showing interest.
- Reinforce that caregivers are role models — children copy adult behaviour online too.



Slide 7: Background of TF-CSEA



AIM

To explain that online violence includes serious risks like sexual exploitation and abuse. Parents need to understand that while technology is the tool, the abuse is real, with offline consequences. Raising awareness is the first step toward prevention and support.

CONNECTED SAFELY

CAREGIVER AWARENESS

7

**CHILDREN ARE MORE AT RISK
BECAUSE THEY MAY NOT
KNOW ALL THE DANGERS OR
HOW TO STAY SAFE.**



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Online violence happens when someone uses the internet, phones, social media, or games to hurt, scare, or abuse someone. Children are more at risk because they may not know all the dangers or how to stay safe. One of the most serious types of online harm is online child sexual exploitation and abuse. This happens when offenders use the internet, phones, social media, or messaging apps to exploit or harm children sexually. Technology is the tool, but the abuse is real and has severe offline consequences.

By understanding these risks, we can protect our children and help them use the internet safely.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Emphasize children are never at fault, even if they share sexual content.
- Remind parents it is illegal in Kurdistan for anyone to share sexual or illicit images of another child.
- Focus on awareness, not shock or graphic detail.



Slide 8: Types of TF-CSEA



AIM

To introduce the main forms of TF-CSEA. Parents learn how offenders manipulate trust, control, or fear to exploit children online. Understanding these risks equips parents to recognize warning signs and respond effectively.

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 8

TYPES OF TF-CSEA

- **Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)**
- **Grooming**
- **Sexual Extortion**
- **Live-Streaming of Abuse**
- **Self-Generated Content**



FACILITATOR TO SAY

1. **Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM):** Photos, videos, or drawings showing children in sexual situations. Illegal to produce, share, keep or intentionally watch.
2. **Grooming:** When someone builds trust with a child online (pretending to be a friend, peer, or benefactor) to persuade them into sexual activity in real life.
3. **Sexual Extortion:** Blackmailing children with private or sexual images, obtained through different means or generated, to get more images, money, or control.
4. **Live-Streaming of Abuse:** Sexual abuse of children broadcast live online, often involving direct instructions by paying viewers.
5. **Self-Generated Content:** Children pressured or manipulated into taking sexual photos or videos of themselves.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Explain terms clearly and simply.
- Emphasize that these tactics are common and can affect any child.
- Encourage parents to have open, age-appropriate conversations with their children.

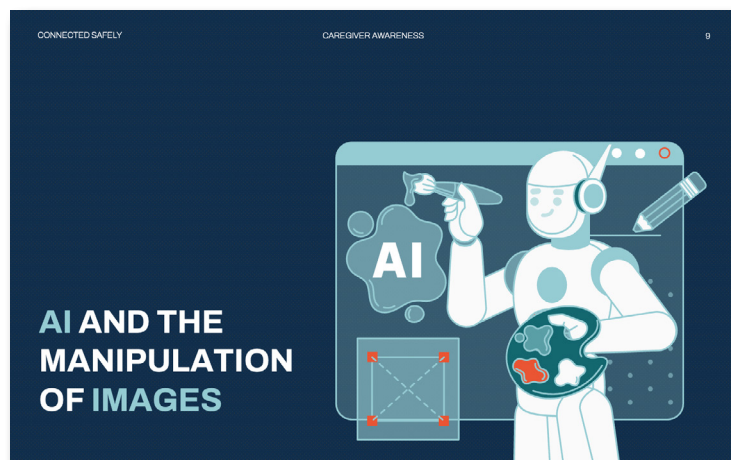


Slide 9: AI and the Manipulation of Images



AIM

To raise awareness about how AI can be used to create fake but realistic sexualized images of children. Parents should understand that children can be harmed even if they never shared explicit content. The focus is on staying calm, protecting the child, and seeking help from trusted authorities.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Let's start by understanding what we mean by <AI> in this context. Simply put, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is technology that allows computers to learn from data and create or alter images and videos so realistically that it is often impossible to tell they are fake.

AI technology is a seriously growing risk where people can create fake photos and videos that look very real. Sadly, these are often used to shame or blackmail children.

For example: A child posts an inoffensive photo online. Later, someone edits the image using AI to make it look sexualized or private and threatens to share it publicly. In some cases, manipulated images are shared to blackmail the child or coerce them into unsafe situations. These images are completely fake.

Your child is never at fault. The harm comes from the manipulator, not your child. AI-manipulated images can deceive families or communities, sometimes leading to serious risks for the child. It's critical to respond calmly, protect your child, and engage the right authorities.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Use simple language:** "fake images that look real."
- Stress that the abuse comes from the manipulator, not the child.
- Emphasize the importance of calm responses and involving trusted organizations.
- Highlight the potential for community or family misinterpretation and the need to manage it carefully.



Slide 10: Supporting Children in the Online World



AIM

To highlight that being online is part of modern childhood and cannot be avoided. The focus is on helping parents shift from restriction to guidance, and encouraging them to teach their children to think critically about their online behavior. This section emphasizes that trust and communication are the most effective tools for protection.

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 10

SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN THE ONLINE WORLD

Parents and caregivers are the first line of defence against online violence.



**BEING ONLINE
IS PART OF
EVERYDAY LIFE**



**RISKS CAN
AFFECT ANY
CHILD**



**SAFETY IS
MORE THAN
PHYSICAL**



**PARENTS
CAN
GUIDE**



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Parents and caregivers are the first line of defence against online violence.

Online risks are everywhere and can impact any child, not just through physical harm. Our role today is to provide technical guidance so you can help your children stay safe emotionally, socially, and digitally, while respecting their independence.

Supporting Children in the Online World is important because:

1. **Being online is part of everyday life:** Children spend hours learning, playing, and connecting online. Digital spaces are integral to their social and educational development. Being online is not something to punish or restrict entirely.
2. **Risks can affect any child:** Harassment, bullying, and exploitation can happen to any child, regardless of age or background. Even children who seem “tech-savvy” are vulnerable. Vigilance and guidance are necessary for all children.
3. **Safety is more than physical:** Emotional and social well-being is as equally important as protecting them from harm. Online threats can affect self-esteem, relationships, and mental health.
4. **Parents can guide:** Show interest in your children’s online life to support them if needed and keep yourselves informed of the technology they use. Recognize signs that something is wrong (changes in behavior, secrecy, withdrawal). It is important to foster trust and make children more likely to ask for help when needed.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Emphasize that safety is about emotional, social, and digital well-being, not just physical protection.
- Encourage parents to show interest, listen without judgment, and stay informed about the technology their children use.
- Stress that the goal is not to stop children from being online but to encourage a healthy relationship with technology and set appropriate boundaries.
- Remind parents that adapting to online risks is part of evolving parenting, just as they do for physical safety.



Slide 11: Risks and Impacts of TF-CSEA



AIM

To show the serious and long-lasting consequences of online abuse for children. Parents should understand that harm can be emotional, psychological, and social, not just physical. Differences in the stigma and consequences experienced by boys and girls make supportive parenting especially important.

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 11

RISKS AND IMPACTS OF TF-CSEA

- Psychological Harm
- Re-victimization
- Offline Risks
- Academic Decline
- Break Down of Trust
- Social Isolation



FACILITATOR TO SAY

For Children

- **Psychological harm:** Shame, guilt, fear, depression, and trauma that can last into adulthood.
- **Re-victimization:** Once images or videos are shared, they can circulate online forever.
- **Offline risks:** Online grooming, extortion, and/or blackmail can escalate to physical abuse.
- **Academic Decline:** Children may feel stress, fear, and become distracted, leading to poor concentration, absenteeism, and a drop in school performance.
- **Break Down of Trust:** Children may lose trust in adults and peers after experiencing or witnessing exploitation, making it harder for them to seek help or form safe relationships.
- **Social Isolation:** Feelings of shame, guilt, or fear of judgment can cause children to withdraw from friends, family, and community activities.

Impacts Affecting Boys & Girls

- **Girls:** May face stronger stigma, victim-blaming, and higher risk of “honor-based” violence from family or community if their images are exposed.
- **Boys:** May experience silence and shame due to cultural expectations of masculinity, making disclosure more difficult. Boys are less likely to report abuse and may be told to “toughen up.”

Both boys and girls need your understanding and non-judgmental support, but the social consequences can differ greatly.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Keep the tone supportive and non-judgmental.
- Remind parents that both boys and girls can be victims.
- Highlight that images and videos can circulate online indefinitely, increasing risk of re-victimization.
- If time permits, ask parents which impacts worry them most to foster reflection and discussion.

SECTION B

HOW TO BUILD TRUST AND COMMUNICATION



OBJECTIVES

- Understand common signs that a child may be experiencing online risks.
- Know how to build trust and maintain open communication with children.
- Be able to create family agreements and safety plans that involve children.
- Understand specific challenges faced by boys and girls and tailored ways to respond.
- Setting up parental controls and safety features.

CONTENT BREAKDOWN FROM SLIDES



Slide 12: Trust and Communication



AIM

To show that trust is the foundation for children to share concerns about online risks. Parents learn why building a safe, reliable relationship encourages children to disclose problems early. This section introduces practical ways to create trust and open communication.



FACILITATOR TO ASK

How do you know your child trusts you?
(OPTIONAL)

Two-three adults to share (sadly there is not enough time to ask everyone)



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Trust isn't given; it's built over time by showing your child through your everyday actions that you are a safe and reliable person to go to. When a child faces online violence, going to a parent is the most effective way to take immediate action to stop the harm. It also allows the parent and child to work together to find solutions and prevent it from happening again. Therefore making sure your children know they can come to you is very important.

Now that we understand why online safety matters and that risks affect all children, we move to the tailored approaches that help children feel safe to share concerns and protect themselves. This section focuses on trust, communication, and practical strategies.

NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Emphasize that trust is built over time through consistent, supportive actions.
- Highlight that children are more likely to seek help from parents they trust.
- Keep language simple and relatable; avoid making parents feel judged.
- Introduce the transition to practical strategies for fostering trust and communication.



Slide 13: Collaborative Online Safety



AIM

To teach parents how to involve children in decisions about their online safety. This strengthens understanding, encourages compliance, and a sense of shared responsibility. Parents learn how to set boundaries, model safe behavior, and support balanced online activity.



MATERIALS NEEDED

Caregiver Handout 1: Parents Guide to Digital Well-being found in Section E.

Reminder: Handouts are optional; for communities with lower literacy, please prioritize verbal delivery and visual aids, adapting your materials accordingly.

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 13

COLLABORATIVE ONLINE SAFETY

- Involve Children in Decisions
- Set Digital Boundaries
- Use Technology Safely
- Explore & Learn Together
- Encourage Balance & Risk Awareness
- Cultivate Digital Wellbeing



FACILITATOR TO SAY

- 1. Involve Children in Decisions:** Collaborative agreements over rules. Children are safer and more likely to comply when they understand why, especially when talking with adolescents. Note: The conversation and rules should be adapted to the child's age and mental capacity.
- 2. Set Digital Boundaries:** Agree on apps, games, and screen times. Include privacy settings and responsible sharing.
- 3. Use Technology Safely:** Keep devices updated, enable privacy controls, recognize risky links or contacts.
- 4. Explore and Learn Together:** Explore apps, games, or online learning together. Model safe, respectful online behavior.
- 5. Encourage Balance & Risk Awareness:** Support responsible online exploration but with a safety mindset.
- 6. Cultivate Digital Well-being:** Knowledge alone isn't always enough. When children understand online risks but struggle with daily habits, parental support is vital. We have prepared a list of practical ways to build digital wellbeing through a supportive environment and a shared family mission.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Stress collaboration rather than strict rules — children feel safer when included in decisions.
- Remind parents to adapt conversations and rules to the child's age and understanding.
- Encourage parents to explore apps, games, and online learning together.
- Highlight the importance of promoting responsible online behavior while allowing safe exploration.



Slide 14: Tool: Collaborative Online Safety Agreement



AIM

To give parents a practical tool for creating shared agreements with their children on online safety. It encourages open communication, trust, and shared responsibility. The tool can evolve as children grow or apps change.



MATERIALS NEEDED

Caregiver Handout 2: Online Safety Agreement found in Section E.

Reminder: Handouts are optional; for communities with lower literacy, please prioritize verbal delivery and visual aids, adapting your materials accordingly.

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 14

TOOL: COLLABORATIVE ONLINE SAFETY AGREEMENT

How Parents Can Use This Tool

- Start the conversation
- Set mutual expectations
- Plan together
- Revisit regularly



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Online safety works best when parents and teens collaborate.

Why This Matters

- Children are safer and more likely to follow rules when involved in decisions.
- Shared responsibility encourages open communication and trust.

Agreements can evolve as children grow and apps change.

How Parents Can Use This Tool

- **Start the conversation:** Sit with your teen to discuss apps, games, screen time, and privacy.
- **Set mutual expectations:** Talk about safe behavior, responsible sharing, and respectful communication.
- **Plan together:** Agree on boundaries, reporting steps, and routines.
- **Revisit regularly:** Update the agreement as your teen matures or new apps/features appear.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Encourage parents to practice listening, validating feelings, and negotiating boundaries.
- Remind them that the goal is collaboration, not dictating rules.
- Suggest regular revisiting of agreements as children age and online risks evolve.
- **Role-play activity:** guide parents to simulate real conversations respectfully and safely.



ACTIVITY:

Role Play – Draft a Family Online Safety Agreement (OPTIONAL)

1. Pair up with another parent. One plays the parent, the other plays a teen.
2. Choose one online safety topic (e.g., screen time, sharing content, reporting harmful messages). Role play a conversation with your “teen” to fill in a hypothetical agreement:
 - a. Ask for the teen’s input on the topic
 - b. Explain your safety concern calmly
 - c. Negotiate a shared decision that respects safety and teen autonomy
 - d. Write down the agreement points as if this were a real family agreement
3. Swap roles and try a different topic.



Slide 15: Setting Up Parental Controls and Safety Features



AIM

To introduce parents to ways of using technology and tools to support safe online behavior. Parents learn to explore safety features with their children rather than imposing strict limits. This empowers children to understand and respect boundaries.



MATERIALS NEEDED

Caregiver Handout 3: Common Application Safety Features found in Section E.

Reminder: Handouts are optional; for communities with lower literacy, please prioritize verbal delivery and visual aids, adapting your materials accordingly.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

There are many ways to help your child stay safe online, but every child and household is different. Today, we won't go through every control, but we'll give you the tools to explore and set them up responsibly.

1. Social Media & Messaging Apps

- Ask parents:** "Which apps does your child use most?" Show examples of safety features (briefly, e.g., TikTok Family Pairing, Instagram private accounts, YouTube Restricted Mode).
- Encourage:** "Explore the app's safety or privacy settings together with your child."

2. Devices & Gaming Platforms

- Suggest parents check for built-in parental controls on phones, tablets, consoles.
- Ask:** "What games or devices does your child spend the most time on?"
- Encourage:** "Adjust settings with your child so they understand the limits, instead of imposing them."

3. Online Safety Practices

- Encourage habits rather than strict rules.
- Schedule regular time to sit with your child and discuss their online activities, understanding new applications, games, and tools, and helping them ensure their privacy and safety settings are up to date.

3. Understanding Your Child's Digital Environment

- a. **Ask parents:** “Does your child use their own device, or someone else’s?” “Who controls the settings?” Explain: “Privacy settings are useful only if the child controls the device”
- b. **Encourage discussion:** “What if the device is not theirs?”
- c. Tips if your children are not using their own device.
 - Log out after use
 - Do not save passwords
 - Avoid sensitive conversations on shared devices
 - Check account activity



FACILITATOR TO SHOW

How to set up parental controls on one social media site and then encourage parents to come forward at the end of the session if they have more questions. But also emphasize that not everything can be taught and we encourage self-learning as technology is continuously changing. (OPTIONAL)



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Highlight that every child and household is different — there is no one-size-fits-all solution.
- Encourage parents to explore settings together with their children to promote understanding.
- Focus on habits and awareness rather than strict rules.
- Provide simple examples (TikTok Family Pairing, Instagram private accounts, YouTube Restricted Mode).
- Make it clear that no caregiving approach is superior to another, and that the space should remain respectful toward all parents, with no judgment or comparison.



Slide 16: Recognizing Warning Signs



AIM

To help parents identify early indicators of online risks or distress. Recognizing changes in behavior, secrecy, or emotional shifts allows timely intervention. Parents learn practical signs to watch for in daily life.

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 16

RECOGNIZING WARNING SIGNS



- Changes in Device Use
- Secrecy or Evasiveness
- Emotional/Behavioural Changes

If you see warning signs, gently ask: Is everything OK online?



FACILITATOR TO SAY

1. **Changes in device use** – different hours, sudden increase or decrease in online activity.
2. **Secrecy or evasiveness** – hiding screens, avoiding discussion about contacts/apps.
3. **Emotional/behavioral changes** – withdrawal, irritability, anxiety, or distress after online activity.

If you see warning signs, gently ask: Is everything OK online?

Scenario Example: «A 13-year-old suddenly deletes all social media applications from their phone and becomes withdrawn after school. These behaviors are red flags for potential online risk.»



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Give clear, observable examples (changes in device use, secrecy, emotional withdrawal).
- Encourage parents not to jump to conclusions but to investigate calmly.
- Remind them that these signs may indicate risk but are not proof of wrongdoing.
- Use scenarios to illustrate red flags in a relatable way.

