

WP2 - PR.I.S.C.I.LLA EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR YOUTH WITH I.D.

MODULE 4: ENSURING SAFETY IN USING SOCIAL MEDIA

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PR.I.S.C.I.LLA EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR YOUTH WITH I.D.

Module 4: Ensuring Safety in Using Social Media

Module Summary

This module is designed to inspire and support young people with intellectual disabilities (ID) in confidently and safely engaging with social media platforms. Through a practical and inclusive approach, it enables participants to develop a clear understanding of privacy and how to safeguard their personal information online. By providing practical tools to manage privacy settings, identify and respond to unsafe situations, and adopt healthier social media habits, the module promotes digital independence while ensuring safety and well-being in online environments.

Learning Outcomes of the Module

By the end of the module, participants will:

- Demonstrate a clearer understanding of privacy and personal information.
- Confidently adjust privacy settings on social media to enhance their safety.
- Identify and respond appropriately to unsafe requests or interactions online.

Educational principles adopted

Positive risk-taking, Self-determination, Sense of control, Promotion of independence

Contents of the module

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- Understanding Privacy and Personal Information (S4-S7)
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Introduction

Social media plays an important role in the everyday lives of young people. It helps them connect with friends, share their interests, and explore the world. When used cautiously, social media can be invaluable for young people with intellectual disabilities (ID). Recent studies suggest that the perceived benefits of social media use are greater for individuals with intellectual disabilities than for their neurotypical counterparts (Chadwick, D. D., Quinn, S., & Fullwood, C., 2017). Platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, Snapchat, Twitch, Telegram and others and Instagram provide spaces for everyone to express themselves, build friendships, and, most importantly, feel included in their communities.

However, managing social media posts and interactions can be challenging for young people with ID, exposing them to risks such as cyberbullying and sexual harassment. Reports indicate that cyberbullying is a prevalent issue within this demographic, with many young adults experiencing exclusion and negative interactions on social media platforms (Borgström, Å., Daneback, K., & Molin, M., 2019). The combination of cognitive challenges and increased exposure to online environments contributes to a heightened risk of harmful experiences for individuals with intellectual disabilities compared to their neurotypical peers.

Moreover, young people with ID often face significant difficulties in navigating social cues and understanding boundaries, making them more vulnerable to grooming and other predatory behaviours online.

The aim of Module 4 is to empower young people to recognise and evaluate what personal information they can safely share online