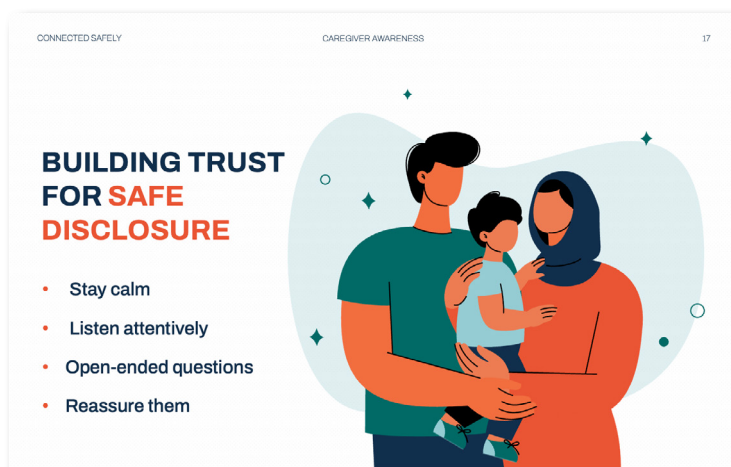


Slide 17: Building Trust for Safe Disclosure



AIM

To teach parents how to respond effectively when a child discloses an upsetting online experience. Safe, calm, and non-judgmental responses encourage children to share future concerns. Parents learn practical steps to provide reassurance, listen actively, and work together to resolve issues.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

When a child goes through something upsetting online, the way you respond can determine whether they feel comfortable opening up to you in the future. Creating a safe, non-judgmental space is essential, so your child knows they can share their experiences without fear of blame or punishment.

If your child comes to you:

- **Stay calm:** Take a moment before reacting. Even if you feel upset or angry, showing calmness helps your child feel secure. Avoid removing their device immediately, as this can feel like punishment.
- **Listen attentively:** Give them your full attention, take their concerns seriously, and avoid interrupting. Ask them to explain unfamiliar apps, games, or terms so you can fully understand.
- **Open-ended prompts:** “Can you tell me what happened on this app?” or “What made you feel uncomfortable?”
- **Reassure them:** Let them know they did the right thing by telling you, they are not to blame, and you’ll work through it together. For example: “I’m glad you told me. This is not your fault. You’re not in trouble, and I’m here to help.”



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Emphasize staying calm and avoiding immediate punitive actions (e.g., taking devices).
- Encourage attentive listening, asking clarifying questions, and using open-ended prompts.
- Highlight reassurance: children are not at fault and did the right thing by sharing.
- Keep guidance simple and actionable; use examples to illustrate supportive responses.

SECTION C

HOW TO RESPOND TO ONLINE VIOLENCE



OBJECTIVES

- Where to go for help in your local area (Referral pathways and safe reporting)
- How to help a child when they seek help
- Basics of psychological first aid
- Family-centered resolution approaches
- When and how to seek outside help
- Supporting a child after an incident
- Addressing gender and honor considerations in responses

CONTENT BREAKDOWN FROM SLIDES



Slide 19: Reflections



AIM

To facilitate reflection on previous learning and apply core communication skills (active listening, staying composed, avoiding blame) to a realistic scenario involving online grooming risks. Participants practice recognizing warning signs and modeling a supportive parental response through role-play and group debriefing.



FACILITATOR TO ASK

Name one thing you learned during our first session? (2-3 adults respond)



ACTIVITY

Read and/or print case example. The group can work in pairs or you can request two volunteers come forward for a role play. The “parent” practices starting a calm, supportive conversation using lessons from previous sessions: active listening, staying composed, avoiding blame, and encouraging honesty. The “child” can react naturally — defensive, quiet, or upset. After 2–3 minutes, pause and debrief with the group. (OPTIONAL)

CASE: Your 15-year-old son has been spending a lot of time gaming online. Yesterday, another parent called to say their child received screenshots of private messages between your son and someone he met through the game.

The messages show that the person (who said they were 16) had been complimenting your son for weeks, sending him game credits, and recently convinced him to share a shirtless photo “as a joke.” Your son seems embarrassed and withdrawn. He insists, “It’s nothing, they’re just my friend,” and refuses to talk about it.

? FACILITATOR TO ASK

- What did the parent do that helped the child open up?
- What language made things worse or better?
- What should the parent do next to keep the child safe (emotionally and legally)?

NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Focus on Trust:** Emphasize that a calm, non-judgmental response is critical for keeping the child willing to share.
- **Realistic Practice:** Encourage the «child» actor to be resistant so the «parent» can practice staying composed under pressure.
- **Balance Support and Safety:** Remind parents that while emotional connection is the first step, serious grooming cases require professional support and cannot be handled alone.



Slide 20: Response and Resolution



AIM

To show parents how their response can influence a child’s safety and recovery after online incidents. Parents learn the importance of acting calmly, systematically, and involving the right support. This section introduces key steps for recognition, response, and referral.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

When a child experiences online violence, their immediate feelings can be intense - shame, fear, or guilt. How we respond as adults can make a real difference in their safety and recovery. In this section, we’ll cover how to recognize, act, and involve the right support in a calm and systematic way.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Emphasize that initial adult response can shape the child’s trust and willingness to share.
- Keep language calm and practical; avoid inducing panic.
- Highlight that parents do not have to solve everything alone — support is available.

Slide 21: Responding to Online Violence

AIM

To provide parents with practical steps for assessing and acting when online harm occurs. This includes observing, supporting, documenting, and involving the appropriate authorities. Parents learn when immediate action or reporting is necessary.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Recognizing the Situation & Taking Action

1. **Observe first** – understand the nature and severity of the incident.
2. **Immediate support** – sometimes listening and reassurance is enough; sometimes taking immediate action (blocking, reporting, evidence preservation) is required.
3. **Document evidence** – create a backup of the chat, save screenshots, messages, contact details, posts; avoid deletion if reporting is planned.
4. **Involve appropriate authorities** – school, local police, child protection services, or online reporting platforms.

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 21

RESPONDING TO ONLINE VIOLENCE

How to respond calmly, act systematically, and support your child's safety and emotional well-being.

- 1 OBSERVE
- 2 IMMEDIATE SUPPORT
- 3 DOCUMENT
- 4 GET HELP



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Encourage parents to stay calm and assess the situation first.
- Explain that listening and reassurance may sometimes be enough, but taking immediate steps may also be needed.
- Remind them to document evidence safely before any deletion.
- Highlight that authorities, schools, or child protection services can be engaged as needed.

Slide 22: Observe

AIM

To guide parents in responding to potential online safety concerns with calm observation rather than immediate panic or confrontation. This step emphasizes gathering essential information and noticing behavioral cues to accurately assess the situation, ensuring the child feels safe enough to share their experience without fear of blame or punishment.

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 22

1. Observe

Pause, notice, and assess before reacting.
Observation builds understanding — and helps guide the right response.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

The first step when something doesn't feel right online is to observe — not to panic or react immediately. Take a moment to notice what's going on and gather basic information.

Here's how to observe safely:

- **Pause and look:** Notice changes in your child's behavior or emotions after being online.
- **Check devices:** Without invading privacy, look for unfamiliar contacts, messages, or apps.
- **Ask calmly:** Use open questions like, "Has anything online made you uncomfortable lately?"
- **Note patterns:** When does the behavior occur? What triggers distress?
- **Avoid judgment:** Children need reassurance, not blame, to open up honestly.

Observation helps you decide if it's a small misunderstanding that needs reassurance or something that requires further action — which we'll cover in the next step.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Manage Parental Anxiety:** Parents often feel an urge to immediately confiscate devices or confront the child aggressively. Remind them that reacting in anger can cause the child to hide the issue out of fear.
- **Privacy Balance:** Clarify the distinction between «checking for safety» and «spying.» Encourage parents to frame device checks as a safety measure, not a lack of trust, and to respect the child's space where possible.
- **Open-Ended Questions:** Reinforce that questions starting with «Why» (e.g., «Why did you talk to him?») can sound accusatory. Stick to «What» or «How» questions to keep the dialogue open.
- **Transition:** Clearly signal that this is just the assessment phase. The next slide will cover the specific actions to take once the observation confirms a risk.



Slide 23: Immediate Support



AIM

To equip parents with knowledge of available resources and organizations that can remove harmful content or support children. Parents learn the importance of quick, practical help. Different considerations for boys and girls are highlighted to ensure safety for all children.



MATERIALS NEEDED

Caregiver Handout 3: Common Application Safety Features found in Section E.

Reminder: Handouts are optional; for communities with lower literacy, please prioritize verbal delivery and visual aids, adapting your materials accordingly.

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 23

2. Immediate Support

Social Media
TikTok Instagram Snapchat

Take It Down
Take It Down

INSM
INSM

Tech4Peace
Tech4Peace



FACILITATOR TO SAY

When something serious happens online, it's important to know who can help quickly. Some organizations and tools can remove harmful content or support your child. Here are a few examples:

- **Social Media Platforms:** Parents can report harmful content directly on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, Telegram, etc. Most have reporting tools for abusive messages, harassment, or inappropriate content.
- **TakeltDown (Global):** A service that helps remove harmful images or content online for individuals under 18 years.
- **INSM (Iraq):** A local NGO supporting online safety and child protection.
- **T4P (Iraq):** Another local service provider supporting and providing advice for children exposed to online risks.

Things to note: Risks for Young Women and Girls

When young women and girls experience online abuse, cultural values, social expectations, and concepts of “honor” can deeply influence the risks they face and the support they receive. Parents play a critical role in safeguarding both their digital and physical well-being.

- **Heightened Risks:** Girls and young women face higher exposure to online harassment, violence, and TF-CSEA due to their age, gender, and frequent use of ICT. Harmful experiences can cause long-term emotional and psychological effects.
- **Honor-Based Threats:** In some communities, even perceived online interactions can lead to family or community retaliation, including violence, shaming, forced marriage, or in extreme cases, honor killings.
- **Stigma and Victim-Blaming:** Harmful norms may wrongly blame survivors, leading to silence, isolation, or withdrawal from education and social life.

Time Allowing: SHOW: How to use one of the platforms above.



NOTE

To deliver this toolkit effectively, facilitators must maintain up-to-date knowledge of the online platforms and tools their audience uses. Continuous learning is essential for adapting content to new trends and answering participant queries with confidence and accuracy.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Introduce key resources:** social media reporting tools, TakeltDown, INSM, T4P. Explain what they are, how they work and that they are trusted and confidential.
- Emphasize that girls may face additional risks due to cultural norms, gender, and honor considerations.
- Highlight the importance of safeguarding both digital and physical well-being.
- Stress that parents are essential in supporting the child's access to help.



Slide 24: Documenting Evidence



AIM

To show parents how to safely record incidents of online abuse for reporting or intervention. Documentation helps authorities act effectively and protects the child.

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 26

3. Documenting Evidence



BACKUP



SCREENSHOT



STORE SAFELY



LOG INFO



WORK TOGETHER



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Evidence helps platforms, schools, and authorities take appropriate action.

How:

- **Create a backup:** Use the app option to create a backup of the chat, including media.
- **Screenshot Everything:** Include timestamps, usernames, and platform details. Capture messages, posts, comments, or profiles.
- **Store Safely:** Store in a secure folder on your device. Ensure the divide is password-protected. Do not share publicly, unless they are trusted.
- **Keep a Simple Log:** Note the date, platform, type of incident, and child's response. Example: "Sept 10, Instagram: threatening message, screenshot saved, reported."
- **Do It With Your Teen:** Walk through steps with your child and keep reassuring them you are there to support them.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- If time allows, demonstrate simple steps: backups, screenshots, secure storage, and logging incidents.
- Encourage parents to do this with their child while reassuring them.
- Emphasize privacy and security — only share information gathered with trusted adults or authorities.



Slide 25: Getting Help and Involving Appropriate Authorities



AIM

To inform parents about local support services and authorities for online safety incidents. Parents learn where to go for advice, reporting, and immediate protection. This ensures children get timely, professional help when needed.

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 25

4. Getting Help and Involving Appropriate Authorities

 116 Child Helpline	 0770 390 62 15 Asayesh
 119 DCVAW	 104 Police



FACILITATOR TO SAY

In the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, you can contact:

116 Child Helpline

- Free, confidential support in Arabic and Kurdish
- Available via phone, Facebook, and email
- Operating Sunday–Thursday, 9 am–6 pm
- Supports children and youth with advice, guidance, and reporting concerns

119 DCVAW Helpline

- 24/7 counseling, referral, psychosocial and legal support
- Supports survivors of gender-based violence, including minors
- Can guide parents on safe responses to online abuse
- 3. 0770 390 6215 Department of Combating Electronic Crimes (DOCEC) – Asayesh
- Investigate threats, blackmail, harassment, and other online crimes

104 Local Police

- For immediate threats or danger to a child

In Federal Iraq, you can contact:

1. Central Emergency Number (911)
 - A toll-free line that consolidates 26 previous hotlines into this single number, which receives reports from citizens and residents in multiple languages, including Arabic, English, Turkish, Persian, and Kurdish.
2. Regular Police (104)
 - To request assistance and protection.
3. Community Police (497)
 - To request assistance in cases of domestic violence.
4. Directorate of Family and Child Protection (139)
 - To report the harassment against women and adolescent girls and cases of torture.
5. National Security Office (131)
 - To report electronic extortion.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Provide clear, accessible contact information (116, 119, DOCEC, Local Police).
- Highlight which services are confidential and available 24/7.
- Encourage parents to reach out without delay if a child is at risk.



Slide 26: Supporting Your Child After an Incident



AIM

To guide parents in providing ongoing support after an online incident. Emphasis is on listening, reassurance, maintaining routines, and empowering children. Parents also learn when to involve trusted adults or professionals for additional help.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

After you've responded to the online incident, listened, documented, or reported, your focus shifts to ongoing support:

- Listen and reassure your child, reminding them it's not their fault.
- Help them understand that feelings like sadness, anger, or fear are normal.
- Keep routines like school and hobbies going to provide stability. Stay in gentle communication, checking in without judgment.
- Watch for signs of distress, and empower them to make age-appropriate decisions online.
- And remember, it's okay to involve trusted adults, counselors, or child protection services if extra support is needed.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Encourage calm, non-judgmental communication.
- Remind parents to monitor for distress and involve counselors or child protection services if needed.



Slide 27: Discussion: Family Online Safety



AIM

To have a recap for the parents and highlight for them what they can tackle first as they leave the session today.



ASK

Two people to share what they will implement at home first (sadly there is not enough time to ask everyone) (OPTIONAL)

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 27

DISCUSSION: FAMILY ONLINE SAFETY

- Talk and Listen
- Collaborative Agreements
- Check and Protect Devices
- Responding to Online Violence
- Encourage Balance and Critical Thinking
- Keep Learning Together





FACILITATOR TO SAY

We've covered a lot today about keeping children safe online. From the main topics listed here, which one will you be implementing first at home?



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Emphasize that the first action they should take should be simple, collaborative, and adaptable for each family.
- Encourage parents to act things together with their child, with the family agreement, rather than as a set of strict rules.
- Invite questions to clarify any of the steps.
- Reinforce that ongoing communication and flexibility are key.

SECTION D

ENSURING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE: ESTABLISHING CAREGIVER CIRCLES



OBJECTIVES

- How to organize and lead regular peer-based support sessions in caregiver communities
- Session examples/templates, including prompts to encourage conversation and check-in with one another

CONTENT BREAKDOWN FROM SLIDES



Slide 28: Caregiver Circles



AIM

To introduce parents to caregiver circles as a peer-led support system. These circles allow caregivers to share experiences, learn together, and find solutions to online safety challenges. The focus is on building a self-sustained, empowering network that encourages long-term support and ownership.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Just like what we are doing right now, connecting with other parents who “just get it” makes all the difference. Would you agree? Whether it’s about managing screen time or navigating a new app your child is hooked on, having a community to brainstorm with turns this challenge into a shared mission.

Do you think this kind of gathering is helpful for you, for other parents, and your families?

Since your children’s safety is a priority, we want to try to encourage a sustainable way for you to keep supporting each other to keep your children safe online. One way is through



what we call Caregiver Circles. Caregiver Circles are small, supportive, parent-led groups where caregivers come together to share experiences, learn from each other, keep up to date with latest tech trends, and find solutions together to support their children’s safety online.

The best part is it doesn’t have to be a formal meeting or a new group. It can be incorporated in any existing group where there is interest. If you are a part of a WhatsApp or Facebook group, a neighborhood association, or a regular family (and extended family) gathering, you can simply introduce digital safety as a recurring topic by using the resources provided in this section.

It's not about adding another task to your routine, rather, we envision this as something that can be woven into important conversations in places where you already show up - this can be in the public parks, school meetings, weddings or other family gatherings, picnics, or after Friday prayers.

Our goal is to empower you, as parents, to eventually run the group yourselves for these circles to be fully self-sustained, giving you a sense of ownership and a long-term support network that doesn't depend on an external person or organization.

- If you already have a group: You can start incorporating these discussions right away using our resources.
- If you want to start one but aren't sure how: We can journey with you at the beginning. We'll help facilitate the first few sessions and eventually hand it over to you so you can run the group independently.

Here are the main aims of these circles:

- **Lead and Decide:** Circles are parent-led and fully self-sustained; parents set the schedule, topics, and format.
- **Create Safety:** Circle is a small, supportive, non-judgmental space for sharing experiences and concerns.
- **Learn Together:** Parents learn from each other, share practical ideas, and stay informed about tech and online safety trends.
- **Solution-Focused:** Circle is a space focused on building on strengths, shifting conversations on what works well, keeping up to date with latest tech trends, and using these resources to better support your children.

NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Use an encouraging tone; emphasize empowerment rather than instruction.
- Highlight real-life examples of collaboration and peer support.
- This is optional. Emphasize that caregivers, as a collective, have total autonomy as to how they want this to be implemented - it can be integrated into already existing community groups, or they can create a new group solely for this purpose.
- Remind parents that the circle is safe and non-judgmental, and all experiences are valid.
- Emphasize that the support group is a safe space for sharing but also to identify challenges and collaboratively explore solutions. The goal is to move to productive action.



Slide 29: Caregiver Circles Checklist Step 1



AIM

To guide parents in forming a committed, manageable group and setting up regular sessions. The focus is on logistics, accessibility, and sustainability to ensure the group lasts. Parents learn how to create a core leadership team and recruit participants effectively.

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 29

CAREGIVER CIRCLES CHECKLIST

Organize Your Circle
Build a group that lasts

1 **2** **3**

**FACILITATOR TO SAY**

Step 1: Organize Your Circle - Create a small, committed group that meets regularly and lasts over time.

- **Start Small:** Begin with 2–3 parents you trust and choose a regular meeting time.
- **Grow Together:** Invite more parents—around 7–10—to join once you've built a rhythm.
- **Be Practical:** Choose a day, time, and place that works for everyone.
- **Keep It Accessible:** Make sure all parents can attend easily, considering transport, family needs, and timing.
- **Ask Yourself:** “What times work best for everyone?” “Is this place easy to reach?”

Remember: Over time, your facilitator will step back as you gain confidence managing your own group. Note that this step is skipped if the group is already existing.

**NOTES TO FACILITATOR**

- **Prompt discussion:** “What days/times would realistically work for everyone?”
- Encourage parents to think practically about venue and accessibility.
- Remind them to start small; a core group of 2–3 committed parents is enough at first.
- Suggest they consider family obligations and transportation needs when scheduling.

**Slide 30: Caregiver Circles Checklist Step 2****AIM**

To show parents how to lead engaging, structured, and solution-focused circle sessions. Parents learn to use handouts and tools for agreements, session agendas, facilitation tips, and closing activities. The goal is to create a safe, respectful space where everyone's voice is heard.

**MATERIALS NEEDED**

Print handout of **Caregiver Handout 3: Sustaining Caregiver Circles** found in Section E.

Reminder: Handouts are optional; for communities with lower literacy, please prioritize verbal delivery and visual aids, adapting your materials accordingly.

**FACILITATOR TO ASK**

parents to brainstorm together how they can stay connected outside of meetings. Examples might include WhatsApp groups, phone check-ins, small meetups over chai, or other methods that fit their context.





FACILITATOR TO SAY

Step 2: Lead Your Circle. This guide is designed to help you conduct engaging circles.

Build confidence to guide your group discussions and create a safe, supportive space for learning.

As your circle grows, you'll begin taking turns leading parts of each meeting while your facilitator supports from the side.

- **Set Clear Goals:** Talk about what your group wants to achieve, sharing experiences, learning new ideas, and supporting each other as parents.
- **Keep It Simple:** Begin with greetings and check-ins, discuss one topic at a time, and close with key takeaways.
- **Encourage Everyone:** Make sure all voices are heard and respected.
- **Stay Safe and Kind:** Keep discussions private, positive, and non-judgmental.
- **Stay Connected:** Keep in touch between meetings, through messages, calls, or small get-togethers.

Your facilitator may still join or check in occasionally, but you'll take the lead more and more.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Remind parents to use the handout when they leave the session.
- Suggest ways to maintain engagement: small check-ins, icebreakers, celebrating small wins.
- Highlight the importance of flexibility—if a discussion naturally flows, allow it while keeping objectives in mind.
- Encourage them to brainstorm ways to stay connected outside meetings (WhatsApp, phone check-ins).



Slide 31: Caregiver Circles Checklist Step 3



AIM

To guide parents in taking ownership of circle sessions and running the group independently. This includes delegating small tasks, assigning roles, and building leadership skills among participants. The focus is on coaching, feedback, and gradual empowerment for long-term sustainability.



FACILITATOR TO ASK

Who would like to work with me to establish their own Caregiver Circle? (take down names)

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 31

CAREGIVER CIRCLES CHECKLIST

Own Your Circle
Achieve Sustainability

1

Organize Your Circle

2

Lead Your Circle

3

Own Your Circle



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Step 3: Own Your Circle.

Run your own caregiver circle with shared leadership and lasting connection.

Now your circle is ready to run independently! You can continue to meet, grow, and even help others form their own groups.

- **Rotate Roles:** Take turns leading, opening sessions, or celebrating successes.
- **Support Each Other:** Offer encouragement and small suggestions after each meeting.
- **Keep It Going:** Keep meetings regular, invite new members when ready, and share what you've learned with other parents.
- **Reach Out When Needed:** Your facilitator will no longer lead meetings, but is still available if your group needs advice or resources.

This is your space now—led by parents, for parents, to keep children safer and families stronger.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

Remind parents they can rotate tasks to build confidence and ownership but also avoid overwhelm on one parent doing it all.

SECTION E

RESOURCES

Caregiver Handout 1: Parents Guide to Digital Well-being

PARENT'S GUIDE TO DIGITAL WELL-BEING



Knowledge alone isn't always enough. When children understand online risks but struggle with daily habits, caregiver support is vital. Here are practical ways to build digital well-being through a supportive environment and a shared family mission.

CHANGE THE ENVIRONMENT

Parents can help by changing the physical and digital environment to make healthy choices the default.

- Strategy 1: Create a Digital Parking Lot**
 Designate a central basket (in the kitchen or living room) where all devices "sleep" at a set time. This removes the temptation of having a phone within arm's reach in the bedroom, which is a primary cause of late-night scrolling and sleep disruption.
- Strategy 2: Change Phone Display to Grayscale**
 Work with your children to change phone displays to grayscale during set hours or as part of the bedtime routine. Removing vibrant colors makes apps like TikTok or Instagram significantly less "rewarding" to the brain, naturally reducing the urge to scroll.

On iOS	On Android
1. Open Settings .	1. Open Settings .
2. Tap on Accessibility .	2. Tap Digital Well-being & Parental Controls .
3. Select Display & Text Size .	3. Tap Bedtime Mode (on some phones, this is called Wind Down).
4. Scroll down to Color Filters and toggle it On .	4. You can turn it on manually or schedule it. Under the "Customize" or "Screen options," ensure Grayscale is selected.
5. Select Grayscale from the list.	



Caregiver Handout 2: Online Safety Agreement

FAMILY ONLINE SAFETY AGREEMENT

WORK TOGETHER TO STAY SAFE, RESPECTFUL, AND CONFIDENT ONLINE



WHY THIS MATTERS

Children explore, learn, and connect online every day. Online risks, such as harassment, exploitation, bullying, can affect anyone. This agreement helps families respond, set boundaries, and build trust while keeping children safe.

STEP 1: COMMITMENTS

PARENTS	TEENS	SHARED
Model safe, respectful online behavior	Think before posting or sharing content	Communicate openly about online experiences
Guide on privacy, security, and safe apps	Protect passwords and personal information	Support each other if something goes wrong online
Monitor online risks without blame	Respect others' privacy and consent online	Report harmful content together
Encourage learning about technology	Balance online and offline activities	Build a culture of respect, kindness, and tolerance online

STEP 2: MAKE YOUR OWN AGREEMENT

Focus on 1-2 safety rules first:

- Example: Sharing photos, screen time, or online games.

Family discussion prompts:

- Which approach to online safety should we practice this week together?
- How will we support each other if something goes wrong online?
- Are there extra rules we want to add for our family?

Write your agreed rules here:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

STEP 3: SIGN THE AGREEMENT

Parent: _____

Teen: _____

Date: _____



Caregiver Handout 3: Common Application Safety Features

COMMON APPLICATION SAFETY FEATURES



HOW TO REPORT DIRECTLY TO SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Facebook

- **Step 1:** Go to the post you would like to report
- **Step 2:** Click the three dots next to the post
- **Step 3:** Click report post
- **Step 4:** From the options given pick the one that best describes your problem

Instagram

- **Step 1:** Click the three dots on the top right corner of a post
- **Step 2:** Click report
- **Step 3:** Choose why you are reporting the post
- **Step 4:** Decide whether you want to block or restrain the account you are reporting

Snapchat

- **Step 1:** Click the three dots on the top or bottom right corner of a post
- **Step 2:** Click report this snap
- **Step 3:** Choose why you want to report
- **Step 4:** Add a comment to back your report

TikTok

- **Step 1:** Go to the video you'd like to report
- **Step 2:** Press the share button
- **Step 3:** Press the report button that looks like a flag
- **Step 4:** Select why you are reporting
- **Step 5:** Send your report


X (Twitter)

- **Step 1:** Click the three dots on the top right corner of the post
- **Step 2:** Click report this post
- **Step 3:** Choose why you are reporting the post
- **Step 4:** Answer the questions with the given options
- **Step 5:** Decide whether you want to block or mute the account you are reporting






Print handout of Caregiver Handout 3: Sustaining Caregiver Circles



SUSTAINING CAREGIVER CIRCLES





CHAPTER

TOOLKIT SESSION GUIDE CHILDREN'S AWARENESS - STAYING SAFE ONLINE AND OFFLINE



The aim of this guide is to compliment the slides with extra information to equip and support facilitators to deliver the most engaging and impactful sessions. Each slide section involves the aim of the slide, the facilitator script, and notes to the facilitator.





LENGTH OF SESSION

- **Session 1:** Structured Awareness Raising (Mixed - Section A and B)
- **Length of Session:** 2 hours
- **Audience Size:** 15 to 20 children (and their parents should be in the other session)
- **Session 2:** Structured Awareness Raising (One for Girls - Section C, one for Boys - Section D)
- **Length of Session:** 1 hour
- **Audience Size:** max. 20 participants of the same gender in each session

**Ideally the session runs directly after Session 1 (whilst parents are in 2 hour session)*



AUDIENCE SIZE

- 15 to 20 Children



MATERIALS NEEDED FOR THESE SESSIONS

- Slides



mixed



Girls



Boys

- Projector and screen
- Printed copies of resources for participants (see Section E)

SECTION A

UNDERSTANDING

ONLINE ABUSE AND YOUR RIGHTS **80**

Content Breakdown from Slides 80

SECTION B

PRIVACY, SAFETY,

AND POSITIVE CHOICES **95**

Content Breakdown from Slides 95

SECTION C

POWER, PRESSURE,

AND POSITIVE CHOICES - GIRLS **101**

Content Breakdown from Slides 101

SECTION D

POWER, PRESSURE,

AND POSITIVE CHOICES - BOYS **117**

Content Breakdown from Slides 117

SECTION E

RESOURCES

139

SECTION A

UNDERSTANDING ONLINE ABUSE AND YOUR RIGHTS



OBJECTIVES

- Types of TF-CSEA and
- Implications on and offline
- How you are protected under the law
- What is against the law
- Relevant government institutions and authorities implementing the law

CONTENT BREAKDOWN FROM SLIDES



Slide 2: Ground Rules



AIM

To establish a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment where all participants feel comfortable sharing their experiences. This collaborative process ensures that everyone understands the ground rules for interaction, fostering trust and active participation throughout the session.



ASK (OPTIONAL)

- What do we need from each other to feel safe and comfortable in this group?
- What helps you learn and participate well in a group setting?

CONNECTED SAFELY CAREGIVER AWARENESS 2

GROUND RULES

1. What do we need from each other to feel safe and comfortable in this group?
2. What helps you learn and participate well in a group setting?



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Before we begin our sessions, let's create a group agreement together. This is a list of behaviors we all agree to follow, to make sure everyone feels safe, heard, and respected. This is our agreement, and everyone has a say in it.

Write down answers on a flipchart. Add suggestions if needed.

Examples:

- Respect each other's opinions
- One person speaks at a time
- Keep what's shared in the group confidential
- Be open-minded and non-judgmental
- Ask questions — there are no wrong questions
- Be on time and participate fully
- Listen actively
- No phones or side conversations during activities



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Emphasize that these are our rules, not just the trainer's rules, to build a sense of shared ownership.



Slide 3: What is Online Child Exploitation and Abuse?



AIM

Help children clearly understand what constitutes online child sexual exploitation and abuse, so they can recognize unsafe interactions and understand it is never their fault.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Did you know? Around the world, many children your age use phones or social media every day — to chat with friends, watch videos, or play games. But some studies show that up to 2 out of 3 children talk to strangers or people they don't know on a daily basis.² Sometimes these interactions can seem harmless, or even exciting, but not everyone online has good intentions.

That's why it's important to understand what online child exploitation and abuse means - sometimes referred to as 'Online Violence'. It happens when someone uses the internet, apps, or phones to hurt, pressure, or take advantage of children under 18. This can include asking for private photos, saying things that make you uncomfortable, or trying to trick or control you. Everyone has the right to feel safe online.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

These are technical concepts and words so try and make it as simple as possible. Use age-appropriate language and avoid fear-inducing examples.

Emphasize emotional safety: reassure children that experiencing online pressure is not their fault.

2. [*Protecting Children from Online Grooming: Cross-cultural, qualitative and child-centred data to guide grooming prevention and response. Save the Children](#)



Slide 4: Icebreaker Spectrum of Online Violence



AIM

To help children recognize different online situations as safe, uncomfortable, or unsafe and practice responding with awareness. The goal is to strengthen their ability to notice how they feel, make safe choices, and know when to reach out for support.



MATERIALS NEEDED

Printed Child Handout 1: Spectrum of Online Violence Cards found in Section E.

WHAT IS ONLINE VIOLENCE?

 SAFE You feel good and in control. <small>Example: You know the person, and the interaction is respectful.</small>	 Uncomfortable Something doesn't feel right. <small>Example: You aren't sure if it's OK or not. You don't like the interaction or feel pressured.</small>	 Unsafe You feel scared, hurt, or threatened. <small>Example: Someone is asking for private things or trying to control you.</small>
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FACILITATOR TO SAY

It can be hard to know when interactions online are safe or not safe. So let's try to practice how to notice and respond to online situations. So we use a tool called the Spectrum of Online Violence to help us think about how we feel in each situation.

We have three categories to help you see if you are safe or unsafe. You can break them down as:

- **Safe:** You feel good and in control online. You know the people you are interacting with and the situation is respectful of each other. This is a great space to be in!
- **Uncomfortable:** Something doesn't feel right. You are unsure and might feel some pressure from whomever you are interacting with online. If you find yourself here then consider to pause and think. You're not in trouble, but talk to a trusted adult to help.
- **Unsafe:** You feel scared, worried, or pressured. Someone is threatening, asking for secrets or images. And if you find yourself in this situation it is best to stop and not reply. Tell a trusted adult right away.

Now we'll do a quick game where we read out some examples of things that might happen online and then you will decide how they feel to you: safe, uncomfortable, or unsafe. There's no right or wrong on how you feel in a situation. We're just practicing how to think through online situations safely and learn how to navigate being online together.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Explain clearly that there are no right or wrong answers. This is about feelings and practice.
- Encourage children to raise their cards without needing to explain unless they want to.
- Keep the activity fun, fast, and non-judgmental.
- If a child shares a personal story or reacts strongly, acknowledge gently and follow safeguarding procedures after the session.



Slide 5 & 6: “You message your best friend from school to plan your homework together.”



AIM

To show that safe online spaces are those where children know, trust, and feel comfortable with the people they interact with.



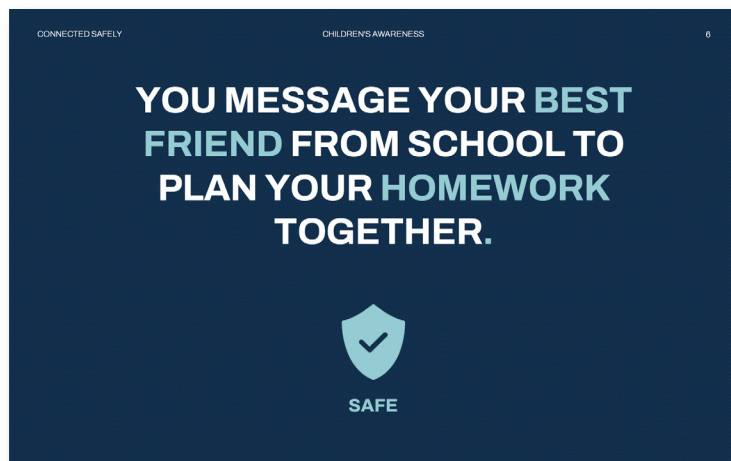
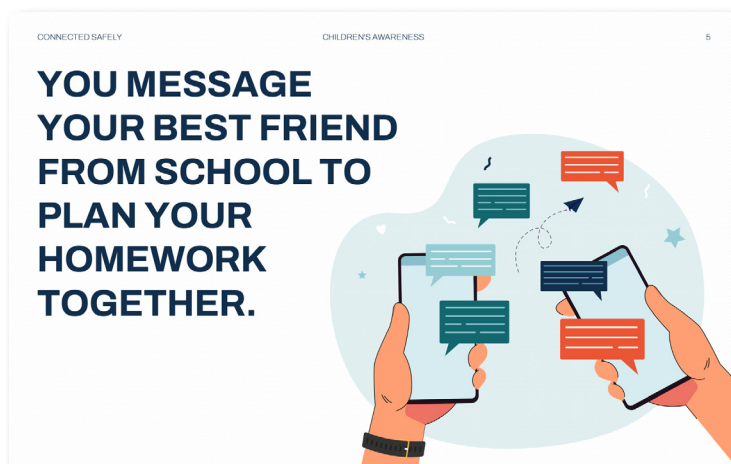
FACILITATOR TO SAY

- **Slide 5:** First question “You message your best friend from school to plan your homework together.” Does this bring up safe, uncomfortable, or unsafe feelings for you? Please raise your cards to answer.
- **Slide 6:** This is a safe situation. This is a safe situation. You know the person you’re talking to, you trust them, and you feel comfortable. There’s no pressure or confusion. That’s what we want all online spaces to feel like - respectful and in your control.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Celebrate this as a positive, safe example.
- Reinforce: “This is how we want most of our online interactions to feel.”





Slide 7 & 8: “Your friend adds you to a group without asking you.”



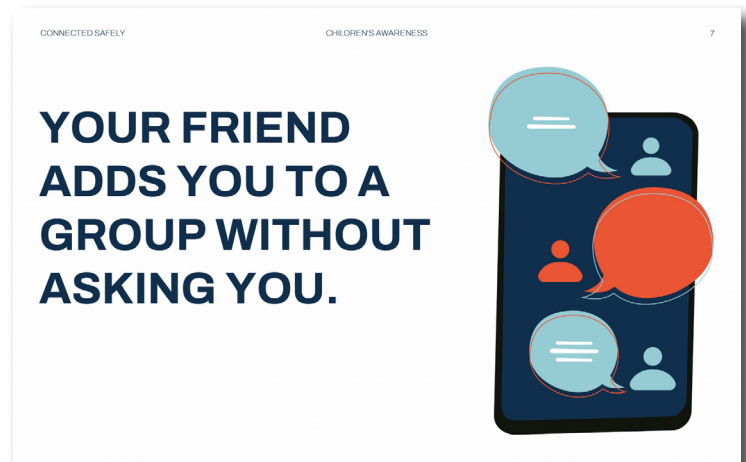
AIM

To practice recognizing “uncomfortable” situations where choice and control are taken away, and to reinforce that children can pause, leave, or check in with a trusted adult.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

- **Slide 7:** Second question “Your friend adds you to a group without asking you.” Does this bring up safe, uncomfortable, or unsafe feelings for you? Please raise your cards to answer.
- **Slide 8:** This one is uncomfortable. Even though your friend added you, you didn’t get a chance to choose. You should be asked before you are added to a group as you might not know who else is in the group or what’s being shared. It doesn’t mean it’s immediately unsafe, but it’s a signal to pause and check what’s going on — and to ask yourself if you really want to be in this group.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Feeling uncomfortable is normal — it’s your choice to stay or leave.
- Encourage the idea that it’s their right to choose what groups they are part of. But also highlight it’s never the child’s fault if someone else is doing something wrong online.
- If it feels unsafe (strangers, bullying, threats, harmful content): Leave the group, don’t reply or share anything, or tell a trusted adult.



Slide 9 & 10: “A friend threatens to share your private messages unless you do what they want.”



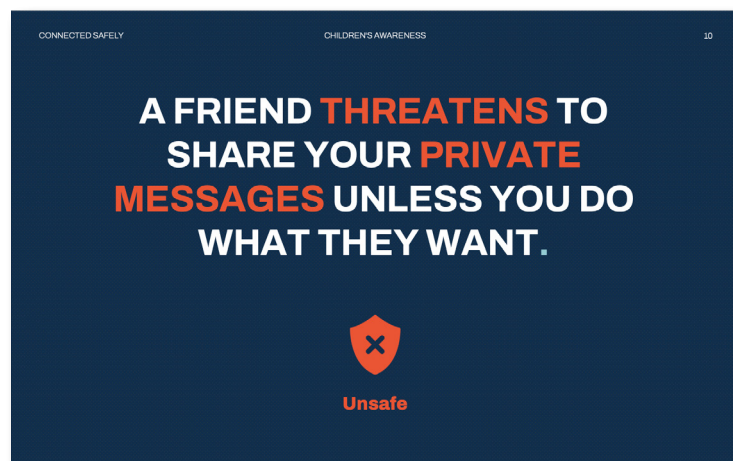
AIM

To recognize threats as unsafe, understand that this is a form of online violence, and practice the correct response.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

- **Slide 9:** Third question “A friend threatens to share your private messages unless you do what they want.” Does this bring up safe, uncomfortable, or unsafe feelings for you? Please raise your cards to answer.
- **Slide 10:** This is unsafe. It’s a threat and threats are a form of violence. No one should ever pressure or scare you into doing something, especially online. In this kind of situation, it’s important to stop replying and tell a trusted adult or organization right away.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Emphasize:** “Threats are never okay and never your fault.”
- **Repeat the safety plan:** stop replying and tell a trusted adult.
- **If a child discloses something similar, respond calmly:** “Thank you for sharing, that’s important. Let’s talk privately after so we can make sure you’re safe.” Then follow safeguarding steps.

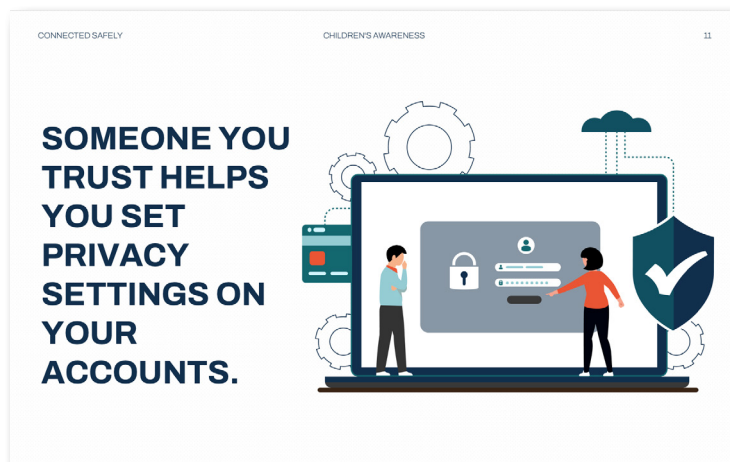


Slide 11 & 12: “Someone you trust helps you set privacy settings on your accounts.”



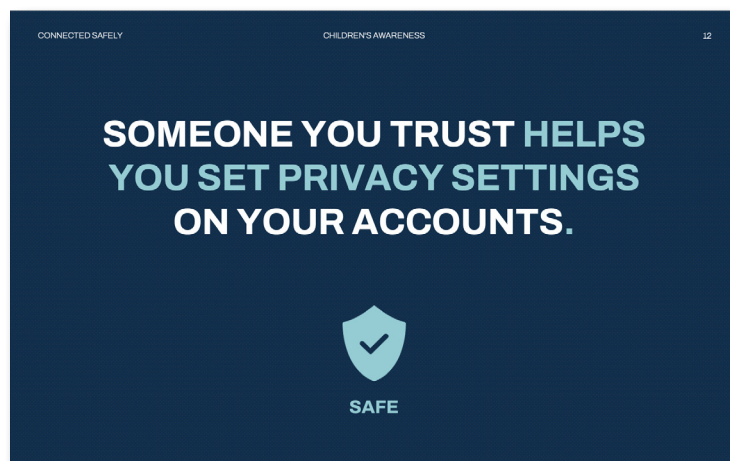
AIM

To reinforce that asking for and accepting help from trusted adults is part of staying safe online and shows strength, not weakness.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

- **Slide 11:** Fourth question “Someone you trust helps you set privacy settings on your accounts.” Does this bring up safe, uncomfortable, or unsafe feelings for you? Please raise your cards to answer.
- **Slide 12:** This is another safe example. Privacy settings help protect your information and give you control. And having someone you trust, like a parent, teacher, or older sibling, support you with this is a good thing.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Encourage children to see trusted adults as allies.
- **Clarify what “trusted” means:** someone who respects their choices and keeps them safe, not someone who pressures them.
- Celebrate this as another positive, safe example.



Slide 13 & 14: “A person you’ve never met offers you money or gifts to talk privately.”



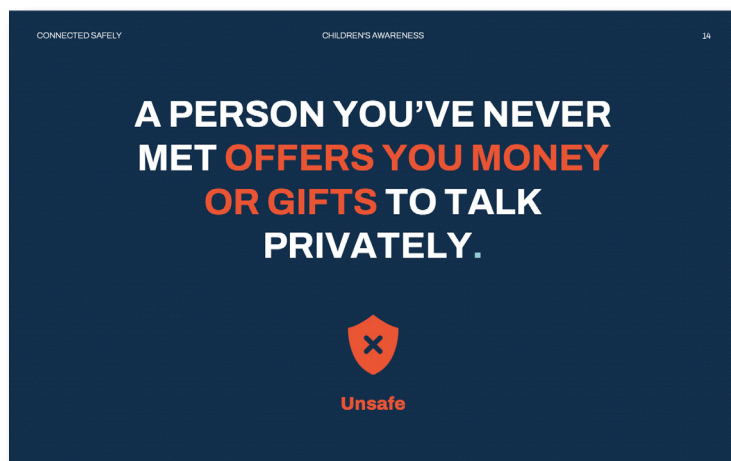
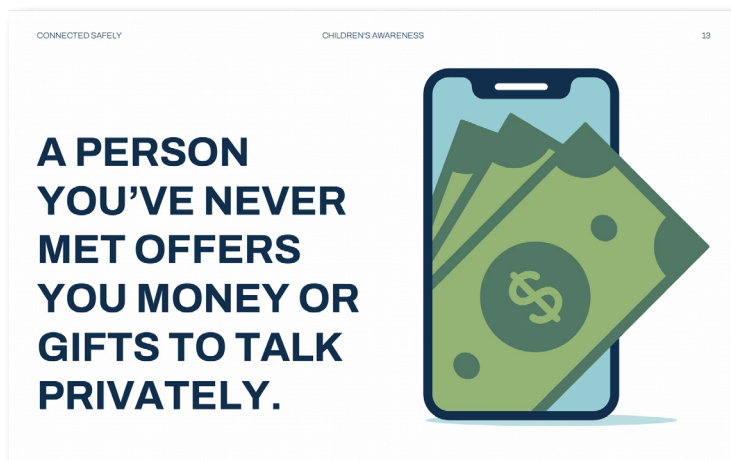
AIM

To help children recognise when someone online is trying to manipulate or groom them with offers of money or gifts, and know that this is unsafe behaviour that requires telling a trusted adult.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

- **Slide 13:** Fifth question “A person you’ve never met offers you money or gifts to talk privately.” Does this bring up safe, uncomfortable, or unsafe feelings for you? Please raise your cards to answer.
- **Slide 14:** This is unsafe. It’s a manipulation bribery, and could lead to violence. It might initially feel nice or good when someone gives you compliments or offers you money or gifts, but it’s important to remember that you shouldn’t talk to strangers. When someone is offering you money or gifts, they usually want something from you in return. In this kind of situation, it’s important to stop replying and tell a trusted adult or organization right away.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Encourage children to recognise forms of manipulation and signs of grooming.
- **Repeat the safety plan:** stop replying and tell a trusted adult.
- **If a child discloses something similar, respond calmly:** “Thank you for sharing, that’s important. Let’s talk privately after so we can make sure you’re safe.” Then follow safeguarding steps.



Slide 15 & 16: “A stranger comments on your photo saying, “You’re cute 😊.””



AIM

To help children recognise that unwanted or personal comments from strangers online can be uncomfortable and unsafe, and to reinforce that ignoring, blocking, and telling a trusted adult are appropriate safety responses.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

- **Slide 15:** Sixth question “A stranger comments on your photo saying, “You’re cute 😊.”” Does this bring up safe, uncomfortable, or unsafe feelings for you? Please raise your cards to answer.
- **Slide 16:** This one is uncomfortable. Even though this might seem like a compliment, you don’t know this person. Don’t engage. Block if you know how. It’s important to remember that you shouldn’t talk to strangers. In this kind of situation, it’s important to tell a trusted adult or organization.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Explain that some online comments may seem friendly or flattering but can cross boundaries, especially when they come from strangers.
- Reinforce that this behaviour can sometimes be an early sign of grooming, and blocking/reporting is a safe first step.
- **Keep tone non-shaming:** the goal is to build awareness, not to blame children for posting photos.
- **If a child shares a personal experience, respond calmly:** “Thank you for telling me. That’s really important. Let’s talk privately after to make sure you’re safe.”

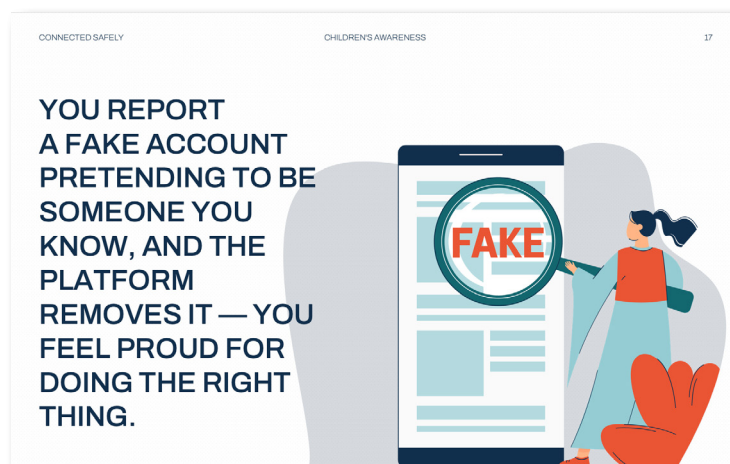


Slide 17 & 18: “You report a fake account pretending to be someone you know, and the platform removes it — you feel proud for doing the right thing.”



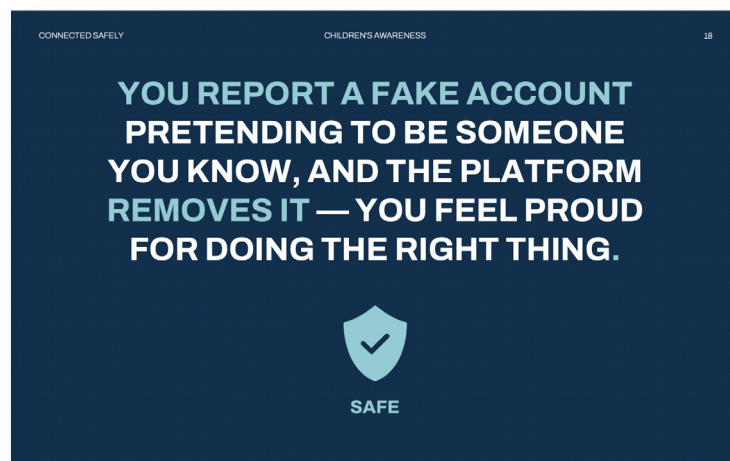
AIM

To help children recognise and celebrate safe online behaviour, understand that reporting harmful or fake accounts is a positive action, and build confidence in their ability to protect themselves and others online.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

- **Slide 17:** Seventh and final question “You report a fake account pretending to be someone you know, and the platform removes it — you feel proud for doing the right thing.” Does this bring up safe, uncomfortable, or unsafe feelings for you? Please raise your cards to answer.
- **Slide 18:** This is another safe example. It's important to take action and report abuse when you see it.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Reinforce that this is a safe, positive example** - a moment where the child has acted responsibly and protected someone else.
- Emphasize that reporting is a key safety action and shows courage and digital responsibility.
- **Encourage the group to reflect:** “How does it feel when you help make the internet safer for someone else?”
- **Remind participants that reporting doesn't mean they have to fix the problem alone** - adults, teachers, or organizations can help.
- **End on a positive tone:** this is a good point to praise the group's learning and remind them that safety online isn't just about avoiding danger - it's also about being kind, alert, and responsible digital citizens.



Slide 19: The Risks Children Face Online



AIM

Increase children's awareness of common forms of online abuse so they can identify potentially harmful situations early.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- These are technical concepts and words so try and make it as simple as possible.
- Reassure children that help is available and they are not alone.
- Provide realistic, relatable examples but keep them non-explicit. Some examples:
 - **Harmful images/videos of children (CSAM):** Someone asks you to take a photo of yourself in private spaces.
 - **Grooming (Tricking or Pressuring Children):** Someone you meet online pretends to be your age and asks to chat privately every day. Then they ask for personal info like your school or address.
 - **Threats and Blackmail (Sexual Extortion):** A stranger or peer pressures you to send images by saying "if you don't, I'll tell everyone your secret."
 - **Self-generated sexual content:** Teens sharing private photos because friends ask or to get likes on social media.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Based on the exercise we just did, we saw that being online can feel safe sometimes, but also unsafe at other times. Today we're going to talk about how to stay safe online. To protect yourself, you first need to know what you're defending against.

There are many ways someone can try to hurt or pressure kids online with online child exploitation and abuse. Today we'll focus on a few important examples—but remember: you are never to blame, and there are people and tools to keep you safe.

- **Harmful Images and Videos of Children (Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)):** This means pictures or videos of anyone under 18 in sexual or inappropriate ways. Even if made with apps, editing, or AI, it's illegal. Making, sharing, or even keeping these images is a crime — and young people are never to blame.
- **Tricking or Pressuring Children (Grooming):** When someone tries to gain your trust to pressure you into sharing photos or doing things online. They might pretend to be your age, a celebrity, or someone who "cares," but this is illegal, and asking for help is always okay and needed.

Threats and Blackmail (Sexual Extortion): When someone threatens to share your private images or messages unless you send more, pay money, or do what they want. It's never your fault, and asking for help is the right thing to do.

- **When Children Share Private Photos of Themselves (Self-Generated Sexual Content Involving Children):** Sometimes teens take or share private photos or videos of themselves because of pressure, threats, or wanting to fit in. Once shared, these images can easily be misused — passed on, posted, or used to hurt or control you. NOTE: If this happens, you are not to blame. The law sees anyone under 18 in these kinds of images as a victim who deserves protection and support, never punishment.



Slide 20: When Online Violence Impacts You Offline



AIM

Help children understand how online violence can move offline and can affect their emotional well-being, reputation, and safety offline.



FACILITATOR TO ASK

How else might someone feel if they experience online violence? (OPTIONAL)



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Have you ever thought about how things that happen online can affect your life offline? Let's look at some ways this can happen.

- **Fear and Embarrassment:** Being hurt or bullied online can leave you feeling scared, embarrassed, or upset for a long time.
- **Reputation and Bullying:** If private pictures or videos get shared without your permission, they can spread fast. This can lead to bullying, people judging you, or feeling left out at school or in your community.
- **Physical Danger:** Sometimes people online try to trick or pressure young people into meeting them in person. This can be really dangerous and could even lead to assault, so it's important to be careful and stay safe.

This is why today we are making sure you have the right tools to make sure you can be as safe as possible online and offline.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Encourage empathy:** help children see the link between online actions and real-world consequences.
- **Avoid inducing panic—** focus on empowerment through knowledge and action.



Slide 21: Digital Rights and Responsibilities



AIM

TITLE SLIDE



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Now we will go through what are your rights and responsibilities, and what is legal and illegal.

A right is something that everyone should have or be able to do, simply because they are a person. Rights help keep us safe, respected, and free to live and learn.

Technically, a right is something that is protected by law. This means governments and others have a duty to respect, protect, and uphold these rights — like your right to safety, privacy, and education.

But with every right, we also have responsibilities — things we should do to respect other people's rights too.

So now, let's look at what that means when we're online: what are your digital rights, and what responsibilities come with them?



Slide 22: Your Rights Online



AIM

Help children understand that they have rights online just as in real life, and these rights are meant to keep them safe and respected.



**FACILITATOR TO SAY**

Just like in real life, you have rights online too. This means you deserve to be safe, have your privacy, and be protected from harm.

By this we mean:

- **Safety:** No one should hurt, trick, or pressure you online.
- **Privacy:** Your personal info, pictures, and messages are yours—no one has the right to share them without your permission.
- **Fun & Learning:** The internet should be a safe space for learning, having fun, and connecting with friends.

If someone is being mean, asking for your personal info, or sharing things without your permission, that's breaking your rights—and you can get help.

**NOTES TO FACILITATOR**

- Reinforce that rights are not “earned” but given to everyone under 18 by law.
- **Avoid making it sound abstract** — use simple “day-to-day” examples (e.g., “No one should share your photo without asking”).
- **If children give examples of when their rights were violated, acknowledge and redirect gently:** “That’s a good example, thank you. Let’s also talk after if you want support.”

**Slide 23: Your Responsibilities Online****AIM**

Encourage children to see themselves as active protectors of their online safety. Highlight that respecting others online is as important as protecting themselves.

**FACILITATOR TO SAY**

Just like you have rights online, you also have responsibilities. Being online is fun, but it comes with some rules to keep yourself and others safe.

- **Respect Others:** Don't share private photos, messages, or personal info about someone else without their permission.
- **Protect Yourself:** Keep your passwords secret, set accounts to private, and think before sharing photos or videos.
- **Report Harm:** If someone bullies, threatens, or pressures you—or another child—tell a trusted adult or use a reporting tool.
- **Think Before You Click or Post:** What you share online can last a long time and affect other people, so be careful.

CONNECTED SAFELY

CHILDREN'S AWARENESS

23

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES ONLINE**RESPECT OTHERS****PROTECT YOURSELF****REPORT HARM****THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK****NOTES TO FACILITATOR**

- Stress that responsibilities are about safety, not punishment — they give power to protect both yourself and others.
- If a child shares examples of unkind behavior they've done or seen, keep it light and use it as a learning point without shaming.
- Remind them that even small actions (like not sharing a photo without asking) make a big difference.



Slide 24: What is Against the Law



AIM

Help children clearly understand which online actions are illegal. Build awareness that laws exist to protect them and stop harmful behavior.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Some actions are against the law, meaning they are illegal:

Sharing private or sexual images of anyone under 18.

Example: Someone forwards a private photo of a classmate — real OR fake (edited). This is illegal, even if they didn't take the photo themselves.

Asking a child for sexual photos, videos, or information.

Example: An adult online asks for pictures or says "don't tell anyone" — this is illegal and never the child's fault.

Bullying, threatening, or blackmailing someone online.

Example: A person says "I'll post this unless you do what I say" — this is online violence and it's against the law.

Pretending to be someone else to trick or harm a child.

Example: Someone creates a fake account to get close to another person — this is deception and is illegal.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Emphasize:** if they experience or are pressured to do these things, they are victims, not criminals.
- **Keep language simple;** avoid going into legal jargon.
- If asked "What happens if someone breaks these laws?" — explain that there are authorities to stop harmful behavior and keep children safe.

SECTION B

PRIVACY, SAFETY, AND POSITIVE CHOICES



OBJECTIVES

- Basic online safety and privacy settings
- Understanding consent and boundaries
- Platform-specific safety features - how to manage privacy settings and report
- Reporting mechanisms and help-seeking
- How to recognize uncomfortable or unsafe situations online

CONTENT BREAKDOWN FROM SLIDES



Slide 25: Privacy, Safety, and Control



AIM

TITLE SLIDE - Help teens recognize safe vs unsafe behaviors through examples.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Now we're going to shift to something very practical — how you can protect yourselves online by recognizing what's safe and what's not. This session is about giving you tools and knowledge to spot risky situations and take control of your privacy and safety. We'll use examples to make it real and relatable, so you clearly see the difference between safe and unsafe behaviors.





Slide 26: Shielding Yourself from Online Dangers



AIM

Teach children practical online safety habits that give them control and reduce risks.



MATERIALS NEEDED

Printed Child Handout 1: Spectrum of Online Violence Cards found in Section E.

Printed Child Handout 2: Your Digital Well-being Guide found in Section E.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Every superhero has a shield or power that keeps them safe. Online, your shield is the way you protect your info and privacy. It lets you explore, chat, and post safely, without putting yourself at risk.

Being safe online doesn't mean missing out. By using your shield—protecting your accounts and personal information—you stay safe from strangers, bullying, and unwanted attention, while still being able to explore, play, and connect freely.

How to Shield Yourself:

- Keeping your accounts private so only people you know can see your posts
- Only accepting followers you know
- Never sharing your passwords except with parents or caregivers
- Never sharing personal details like your home address, school name, or phone number
- Support your digital well-being by maintaining healthy habits and being mindful of your screen time

Now let's practice using our cards again. This time, we'll only use Safe (green) or Unsafe (red).

Example 1 – Sharing Passwords

- **SAY:** "You give your account password to a friend so they can post for you."
- **ASK:** Raise their cards based on if they think it is safe or unsafe.
- **After cards are raised EXPLAIN:** "The answer is unsafe. Passwords are private. Sharing them can let someone else control your account or see your personal info. That's unsafe. Doing this puts your privacy at risk, and that's why we don't do it."

Example 2 – Keeping Accounts Private

- **SAY:** "You set your social media accounts to private so only people you know can see your posts."
- **ASK:** Raise their cards based on if they think it is safe or unsafe.
- **After cards are raised EXPLAIN:** "The answer is safe. Keeping accounts private helps protect your information and gives you control over what you share. That's safe online behavior. This is why it's important: it keeps you in control and reduces risk."

Digital safety is one thing, but making sure we maintain a healthy digital life is another. Sometimes, even if you know the risks of being online and you want to limit your screen time, it can be really difficult to keep up the habit. You might find it hard to stay consistent after this session is over. Because of that, we've prepared a list of strategies that you can use and work on with your parents to help you reach your goals.

NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Keep the card activity fast and playful and encourage participation without pressure.
- If children disagree, allow space: "It's okay if you're unsure, that's why we practice."
- Highlight that safety is about being in control, not about fear.



Slide 27: Shield Your Space: App Safety Tips



AIM

Show children how to use platform-specific tools to protect privacy and control their spaces online. Encourage them to take small, practical steps to make their accounts safer.



ASK

Take a moment now to think about your own accounts. Which of these safety features are you already using? Which ones could you turn on today to make your online space safer?

CONNECTED SAFELY

CHILDREN'S AWARENESS

27

SHIELD YOUR SPACE: APP SAFETY TIPS

- Accounts to private
- When in doubt block
- Control who comments, and who talks to you



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Remembering the card game we just played, we saw that having public accounts or sharing too much can be unsafe. Now let's look at some real ways to shield yourself on the platforms you use every day.

Platform-Specific Safety Features:

- **Facebook / TikTok / Instagram / Snapchat:** Set accounts to private, control who can comment, block or report anyone bothering you.
- **Telegram / WhatsApp:** Control who can see your number, block unwanted messages, and avoid being added to groups by strangers.
- **YouTube:** Turn on restricted mode to block harmful content and report unsafe videos.
- **Games like PUBG / Fortnite:** Turn off voice chat with strangers and only play with people you know.

These safety features are like extra layers of your superhero shield—they help you stay in control, protect your personal info, and enjoy social media, messaging apps, and games without unwanted trouble.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Ask for a show of hands: "Who already uses private settings? Who blocks people?" to avoid it taking too long.
- Don't assume all kids use the same apps — let them share which ones they use most.
- Frame safety features as "normal" and something smart online users use.



Slide 28: Protect Your Space: Say Yes or No



AIM

Teach children the concept of consent and boundaries in online spaces. Strengthen their ability to say no when something feels wrong or pressured.



MATERIAL NEEDED

Child Handout 2: Consent Decision Tree to give to children to take home and support on this; found in Section E, and blank paper and assorted colored pencils or markers for optional activity.

Reminder: Handouts are optional; for communities with lower literacy, please prioritize verbal delivery and visual aids, adapting your materials accordingly.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Just like your shield protects your information, your boundaries protect you too. You set boundaries by giving your consent—choosing freely, saying yes only when you feel comfortable, and no when you don't. Respecting your own boundaries helps you stay in control online, keeping your space safe and stopping anyone from pressuring or tricking you.

Understanding Consent and Boundaries - Consent Checklist: Can I Say Yes?

- Do I want to? – I feel comfortable saying yes, not pressured.
- Do I understand? – I know what I'm agreeing to and what might happen.
- Can I say no? – I can refuse without anyone getting angry or upset.
- Is it safe? – Saying yes won't put me, my information, or my privacy at risk.

For example, imagine your friend asks you to send a private Snapchat photo. Would you give your consent and send it?

Let's use the consent checklist to decide:

- Do I want to? – No, it makes me uncomfortable.
- Do I understand? – Yes, I know what sharing this photo could mean.
- Can I say no? – Yes, I can refuse without being in trouble.
- Is it safe? – No, sharing it could put my privacy or safety at risk.
- Since a couple of these answers are no, this means you should not give consent. Saying no is part of your shield—protecting your personal space and choices online.

Yes, setting boundaries can sometimes feel hard, especially with friends or online pressure—but it's a skill that will help you in many aspects of your life. And remember, using your shield means protecting yourself while still enjoying your online world safely.



ACTIVITY

Distribute blank paper and colored markers or pencils and ask participants to draw a "Shield" and within that shield to write down or illustrate the efforts they are taking OR will take to protect themselves from online harm. Allow a select number of volunteers to share with the group if time allows. (OPTIONAL)



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Stress that saying “no” online is a strength, not a weakness.
- Use peer pressure examples carefully — don’t single anyone out.
- If a child shares a personal example, validate them: “That was a good choice to say no” (or) “That’s a hard situation — thank you for sharing.”



Slide 29: Get Help When You Need It



AIM

Show children that support systems exist and they are never alone. Provide clear contacts they can use in unsafe situations.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

If something online makes you feel unsafe or uncomfortable, there are people you can reach out to for support, but we consider always trying to see if you can talk to a trusted adult first.

In the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, you can contact:

116 Child Helpline

- Free, confidential support in Arabic and Kurdish
- Available via phone, Facebook, and email
- Operating Sunday–Thursday, 9 am–6 pm
- Gives advice, guidance, and helps you report concerns

119 DCVAW Helpline

- 24/7 counseling, referral, psychosocial and legal support
- Offers counseling, legal guidance, and referrals
- Can help you figure out safe ways to respond to online abuse

0770 390 6215 Department of Combating Electronic Crimes (DOCEC) – Asayesh

- Investigates threats, blackmail, harassment, and other online crimes

104 Local Police

- For immediate danger or urgent threats to your safety

In Federal Iraq, you can contact:

1. Central Emergency Number (911)
 - A toll-free line that consolidates 26 previous hotlines into this single number, which receives reports from citizens and residents in multiple languages, including Arabic, English, Turkish, Persian, and Kurdish.
2. Regular Police (104)
 - To request assistance and protection.
3. Community Police (497)
 - To request assistance in cases of domestic violence.
4. Directorate of Family and Child Protection (139)
 - To report the harassment against women and adolescent girls and cases of torture.
5. National Security Office (131)
 - To report electronic extortion.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Highlight that the best option is always going to a parent or trusted adult first to get support and help.**
- Stress confidentiality and that asking for help is brave.
- Encourage saving numbers or taking a photo of the slide for later.
- Be prepared. Bring your own referral cards or information, as well as the information for other NGOs offering referral services in the relevant geographic area.
- Only mention reporting authorities (police, Asayesh) as options if there is real danger — avoid creating fear.

SECTION C

POWER, PRESSURE, AND POSITIVE CHOICES - GIRLS



OBJECTIVES

- Recognizing manipulation and coercive and emotional pressure in online relationships and choosing actions that protect dignity, agency, and peer safety
- Responding to gender-based harassment
- Strategies for managing unwanted attention
- Building confidence in digital spaces
- Managing privacy and reputation concerns
- Reporting mechanisms that address honor concerns

CONTENT BREAKDOWN FROM SLIDES



Slide 1: Welcome



AIM

Welcome participants and situate them within the next hour of discussion.



ASK

What's one thing you love doing online? (quick popcorn answers).



**FACILITATOR TO SAY**

Welcome everyone! Today, we're talking about online safety, especially for girls.

This session will help you:

- recognize those red flags
- handle unwanted attention
- build confidence
- protect your privacy
- and know where to get support

**Slide 2: Why Does Online Safety Matter?****AIM**

Introduce the topic of online safety for girls by acknowledging both the positive and negative sides of internet use. Normalize the fact that many girls receive unwanted or uncomfortable messages online, and frame the session as about building awareness and control.

**ASK**

Raise your hand if you've ever been asked to share a photo, your location, or to keep a secret. How did it make you feel?

CONNECTED SAFELY ONLINE SAFETY FOR GIRLS 2

WHY DOES ONLINE SAFETY MATTER?

- The internet is fun & creative
- Not everyone online is kind
- You need to know how you can protect yourself & friends

The slide features a central illustration of a person standing next to a large computer monitor. The monitor displays a login screen with a padlock icon and a checkmark icon. Surrounding the monitor are various icons representing online safety, including gears, a cloud, a shield, and a checkmark.

**FACILITATOR TO SAY**

We all use the internet — to watch videos, do homework, chat with friends on WhatsApp, play games like Roblox or PUBG, follow our favorite celebrities on Instagram, or share photos and stories on SnapChat and TikTok. But sometimes, people use it in harmful ways, especially toward girls. They may try to pressure you into doing things you don't want to do, that you know are wrong, or that they expect you to keep secret from your parents. This is not OK.

The good news is: once you know the signs, you can stay in control, keep yourself safe, and share knowledge with your friends.

**NOTE**

(Let participants see that many hands go up. This normalizes the experience and shows them they are not alone. You can say: "See, lots of us have had this happen. That's why it's so important we talk about it together.")

NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Start on a positive note by highlighting the good sides of the internet before discussing risks.
- **Normalize the experience of receiving uncomfortable messages** — the goal is to reduce shame, not increase fear.
- **If a few hands go up, reassure:** “Even if you haven’t experienced it, you probably know someone who has. And this is still useful to know.”
- **Keep the tone calm and supportive** — avoid alarmist language.
- **Frame this as empowerment:** “Knowing the tricks people use online helps you stay in charge of your choices.”



Slide 3: Red Flags...



AIM

Help girls recognize warning signs — isolation, pushiness, not taking ‘no’ for an answer — as valid indicators that something may be unsafe online.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

When you’re chatting online, pay attention to what the other person asks you to do. Sometimes unsafe people try to get you to do things that cross a line.

- Do they ask you to keep your chats secret or hide them from your parents or friends?
- Do they ask for photos, videos, or your personal information?
- Do they get upset or stop talking if you don’t answer quickly or say no?
- Do they try to move the chat to another app or a private video call?

These are warning signs that the person might not be safe — even if they act friendly or say they care about you.

CONNECTED SAFELY ONLINE SAFETY FOR GIRLS 3

RED FLAGS...

- Too many compliments too fast
- Asking for secrets
- Make you feel guilty
- Isolating you from friends
- Not taking “no” as an answer





ACTIVITY:

“Red Flag or Not?”

- Ask participants to give a **thumbs DOWN** if it’s a red flag, and a **thumbs UP** if it seems safe.
- **Start with:** “A stranger online says, ‘You’re so mature for your age.’”
- **Discuss briefly:** why is this a red flag? (Because they’re focusing on age and trying to blur boundaries).
- Use 2–3 more quick examples (mix of red flags and safe comments) to keep engagement.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Use relatable metaphors: compare the “gut feeling” to an alarm bell, warning light in a video game, or traffic light turning red.
- Normalize the experience: explain that it’s common to feel unsure, but feelings of discomfort are important signals.
- If participants share experiences, thank them and keep responses short so the discussion feels safe and not too heavy.
- Reinforce that instincts don’t need proof: “If it feels wrong, you don’t have to wait for evidence.”
- Transition smoothly into help-seeking in later slides: “When you notice these feelings, that’s when it’s time to reach out for support.”



Slide 4: Manipulation or ‘Grooming’



AIM

Help girls recognize common red flags of manipulation online, understand that these behaviors are warning signs, and practice identifying them in a safe, interactive way.



FACILITATOR TO ASK

- What are some things someone might say online to make you feel special or guilty?
- Why do you think people like this try to make you keep secrets?

Emphasize that real friends and safe adults never ask for secrets, photos, or private chats.

CONNECTED SAFELY ONLINE SAFETY FOR GIRLS 4

MANIPULATION OR ‘GROOMING’

- Starts with kind words or attention
- Becomes personal questions or secrets
- They try to make you feel special or guilty
- They say “Don’t tell anyone” or “You can trust me”
- They push your boundaries and won’t take no for an answer



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Grooming doesn’t usually start with something scary — it starts small, friendly, and kind. Someone might start by giving compliments: “You’re beautiful,” “You’re different from other girls.” That attention can feel nice at first, but slowly, they begin to ask more personal things — like your age, your family, or your photos.

Then they might say things like “Don’t tell your parents; they wouldn’t understand” or “If you liked me, you’d send me that picture.” These are signs of manipulation — they’re trying to control you by using your feelings.

If someone online makes you feel you owe them, can’t say no, or need to keep secrets, that’s not friendship or love — that’s manipulation.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Use clear, everyday language — keep examples short and believable.
- Reinforce that one red flag doesn't mean it's the child's fault; it means the other person's behavior is unsafe.
- Encourage quick responses during the activity — keep it fun but meaningful.
- Be prepared for nervous laughter or joking — acknowledge it lightly, then bring focus back: "It's okay to laugh, but remember these tricks are serious."



Slide 5: Online Harassment May Be...



AIM

Help girls recognize the many forms harassment can take online — from sexual harassment to controlling behavior — and emphasize clearly that harassment is never their fault.



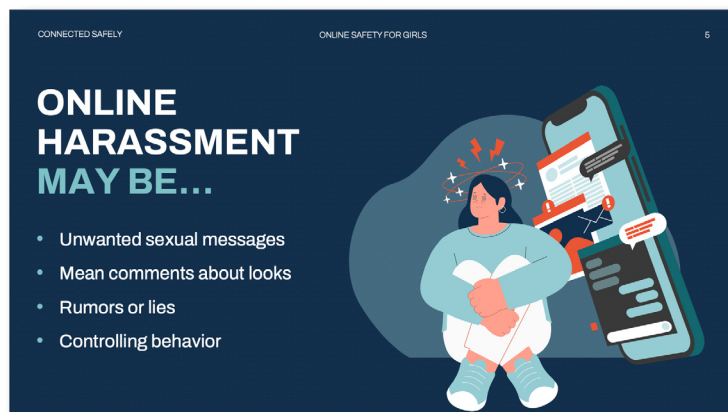
FACILITATOR TO SAY

Harassment is when someone targets you with hurtful, controlling, or inappropriate behavior.

It can look like:

- Sexual harassment — comments, requests for pictures (normal or nudes), sending sexual images, or sharing private photos without your consent.
- Mean comments about your appearance.
- Lies or rumors that hurt your reputation.
- Controlling behavior, like checking who you talk to, stalking your accounts, or making threats.

None of this is okay. And remember: it's never your fault.



ACTIVITY:

Guessing Game (OPTIONAL)

"Which do you think happens the most to girls your age?"

- Let participants guess openly.
- Validate every answer: "Yes, that does happen — and lots of girls report that."
- Close by reinforcing: "Harassment comes in many forms. Whether it's sexual comments, controlling behavior, or spreading rumors, all of it is harassment and none of it is your fault."



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Keep tone serious but supportive** — avoid shaming or singling anyone out.
- **Normalize that harassment is unfortunately common, but reinforce empowerment:** “Recognizing it is the first step to stopping it.”
- **If participants joke or downplay, redirect gently:** “Sometimes people laugh because it’s uncomfortable. But this is a serious issue many girls face.”
- Be clear that the responsibility is always on the harasser, never on the victim.
- **Transition smoothly to coping/help-seeking in the next slide:** “So what can we do when harassment happens?”



Slide 6: Here’s What to Do, Right Away



AIM

Equip girls with clear, practical steps to follow if they experience online harassment: documenting it, setting boundaries, and getting help quickly. Reinforce that seeking help is a strength.

CONNECTED SAFELY ONLINE SAFETY FOR GIRLS 6

HERE'S WHAT TO DO, RIGHT AWAY

- Save it, take screenshots!
- Block them
- Report & tell an adult



FACILITATOR TO SAY

If you're ever harassed online, here's what you should do:

1. Save the evidence

Take screenshots of mean messages, comments, or posts before you block the person. Make sure the date and time show. Keep them safe, or share with a trusted adult.

2. Set clear boundaries

You can be direct: say ‘Stop messaging me’ or ‘Leave me alone.’ You don’t have to be nice to someone who’s being mean. Block them right after. Don’t argue or explain — just block.

3. Get help right away

Talk to a trusted adult like a parent, teacher, or school counselor. Lean on friends who can support you. Report the harassment on the platform. And remember: asking for help doesn’t mean weakness — it means strength.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Keep it concrete:** Emphasize practical, doable actions (screenshots, blocking, reporting).
- **Normalize seeking help:** Say explicitly that it’s the harasser’s fault, not the victim’s, and that strong people ask for support.
- **Anticipate hesitation:** Some girls may feel embarrassed or fear being blamed. Reassure: “You’re never at fault, and you always deserve help.”
- **Encourage peer support:** Remind them they can help friends by listening, validating, and encouraging them to tell a trusted adult.
- **Close on empowerment:** “You are not powerless — you have tools and people who can help you.”



Slide 7: Dealing with Unwanted Attention...



AIM

Show girls practical ways to protect their privacy and set healthy boundaries online, while reinforcing that they are in control of their digital spaces.



ASK

What's one thing you'd never want a teacher or a relative to see online?

(Encourage funny answers to keep the activity light — laughter helps normalize the idea that posts last forever.)



FACILITATOR TO SAY

One of the best ways to stay safe online is to lock down your privacy and set clear boundaries.

Lock down your privacy:

- Make your accounts private so only people you know can follow you.
- Turn off location sharing — no one needs to know where you are.
- Check your privacy settings regularly because apps change their rules.
- Think before you post — remember anyone can screenshot what you share.

Set clear boundaries:

- You don't have to respond to everyone. It's okay to ignore messages or friend requests.
- Trust your gut — if someone makes you uncomfortable, block them.
- Be picky about who you talk to. You get to choose who is in your online space.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Keep tone positive:** Frame privacy as power and control, not fear.
- **Encourage humor:** Let funny examples come out — this makes the message stick.
- **Reinforce agency:** Stress that they get to choose who's in their online world.
- **Model an example:** Share your own lighthearted answer (e.g., "I'd never want an employer to see a picture of me in my pajamas eating a whole pizza").
- **Wrap up:** Remind participants: "Your online space is yours. You're in charge of who sees it and what goes there."



Slide 8: What to Do if They Won't Stop



AIM

Equip girls with clear steps to take when someone keeps bothering them online, whether it's just annoying, genuinely threatening, or spilling over into their real life. Reinforce that the responsibility always lies with the harasser, not the victim.

CONNECTED SAFELY ONLINE SAFETY FOR GIRLS 8

WHAT TO DO IF THEY WON'T STOP

- Annoying... Say once & block
- Threatening... Screenshot + tell an adult
- Affecting real life... Get support



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Sometimes people won't stop, no matter what. Here's what to do, depending on the situation:

If they're annoying but not scary:

- **Send one clear message:** 'I'm not interested in talking. Please stop messaging me.'
- Block them right away — don't wait for their response.
- Don't explain yourself — you don't owe anyone a long explanation.

If they're being threatening or scary:

- Screenshot everything first — you'll need proof.
- Tell a trusted adult right away. Don't handle this alone.
- Report them on the platform. Instagram, TikTok, and others all have reporting tools.
- Take a break from the app if you need to feel safe.

If it starts affecting your real life:

- Talk to a trusted adult about how it's making you feel.
- Don't stop doing the things you enjoy online — the problem is with them, not you.
- If it continues, you may need to change your username or profile.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Emphasize escalation:** Make clear that not all situations are the same — sometimes it's annoying, sometimes it's serious.
- **Stress adult involvement:** Repeat that they should not try to handle threats alone.
- **Normalize blocking/reporting:** Frame it as a smart tool, not "being mean."
- **Empower, don't scare:** Avoid making them feel like they should quit the internet — highlight that the harasser is the problem.
- **Offer reassurance:** Let participants know that changing usernames or profiles is a last resort but can restore safety.
- **Transition smoothly:** "If you ever face this, remember — you're not alone. You have tools and people to help."



Slide 9: Remember Your Rights Online...



AIM

Remind girls that they have rights in digital spaces, just like in real life. Empower them to exercise those rights by setting boundaries, seeking help, and rejecting blame.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

- You have rights online, just like you do in real life.
- You have the right to feel safe.
- You can block or report anyone who makes you uncomfortable.
- You can change your mind — you don't owe anyone your pictures, your conversations, or your time.
- And you have the right to get help without anyone blaming you.

Your have control over your online space, but family and trusted adults are here to support you.

CONNECTED SAFELY ONLINE SAFETY FOR GIRLS 9

REMEMBER YOUR RIGHTS ONLINE...

- You have the right to feel safe online
- You can block, report, or ignore anyone who bothers you
- You can change your mind about what you share or who you talk to
- You deserve help without being blamed



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Use an empowering tone** — this is about rights, not rules.
- **Reinforce that exercising rights online is normal and healthy:** blocking/reporting isn't rude, it's protective.
- **Stress autonomy:** emphasize they can always change their mind, even if they said yes before.
- **Normalize help-seeking:** "If you need help, that doesn't make you weak — it means you're standing up for your rights."
- **Wrap up with a positive reminder:** "When you know your rights, you can use them to protect yourself and your friends."



Slide 10: Take Control!



AIM

Empower girls to take control of their online spaces by curating positive content, disengaging from harmful accounts, and supporting one another to create safer digital communities.



FACILITATOR TO ASK

Quick Share - Name one account you follow that makes you feel good. (OPTIONAL)

(Let participants share lighthearted examples — fun, creative, or inspiring accounts. Normalize the idea that it's smart to choose uplifting content.)

CONNECTED SAFELY ONLINE SAFETY FOR GIRLS 10

TAKE CONTROL!

- Follow positive accounts
- Unfollow/mute negativity
- Support other girls

**FACILITATOR TO SAY**

You are not powerless online. You get to choose who you follow and what kind of content fills your feed.

Follow accounts that inspire and uplift you. Unfollow or mute accounts that bring you down.

And remember — you can support other girls, too. If you see someone being harassed, stand by them. Together, we can make online spaces safer and more positive.

**Slide 11: Remember to Protect Your Privacy...****AIM**

Help girls understand the limits of online privacy and encourage them to think carefully before sharing personal details or content that could impact their future.

**FACILITATOR TO SAY**

Earlier we talked about things you wouldn't want a teacher to see online. That's exactly why it's so important to think before posting — because once something's out there, you can't always take it back.

- **Remember:** nothing online is 100% private.
- Screenshots can last forever.
- Don't include your full name, age, or location (including your school) in your usernames. While you shouldn't create a fake name, it's never necessary to include your full name.
- Be careful with video calls — they can be recorded without you knowing.
- Always think about your future: could this post hurt you at school or work?

The key is to balance being yourself with staying safe.

**NOTES TO FACILITATOR**

- Keep tone practical, not scary — the message is about smart choices, not fear.
- Link back to slide 7's activity to reinforce continuity and remind them they already know what could be risky.
- **Encourage self-reflection:** "Would I be okay if this was on a big screen at school?"
- Stress that protecting privacy doesn't mean hiding your personality — it's about choosing what's safe to share.
- **Wrap up positively:** "You're in charge of what you share. Smart choices today protect your future tomorrow."



Slide 12: Getting Help Safely



AIM

Empower girls to take control of their online spaces by curating positive content, disengaging from harmful accounts, and supporting one another to create safer digital communities.



ASK

Who could be a trusted adult outside your family?

CONNECTED SAFELY ONLINE SAFETY FOR GIRLS 12

GETTING HELP SAFELY

- Anonymous reporting in apps
- Trusted adults (school/community)
- Confidential hotlines
- Only involve family if safe



FACILITATOR TO SAY

There are many safe ways to get help if you're facing online harassment or abuse:

Report on apps anonymously

- Use report buttons on social media apps - you can report anonymously
- Take screenshots first - save evidence before reporting

Get confidential professional help

- Organizations like DCVAW provide support for online violence while keeping your identity safe.
- Social workers are required to keep your information confidential
- You can get help without your family knowing
- They understand honor-based violence risks

Find trusted adults outside your family

- Choose adults who you trust to keep information confidential - teachers or community leaders
- Ask them to help you think through your options without making decisions for you

Before involving family - ask yourself:

- Do you feel genuinely safe telling your family about this situation?
- Have family members ever reacted with anger or violence about reputation issues?
- Do you trust that your family will focus on your safety rather than family reputation?

Remember: your safety always comes first.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Be sensitive when discussing family: avoid assuming participants feel safe at home. Children may be hesitant or quiet when asked to identify a "trusted person" outside of the family due to fear of parental punishment if they report a problem.
- Before delivering the session, identify and consult trusted parties such as community leaders, respected elders, or local youth advocates to gain a clear understanding of local community dynamics, norms, and potential sensitivities. This preparation ensures your facilitation is culturally sensitive and allows you to navigate discussions safely without endangering the children or conflicting with local values.
- If children are quiet or shy about identifying their own trusted adults during the session, you can use the insights gained from these community leaders to suggest safe, local examples (youth center or a well-known kind teacher) to help break the ice.



Slide 13: Trusted People



AIM

Empower children and parents by clearly defining the role of a «trusted adult» in the context of online safety. This section aims to help children identify specific individuals they can turn to for support without fear of blame, while reinforcing the critical message that seeking help is a sign of strength. Through interactive activities, it encourages children to visualize their support network and practice distinguishing between safe, supportive responses and harmful reactions from adults.



ASK

Who Can I Talk To About Online Problems?

- If something happens online that makes you uncomfortable, who would you talk to first?
- Who else could help you if the first person is not available?

Invite volunteers to share (if safe and appropriate). Reinforce that different children may choose different trusted people, and that is okay.



MATERIALS NEEDED

Drawing Paper and Pens



FACILITATOR TO SAY

A trusted person is a supportive adult, such as a parent, teacher, caregiver, or counselor who listens without judgment, acts in the child's best interest, cares about the child's safety, and helps them when something feels wrong or unsafe. This includes situations online.

A trusted person is someone a child can go to if they feel scared, confused, or unsafe, especially when something happens on the internet.

A trusted person:

- Listens calmly without blaming or punishing
- Believes the child and takes their concerns seriously
- Helps the child find solutions and support
- Protects the child's best interests at all times
- Is someone consistent, caring, and honest

Sometimes children may meet people online or see things that make them feel uncomfortable or worried. It is important to know that you are never alone, and there are adults you can trust to help you.



ACTIVITY:

My Circle of Trusted People (OPTIONAL)

Draw the Circle

Ask children to draw a large circle and write "ME" in the center.

Trusted People Around Me

Explain: Around you, there are people who can help and support you when you feel unsafe or worried.

Ask children to draw or write the names of people they trust around the circle. These may include:

- Parent or caregiver
- Teacher
- School counselor
- Relative
- Community leader

Key message: Trusted people are important because they help keep you safe. If something happens online or offline that makes you feel unsafe, confused, or scared, you should always tell a trusted adult. You are never alone, and asking for help is a sign of strength.



ACTIVITY:
Scenarios (OPTIONAL)

Now we will read about different situations. After each one, you will decide: Is this a trusted response or not a safe response from an adult?

1. A child tells a teacher they received a scary message online. The teacher listens calmly and helps them find support.
2. A child shares that someone online asked for personal photos. The adult says, This is your fault, don't tell anyone.
3. A child tells a caregiver they feel uncomfortable about an online friend. The caregiver thanks them for sharing and offers help.
4. A child says something online made them scared. The adult ignores them and says they are overreacting.
5. A teacher explains how to stay safe online and reminds the child they can always talk if something feels wrong.

Group Decision

After each scenario, ask children to move to the side they think is correct (or raise hands if virtual).

Facilitator Clarification

After each response, briefly explain:

- Why it is trusted or not trusted
- What a safe adult should do instead
- Reinforce that safe adults listen, believe, and support not blame or ignore

SAY: A trusted person always listens, believes you, and helps you stay safe. If someone reacts in a harmful or dismissive way, it is important to find another trusted adult until you get help.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Normalize help-seeking outside the family — emphasize that this is smart, not shameful.
- Keep examples simple and relatable (teacher, coach, counselor).
- Reassure participants that professionals and organizations exist to protect them, not judge them.
- **Highlight:** “You deserve support. You are never alone in this.”
- Be prepared. Bring your own referral cards or information, as well as the information for other NGOs offering referral services in the relevant geographic area.



Slide 14: Emergency Help



AIM

Help girls recognize when online harassment crosses into an emergency, know the difference between general support and urgent action, and feel confident that their safety always comes first.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Sometimes situations go beyond harassment and become real emergencies — like if someone threatens violence, says they'll share your private photos, or if you feel unsafe at home.

If you are ever in immediate danger, call 119 — it's a 24-hour helpline in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, or 139 in Federal Iraq. Don't wait. Act quickly.

If you're not safe at home because of family reactions or honor concerns, it's especially important to reach out for outside professional help, like DCVAW. Your information will stay confidential.

In emergencies, your safety always comes first. No post, no threat, no secret is more important than keeping you safe.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Speak calmly and clearly** — don't dramatize, but stress urgency where needed.
- Make sure participants remember the emergency number (repeat it: "190, 24 hours a day").
- **Emphasize that acting fast is a strength:** "You're not overreacting — emergencies need action."
- **Be sensitive when mentioning unsafe homes or honor concerns** — keep tone matter-of-fact, not judgmental.
- **Reinforce confidentiality:** "There are professionals trained to protect you without exposing you."
- **Close with empowerment:** "You deserve to be safe, and you are never alone in an emergency."



Slide 15: My Online Safety Plan



AIM

Help girls move from learning to action by creating a personalized online safety plan. Encourage them to write down practical steps, trusted adults, and boundaries so they feel prepared if something happens.



MATERIAL NEEDED

Child Handout 4: My Online Safety Plan found in Section E.

Reminder: Handouts are optional; for communities with lower literacy, please prioritize verbal delivery and visual aids, adapting your materials accordingly.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

This part is about putting your safety into practice. We've talked about red flags, harassment, and getting help — now let's make your own Online Safety Plan.

- Write down your trusted adults.
- Decide when you'll check your privacy settings.
- Set your boundaries: what you will and won't share online.
- List your support network — friends, communities, and resources you can turn to.

Having a plan makes it much easier to act if something happens, because you won't be caught off guard — you'll already know your steps.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Frame this as empowering, not scary — “You're taking control of your online world.”
- Provide the handout (“My Online Safety Plan”) and give 5–7 minutes for participants to fill it in quietly.
- Offer simple prompts for those who get stuck:
 - “Who do you trust most at school?”
 - “What's one thing you'll never share online?”
- Remind them the plan is personal — they don't have to share it if they don't want to.
- Encourage them to keep the handout somewhere safe and review it regularly.
- Close by reinforcing: “Planning ahead is a sign of strength — it means you're ready to protect yourself and support others.”



Slide 16: Remember! You have the right to:



AIM

Leave girls with a strong, positive closing message that reinforces their rights, self-worth, and power to set boundaries online. End with a group activity that helps them commit to one concrete takeaway.



ASK

Let's finish by going around the room. Share one boundary you'll keep online after today. It could be something like: 'I won't respond to strangers,' 'I'll keep my accounts private,' or 'I'll block anyone who makes me uncomfortable.'



FACILITATOR TO SAY

The most important thing to remember is this: you are never responsible for someone else's actions online.

- You have the right to say no.
- You have the right to block.
- You have the right to report.
- And you have the right to get support.

Stay safe, trust your instincts, and always remember — harassment or abuse is never your fault.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Keep the energy positive and encouraging — this is about empowerment, not fear.
- Give examples of simple boundaries to help participants who feel shy.
- Validate all answers and keep the pace moving.
- If time is short, ask for volunteers instead of going around to everyone.
- Close with a unifying statement: "Each of you has the power to make your online spaces safe, respectful, and positive. Thank you for your courage and honesty today."

SECTION D

POWER, PRESSURE, AND POSITIVE CHOICES - BOYS



OBJECTIVES

- Understanding consent and respectful communication
- Recognizing manipulation in different contexts (gaming, etc.)
- Resisting peer pressure to engage in harmful behaviors
- Becoming active allies against online harassment
- Safe help-seeking that addresses masculine stereotypes

CONTENT BREAKDOWN FROM SLIDES



Slide 1: Power, Pressure, and Positive Choices: Online Safety for Boys



AIM

Situate participants within the next hour of discussion.



ASK

Tell me one word that comes to mind when you think of online gaming or social media?" (quick popcorn answers)



**FACILITATOR TO SAY**

Today we'll explore how boys can stay safe online while also being respectful, confident, and positive role models in digital spaces.

We'll talk about:

- pressures you might face
- how to handle them
- how to support others

**NOTES TO FACILITATOR**

- Start on a positive note by highlighting the good sides of the internet before discussing risks.

**Slide 2: What is Online Child Exploitation and Abuse?****AIM**

To refresh participant memories from Session A and B, and remind them that online violence includes both everyday harmful behaviours and serious sexual exploitation and abuse (OCSEA), understand how it can happen to anyone — including boys — and identify early warning signs such as manipulation, grooming, or pressure for sexual content.

**FACILITATOR TO SAY**

You've already learned that online child exploitation and abuse happens when someone uses the internet, apps, or phones to hurt, pressure, or take advantage of children under 18. Sometimes we call this online violence.

But online violence doesn't only mean extreme cases or criminal acts. It can also include everyday behaviours that cause harm or pressure — like spreading rumours, sharing private pictures, insulting someone in a group chat, or pretending to be someone else.

Online violence can happen between strangers, but also between people who know each other — classmates, teammates, even friends. It can happen through photos, messages, videos, or comments.

In this session, we will again be focusing on Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. It happens when someone uses the internet, apps, or phones to get sexual images, videos, or behaviour from a child or to target them for sexual purposes.

This can look different in real life:

Someone might offer gifts, money, or compliments to try to get private photos.

Someone might pretend to be your age or say "Don't tell anyone."

Someone might share or threaten to share private images to control or embarrass another person.

It's important to know that boys and girls can both be targeted, and sometimes people online try to make boys believe it's "normal" or "fun" when it's actually manipulation or grooming.

**NOTES TO FACILITATOR**

- These are technical concepts and words so try and make it as simple as possible.

**Slide 3: Why does online safety matter?****AIM**

Explain that there are both positive opportunities and harmful pressures that boys will face online, so they can recognize risks and make safer choices.

**ASK**

What kind of pressure have you noticed boys face online?

CONNECTED SAFELY ONLINE SAFETY FOR BOYS 3

WHY DOES ONLINE SAFETY MATTER?

ONLINE =
Fun + Friends + Gaming +
Education ...but also
Pressure

**FACILITATOR TO SAY**

Online spaces give us

- Gaming
- Education
- Creativity
- Friendship

But they also come with pressure — to act tough, prove you're "man enough," or do things that don't feel right.

Recognizing these pressures helps you make better choices.

**NOTES TO FACILITATOR**

- **Make sure boys don't feel singled out or blamed** — frame pressures as something many young people experience.
- **Encourage open sharing.** If the group is quiet, give an example yourself (e.g., "Some boys say they feel pressure to swear a lot in games, even if they don't want to").
- **Be prepared for laughter or joking responses** — acknowledge them, then gently steer back to serious examples.
- **Keep the discussion moving** — aim for 2–3 responses, then wrap up by reinforcing that noticing these pressures is the first step to making safer choices online.



Slide 4: Manipulation happens when...



AIM

Help boys understand common manipulation tactics and recognize when someone is trying to pressure or control them online.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

We’ve talked about how boys sometimes feel pressure online — to fit in, prove themselves, or look confident. Some people use those pressures to manipulate or control boys into doing things they don’t want to.

These people are not friends — they are manipulators — and they often use tricks like these:

- **“Be a man” pressure:** Saying things like “Real boys would send that,” or “Don’t be scared.”

They try to make you prove yourself — but real strength means saying no.

- **Little steps that grow:** Starting with something small — like asking for a normal photo — then slowly asking for more private or sexual pictures.

They test your boundaries to see how far they can go.

- **Gifts or fake rewards:** Offering gifts, free game points, or saying “I’ll make you famous.”

They try to make you feel special so you’ll trust them.

- **“Don’t tell anyone”:** Asking you to keep secrets from your family or friends.

They want to isolate you so they can stay in control.

- **Making you feel guilty and threats:** Saying “You started it,” or “I’ll show everyone if you don’t.”

They blame or scare you to make you obey.

If someone ever talks to you like this, you are not in trouble — they are. The best thing to do is stop replying, take screenshots, and tell a trusted adult or organization right away.



Slide 5: “Being a Man”



AIM

Help boys recognize how “be a man” pressure can be used to manipulate or control them, understand that real strength means self-control and respect, and practice resisting peer or online pressure through role-play.



ASK

Two volunteers role-play. One person tries to pressure the other using “man up” language; the other person says no and practices standing their ground respectfully. Encourage the “responder” to use assertive but respectful language (“No, I’m not doing that,” “That’s not right for me”).

AFTER, ASK

- How did it feel to say no?
- What worked to resist the pressure?
- What made the pressure hard to ignore?



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Sometimes people try to use words like “Be a man” or “Real men don’t back down” to pressure boys into doing things they don’t want to do — like fighting, sending private photos, or taking risks online.

This is called manipulation — when someone tries to control you by making you feel weak, scared, or ashamed if you say no.

In reality, real strength means being in control of your own actions and making choices that are right and safe for you.

Examples of manipulation:

- “Real men don’t say no.”
- “Don’t be a wimp.”
- “What are you scared?”
- Joking or shaming someone for setting limits or respecting others.

People who use these words aren’t showing strength — they’re trying to take yours away.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Keep the tone calm and safe — no shouting or violence.
- Reframe, don’t reject masculinity. Emphasize that being a man can mean being respectful, responsible, and in control of your choices. Avoid mocking cultural values of strength or courage — instead, redefine them positively: “Real strength is being able to walk away from harm, not prove yourself through risk.”
- Acknowledge that “be a man” can also be used as an insult or form of shaming. Make it clear that using those words to insult someone is hurtful and not a sign of strength.
- Normalize vulnerability. Explain that everyone feels pressure sometimes — strength is knowing your limits, not hiding your feelings.



Slide 6: Small to Big



AIM

Help boys recognize how online manipulation often starts small and builds gradually, understand that early “friendly” interactions can become unsafe over time, and practice identifying early warning signs of grooming or exploitation.



MATERIALS NEEDED

Post-It Notes and Pens for each participant



ASK

“What small requests might turn into big red flags?” Collect answers on post-it notes and ask a participant to read them out.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Online exploitation or manipulation rarely starts suddenly. It often begins in ways that seem harmless — gaming, joking around, or sharing small bits of information.

Over time, the person might push for more private details, bully others, or start inappropriate conversations.

This slow build-up is what makes it tricky — it feels normal at first. That’s why it’s important to notice the signs early.

Examples:

- In a gaming chat, someone starts by saying, “Hey bro, what’s your name?” → then asks, “Where do you live?” → then says, “Can you send a photo of your setup or your room?”
- A new “friend” in a group starts joking about body parts or relationships → then sends private messages about those topics.
- Someone shares a meme about girls or sex → then asks what you would do in that situation.
- A person offers free game credits or data → then says you have to “do something small first.”

Each of these starts small but moves toward control, pressure, or sexual content — these are red flags that the person isn’t safe.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Normalize awareness.** Emphasize that anyone can be targeted — it’s not about being naïve. The focus is learning to notice patterns early and act safely.
- **Use relatable examples.** Connect to common experiences like gaming chats, social media jokes, or group message banter. Adapt to platforms youth in your area actually use (e.g., TikTok, WhatsApp, PUBG, Instagram).
- **Encourage reflection, not fear. Keep the tone calm.** You’re teaching awareness and critical thinking, not scaring them away from being online.
- **Link to safety.** Reinforce that early action protects you — stopping communication, blocking, saving messages, and telling a trusted adult or organization are all strong and smart responses.
- If a participant describes a real situation, thank them for sharing and speak privately after the session following safeguarding steps.



Slide 7: Bribes & Secrets



AIM

Help boys recognize that offers of gifts, rewards, or secrecy are signs of manipulation, not friendship, and to reinforce that healthy relationships are based on honesty, respect, and equality — not pressure or control.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Real friends don't need bribes or secrets.

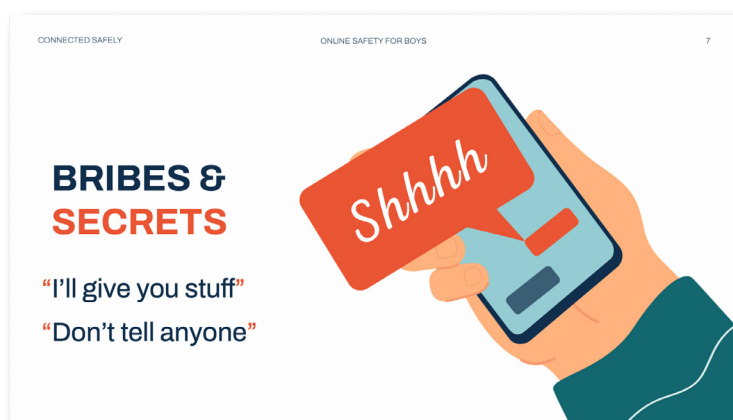
Manipulators might offer gaming items, special group access, or praise like “you're more mature than other guys.”

They'll also demand secrecy: “Don't tell your parents.” Healthy friendships don't require secrecy. Other examples might include:

“I'll give you 1,000 game coins if you send me that picture.”

“If you do this, I'll make you popular in our group.”

“Only the cool kids get these rewards.”



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Explain simply:**
 - Bribes = “If you do this, I'll give you that.”
 - Secrecy = “Don't tell anyone.”
- Both are warning signs that someone's trying to take advantage.
- Explain that these tricks are common — smart people can still be caught off guard. The key is recognizing patterns early.
- In contexts where generosity or gift-giving is normal, clarify the difference: “Gifts given to make you feel unsafe, pressured, or secretive are not real kindness.”
- Reinforce that “real men” and “real friends” show respect and openness, not control.
 - Encourage discussion: Ask:
 - “Have you ever seen someone offer rewards online to get what they want?”
 - “How can you tell the difference between a genuine friend and a manipulator?”
- Link to empowerment. Emphasize that saying no and telling someone you trust isn't weakness — it's protecting your rights and your safety.
- If a participant shares a real-life example, thank them calmly and follow the safeguarding protocol privately.

Slide 8: Making You Feel Guilty

AIM

Help boys recognize emotional blackmail as a form of manipulation, understand that they are never responsible for another person's feelings or threats, and practice saying no in a respectful but confident way — without guilt or fear.

ASK

What's a respectful way to say no without feeling guilty?



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Emotional blackmail is NOT your responsibility.

They may say: "I thought you were cool," "Everyone else is doing this," or even threaten self-harm. Other examples might include:

- "If you don't do this, I won't be your friend anymore."
- "You're the only one I can trust with this secret."
- "Everyone else has already done it — why won't you?"

Remember — you're not responsible for their feelings.

NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Keep examples simple and relatable (e.g., "If someone says, 'Be a real man and send me that photo,' that's using masculinity against you").
- Stress that manipulation can start harmlessly ("Just one small thing...") and then escalate.
- **Emphasize that secrecy is a red flag** — if someone tells you not to tell anyone, that's a warning sign.
- **Avoid shaming;** explain that manipulators are skilled at making kids feel responsible when it's not their fault.
- **Watch body language:** if participants look uncomfortable, acknowledge that it can be a tough topic and reassure them that recognizing these tricks makes them stronger.
- **End the section by reinforcing empowerment:** "Once you know these tricks, they're easier to spot — and you can protect yourself and your friends."



Slide 9: Warning Signs



AIM

Help boys recognize early warning signs of unsafe or manipulative interactions online, and encourage them to trust their instincts when something feels wrong.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Sometimes your body knows something's wrong before your brain does. If you feel nervous, pressured to keep secrets, or stressed after gaming or chatting — those are red flags. This is your gut telling you: something isn't right. Real friends don't make you feel scared, guilty, or like you have to hide things. Trust your gut. Real friends respect your boundaries.

Examples of this might also include:

Feeling knots in your stomach when someone messages you.

Worrying someone might get angry if you say no.

Being asked to do things you wouldn't want your parents or teachers to see.

Thinking, "I don't want to, but I might lose them as a friend if I say no."



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Normalize the feeling.** Explain that everyone has a “gut alarm” — like a built-in safety sensor.
- **Keep it light but serious.** Compare warning signs to “game alerts” or “danger signals” kids already know.
- Encourage kids to listen to their gut and talk to a trusted adult if they feel uneasy.
- **Avoid language that blames:** emphasize that if they feel unsafe, it's the manipulator's fault — not theirs.
- **Close the section by reinforcing empowerment.** “If something feels off, you don't have to wait for proof. Trust your gut, and get help from someone you trust.”



Slide 10: 5 Essential Conditions of Consent



AIM

Teach children that consent is clear, ongoing, and about choice. Help them understand the five parts of consent in easy language: Freely given, Reversible, Informed, Enthusiastic, and Specific.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Consent isn't complicated — it's about respect. To know if consent is real, we don't need a secret code. We just need to check if five conditions are met. If even one is missing, consent is not there. Let's look at these five essentials.

The Five Essentials:

- **Free:** Given without pressure, threats, or tricks.
- **Reversible:** You can say «no» at any time, even after saying «yes» before.
- **Informed:** Everyone knows exactly what they are agreeing to (no lies).
- **Enthusiastic:** It feels like a happy «Yes!» not a hesitant «I guess.»
- **Specific:** Saying yes to one thing doesn't mean yes to everything else.

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5 ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS OF CONSENT



- FREE
- REVERSIBLE
- INFORMED
- ENTHUSIASTIC
- SPECIFIC



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

Use positive, simple examples kids relate to (e.g., “If you say yes to sharing your snack, it doesn't mean you said yes to giving away your lunch too”).

Stress that all five essentials are needed — if even one is missing, it's not real consent.

Avoid shaming; keep tone encouraging: “Real friends and safe people always check for consent.”

Reinforce that “no” is always an option — and saying “no” should be respected every time.

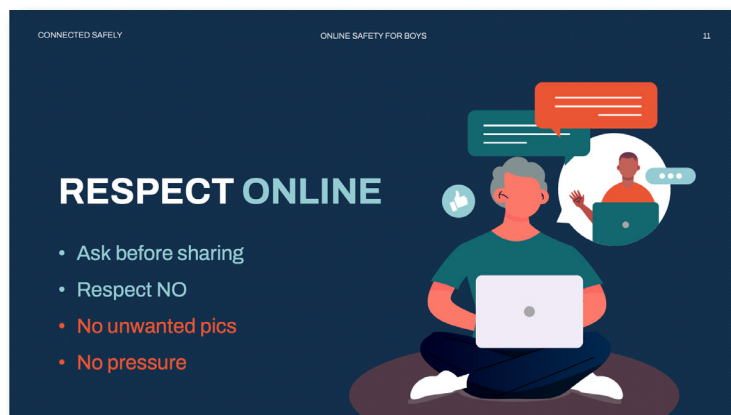


Slide 11: Respect Online



AIM

Help boys understand what respect looks like online and offline, and encourage them to check their actions by putting themselves in the other person's shoes.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Respect means treating people the way you would want to be treated. Online, that means making sure you don't cross someone's boundaries. Respect looks like this...

Respect Looks Like:

- Not pressuring friends.
- Asking before you share someone's info or photos.
- Not sending sexual or rude content they didn't ask for.
- Giving space if someone looks uncomfortable.

Before you [insert example], ask yourself: Would I be okay if someone did this to me? If the answer is no, then it's not respectful.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

Use real-life kid-friendly examples: "Would you like it if someone posted your funny photo without asking? Probably not. That's why we ask first."

Normalize checking in: explain that asking "Is this okay?" is a sign of maturity and strength, not weakness.

Reinforce that respect builds trust and stronger friendships.

If kids laugh or joke about "unwanted sexual content," acknowledge it lightly but bring them back: "Even if it seems funny, it can really hurt or embarrass someone. That's not respect."

Close by encouraging empathy: "Respect online isn't different from respect in real life — it's the same rule: treat others the way you want to be treated."



Slide 12: Peer pressure



AIM

Show boys that pressure can take many forms online, from bullying and dares to sharing harmful jokes, and help them recognize when they are being pushed to do things they don't want to do.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Online spaces can be fun, but they also come with pressure. People might try to push you into doing things just to fit in or look cool. Pressure can take many forms, and it's important to notice when it's happening."

Examples of Pressure Online:

- Bullying female gamers or making fun of them.
- Sending sexual pictures or messages.
- Trolling others to get a reaction.
- Sharing racist or sexist jokes.
- Doing dares that make you or someone else uncomfortable.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Normalize that everyone faces pressure online at some point** — it's not a personal weakness.
- **Explain that pressure is a red flag:** if you feel you "have to" do something to belong, it's not a real choice.
- **Avoid singling kids out** — keep examples general, but let participants share others they've noticed.
- **Be ready for giggles at some examples (jokes/dares); acknowledge with a smile, then bring it back:** "It might sound funny, but it can actually hurt people."
- **Wrap up by stressing empowerment:** "Real strength is knowing when to say no to pressure, even if others are going along."

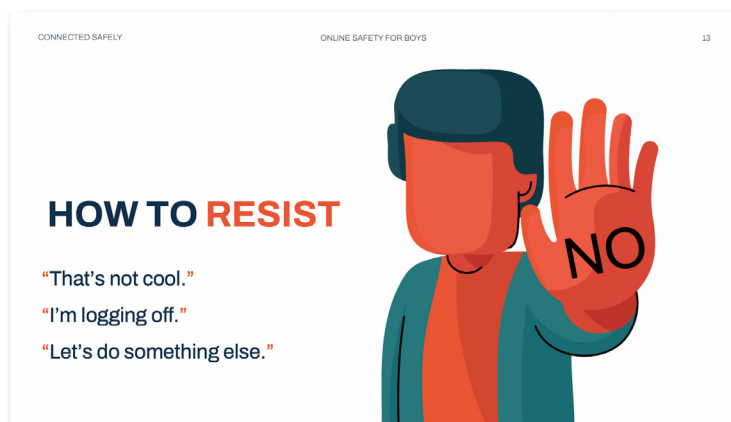


Slide 13: How To Resist



AIM

Give boys practical phrases and the confidence to say no in pressured situations online, and let them practice responding in a safe, supportive setting.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

When someone pressures you online, you don't have to argue or explain yourself. A short, strong response is enough. You can say things like: 'That's not cool,' 'Let's do something else,' 'This is getting weird,' or you can just log off. Real strength is walking away from toxic behavior, not joining in.



ACTIVITY:

Put participants into pairs.

- Give each pair a short pressured scenario (e.g., "Your friend dares you to send a picture," or "Someone in the game keeps making mean jokes about another player").
- Ask them to come up with and practice one strong way to say no.
- After 2–3 minutes, invite a few pairs to share their best examples with the group.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Model a confident "no" yourself first, so kids see what it sounds like.
- Encourage tone and body language: calm, firm, not apologetic.
- Keep scenarios age-appropriate and not too heavy; focus on everyday online pressures.
- Reinforce that there is no "perfect" wording — any clear no, or logging off, is valid.
- **Celebrate creativity:** highlight phrases that are simple, respectful, or funny in a way that shuts pressure down.
- **Wrap up by reminding:** "The goal isn't to please everyone online. The goal is to keep yourself safe."



Slide 14: Be An Ally



AIM

Encourage boys to see allyship as a form of real strength and to practice ways they can actively support others online by speaking up, reporting harm, and creating positive spaces.



ASK

What's one way you could make your gaming or social space more positive this week?



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Real strength isn't about putting others down — it's about protecting them. Being an ally means standing up when you see someone being treated unfairly. That could mean calling out bullying, reporting harassment, supporting players who are being targeted, or using your voice to make your online space welcoming for everyone. Every small action makes a difference.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- **Emphasize that allyship is active** — it's not enough just to not bully; being an ally means choosing to help.
- **Normalize small steps:** even sending a supportive message like "Don't worry about them, you're great at this game" is allyship.
- **Encourage peer influence:** explain that when one person stands up, others often follow.
- If kids seem hesitant to "call out" bullying, highlight safer options like reporting through the platform or checking in privately with a friend who was targeted.
- **Watch time** — let 3–4 participants share examples, then summarize by reinforcing: "Real strength is making online spaces safe and fun for everyone."



Slide 15: Getting Help = Strength



AIM

Challenge the myth that seeking help is weakness, and show boys that real strength means reaching out to trusted people or services when they feel unsafe online.



FACILITATOR TO ASK

Who would you reach out to if you felt unsafe online?



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Sometimes people say that men and boys should 'deal with problems on their own.' That's a myth. Asking for help is not weakness — it's smart. Real strength is knowing when you need support and reaching out. There are always people who can help — trusted adults, school counselors, helplines, or supportive friends.

When situations go beyond harassment and become real emergencies — like if someone threatens violence, says they'll share your private photos, or if you feel unsafe at home, it's brave to seek help.

If you are ever in immediate danger, call the emergency services or 116 — it's a 24-hour helpline. Don't wait. Act quickly.

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GETTING HELP = STRENGTH

“Real men ask for help 🙌”

- Trusted adult
- 24/7 Children's Helpline 116
- Friend
- Emergency services if unsafe
- DCVAW – confidential support

If unsafe at home → seek outside help



NOTES TO THE FACILITATOR

- Children may be hesitant or quiet when asked to identify a “trusted person” outside of the family due to fear of parental punishment if they report a problem.
- Before delivering the session, identify and consult trusted parties such as community leaders, respected elders, or local youth advocates to gain a clear understanding of local community dynamics, norms, and potential sensitivities. This preparation ensures your facilitation is culturally sensitive and allows you to navigate discussions safely without endangering the children or conflicting with local values.
- If children are quiet or shy about identifying their own trusted adults during the session, you can use the insights gained from these community leaders to suggest safe, local examples (youth center or a well-known kind teacher) to help break the ice.



Slide 16: Trusted People



AIM

Empower children and parents by clearly defining the role of a «trusted adult» in the context of online safety. This section aims to help children identify specific individuals they can turn to for support without fear of blame, while reinforcing the critical message that seeking help is a sign of strength. Through interactive activities, it encourages children to visualize their support network and practice distinguishing between safe, supportive responses and harmful reactions from adults.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

A trusted person is a supportive adult, such as a parent, teacher, caregiver, or counselor who listens without judgment, acts in the child's best interest, cares about the child's safety, and helps them when something feels wrong or unsafe. This includes situations online.

A trusted person is someone a child can go to if they feel scared, confused, or unsafe, especially when something happens on the internet.

A trusted person:

- Listens calmly without blaming or punishing
- Believes the child and takes their concerns seriously
- Helps the child find solutions and support
- Protects the child's best interests at all times
- Is someone consistent, caring, and honest

Sometimes children may meet people online or see things that make them feel uncomfortable or worried. It is important to know that you are never alone, and there are adults you can trust to help you.

**ACTIVITY:****My Circle of Trusted People (OPTIONAL)*****Draw the Circle***

Ask children to draw a large circle and write “ME” in the center.

Trusted People Around Me

Explain: Around you, there are people who can help and support you when you feel unsafe or worried.

Ask children to draw or write the names of people they trust around the circle. These may include:

- Parent or caregiver
- Teacher
- School counselor
- Relative
- Community leader

ASK: Who Can I Talk To About Online Problems?

- If something happens online that makes you uncomfortable, who would you talk to first?
- Who else could help you if the first person is not available?

Invite volunteers to share (if safe and appropriate). Reinforce that different children may choose different trusted people, and that is okay.

Key message: Trusted people are important because they help keep you safe. If something happens online or offline that makes you feel unsafe, confused, or scared, you should always tell a trusted adult. You are never alone, and asking for help is a sign of strength.



ACTIVITY: Scenarios (OPTIONAL)

Now we will read about different situations. After each one, you will decide: Is this a trusted response or not a safe response from an adult?

1. A child tells a teacher they received a scary message online. The teacher listens calmly and helps them find support.
2. A child shares that someone online asked for personal photos. The adult says, This is your fault, don't tell anyone.
3. A child tells a caregiver they feel uncomfortable about an online friend. The caregiver thanks them for sharing and offers help.
4. A child says something online made them scared. The adult ignores them and says they are overreacting.
5. A teacher explains how to stay safe online and reminds the child they can always talk if something feels wrong.

Group Decision

After each scenario, ask children to move to the side they think is correct (or raise hands if virtual).

Facilitator Clarification

After each response, briefly explain:

- Why it is trusted or not trusted
- What a safe adult should do instead
- Reinforce that safe adults listen, believe, and support not blame or ignore

SAY: A trusted person always listens, believes you, and helps you stay safe. If someone reacts in a harmful or dismissive way, it is important to find another trusted adult until you get help.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Normalize help-seeking outside the family — emphasize that this is smart, not shameful.
- Keep examples simple and relatable (teacher, coach, counselor).
- Reassure participants that professionals and organizations exist to protect them, not judge them.
- **Highlight:** “You deserve support. You are never alone in this.”
- Be prepared. Bring your own referral cards or information, as well as the information for other NGOs offering referral services in the relevant geographic area.
- **A trusted person** is a supportive adult, such as a parent, teacher, caregiver, or counselor who listens without judgment, acts in the child's best interest, cares about the child's safety, and helps them when something feels wrong or unsafe. This includes situations online.
- **A trusted person** is someone a child can go to if they feel scared, confused, or unsafe, especially when something happens on the internet.
- **A trusted person:**
 - Listens calmly without blaming or punishing
 - Believes the child and takes their concerns seriously
 - Helps the child find solutions and support
 - Protects the child's best interests at all times
 - Is someone consistent, caring, and honest

Before the activity Start a simple, open conversation:

Sometimes children may meet people online or see things that make them feel uncomfortable or worried. It is important to know that you are never alone, and there are adults you can trust to help you.

Then guide caregivers (if present) with key messages:

- Talk to your child regularly about their online experiences
- Ask open questions like: Who do you talk to online? or Is anything online worrying you?
- Stay calm, listen, and avoid blame or shame
- Remind children that online actions can affect others and vice versa
- Encourage children to always ask for help if something feels wrong



ACTIVITY 1: Scenarios (OPTIONAL)

Draw the Circle

Ask children to draw a large circle and write “ME” in the center.

Trusted People Around Me

Explain: Around you, there are people who can help and support you when you feel unsafe or worried.

- Ask children to draw or write the names of people they trust around the circle. These may include:
- Parent or caregiver
- Teacher
- School counselor
- Relative
- Community leader

Who Can I Talk To About Online Problems?

Ask specifically:

- If something happens online that makes you uncomfortable, who would you talk to first?
- Who else could help you if the first person is not available?

Invite volunteers to share (if safe and appropriate). Reinforce that different children may choose different trusted people, and that is okay.

Key message: Trusted people are important because they help keep you safe. If something happens online or offline that makes you feel unsafe, confused, or scared, you should always tell a trusted adult. You are never alone, and asking for help is a sign of strength.

**ACTIVITY 2:**

Scenario cards (or facilitator reads aloud if no materials)

Explain the Activity

Say: Now we will read about different situations. After each one, you will decide: Is this a trusted response or not a safe response from an adult?

1. A child tells a teacher they received a scary message online. The teacher listens calmly and helps them find support.
2. A child shares that someone online asked for personal photos. The adult says, This is your fault, don't tell anyone.
3. A child tells a caregiver they feel uncomfortable about an online friend. The caregiver thanks them for sharing and offers help.
4. A child says something online made them scared. The adult ignores them and says they are overreacting.
5. A teacher explains how to stay safe online and reminds the child they can always talk if something feels wrong.

Group Decision

After each scenario, ask children to move to the side they think is correct (or raise hands if virtual).

Facilitator Clarification

After each response, briefly explain:

- Why it is trusted or not trusted
- What a safe adult should do instead
- Reinforce that safe adults listen, believe, and support not blame or ignore

Key message: A trusted person always listens, believes you, and helps you stay safe. If someone reacts in a harmful or dismissive way, it is important to find another trusted adult until you get help.



Slide 17: My Action Plan



AIM

Guide boys to reflect on what they've learned and create a personal action plan for safer, more respectful online behavior. Encourage ownership, self-awareness, and concrete steps for both self-protection and supporting others.



MATERIALS NEEDED

Child Handout 5: My Action Plan Template found in Section E. Reminder: Handouts are optional; for communities with lower literacy, please prioritize verbal delivery and visual aids, adapting your materials accordingly.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

We've talked about pressures, respect, allyship, and help-seeking. Now it's your turn to put it all together in your own Action Plan. This is like a roadmap for how you want to act online — based on your values, your boundaries, and the support you know you can count on.

Take a few minutes to fill this out honestly. There are no right or wrong answers. This is for you — to help you think about how you'll handle tough situations and how you can make your online spaces more positive.

Remember: Being strong online doesn't mean proving you're tough. Real strength means protecting yourself and others, respecting boundaries, and knowing when to ask for help.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- Set the tone: Frame the activity as empowering, not like a school test. Emphasize privacy — participants don't have to share anything they don't want to.
- Give examples: Offer 1–2 sample responses (e.g., "A value could be kindness" or "A behavior I won't engage in: making fun of other players"). This helps kids get started without copying.
- Encourage honesty: Remind participants the plan is theirs alone. They can keep it private or share parts of it if they want.
- Support reflection: Circulate around the room quietly while they write. If someone is stuck, ask gentle prompts like, "What's one thing online that you would never want to do?"
- Wrap up positively: After they finish, ask for a few volunteers to share one idea from their plan (e.g., an ally action or a support person). End by reinforcing: "Each of you has the power to make online spaces safer and more respectful. Your action plan is the first step."



Slide 18: Wrap Up



AIM

End the session by reinforcing key lessons: respect, boundaries, allyship, and help-seeking. Leave participants with encouragement that they have the power to make online spaces safer for themselves and others.



FACILITATOR TO SAY

Today we've talked about how to spot pressure, set boundaries, say no, and stand up for others. We learned that real strength isn't about proving yourself online — it's about protecting yourself and building positive spaces for everyone.

Remember your Action Plan. Keep it somewhere safe and look at it when you need a reminder of your values, your support network, and your next steps.

You each have the power to make a difference online — by respecting others, saying no to harmful behavior, being an ally, and asking for help when you need it. That's what true strength looks like.

Thank you for your honesty and participation today. I hope you leave feeling more confident and more prepared to shape your online spaces into positive ones.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR

- End on encouragement, not fear — emphasize kids' power and choices.
- Invite 1–2 volunteers to share a favorite takeaway if time allows.
- Remind participants that trusted adults, counselors, and helplines are always available.
- Keep the tone hopeful: "You are not alone online — and you're stronger than you think."

SECTION E

RESOURCES

Printed Child Handout 1: Spectrum of Online Violence Cards

 <p>SAFE</p> <p>You feel good and in control.</p> <p>Example: You know the person, and the interaction is respectful.</p>	 <p>Uncomfortable</p> <p>Something doesn't feel right.</p> <p>Example: You aren't sure if it's OK or not. You don't like the interaction or feel pressured.</p>	 <p>Unsafe</p> <p>You feel scared, hurt, or threatened.</p> <p>Example: Someone is asking for private things or trying to control you.</p>
 <p>SAFE</p> <p>You feel good and in control.</p> <p>Example: You know the person, and the interaction is respectful.</p>	 <p>Uncomfortable</p> <p>Something doesn't feel right.</p> <p>Example: You aren't sure if it's OK or not. You don't like the interaction or feel pressured.</p>	 <p>Unsafe</p> <p>You feel scared, hurt, or threatened.</p> <p>Example: Someone is asking for private things or trying to control you.</p>



Printed Child Handout 2:
Your Digital Well-being Guide

YOUR DIGITAL WELL-BEING GUIDE



Knowing how to stay safe online is like having a map, but building healthy habits is how you actually finish the quest! When you and your family work together, you can make the digital world a fun, safe, and exciting place without feeling drained or tired.

Why does this matter?

When you take control of your screen time, you get more energy, better sleep, and more time for the things you actually love doing—like hanging out with friends, playing sports, or crushing a new hobby.

HACK YOUR ENVIRONMENT

You can “hack” your world to make it easier for your brain to focus and relax.

• **Strategy 1: The Device Parking Lot**

Pick a basket in the kitchen or living room where your devices “sleep” at night.

The Benefit: Getting the phone out of your bedroom helps your brain relax, so you wake up feeling well-rested, energized and ready for the day.

• **Strategy 2: Go Gray for Focus**

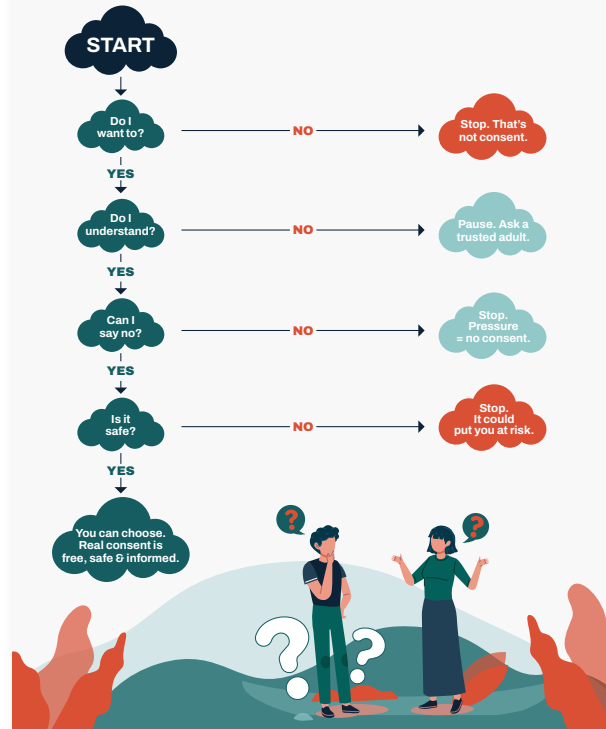
Apps are designed with bright, “candy” colors to trick your brain into staying longer. By turning your screen to Grayscale, you take that power back.

The Benefit: TikTok and Instagram become much less “sticky,” making it way easier to put the phone down when you’re done.



Child Handout 2:
Consent Decision Tree

CONSENT DECISION TREE



Child Handout 4: My Online Safety Plan

MY ONLINE SAFETY PLAN



This is your personal plan for staying safe online. You can use it to set boundaries, remember your support network, and know what to do if something goes wrong. Keep it somewhere safe and update it regularly.

TRUSTED ADULTS

Primary contact: _____

Secondary contact: _____

Emergency contact: _____

PRIVACY & SAFETY SETTINGS

My review schedule (monthly date): _____

Platforms to check: _____



Child Handout 5: My Action Plan

MY ACTION PLAN



PERSONAL VALUES AND BOUNDARIES

My core values that guide my online behavior:

Behaviors I will not engage in online:

How I will respond when pressured to do inappropriate things:

SUPPORT NETWORK

Trusted adults I can talk to about online concerns:



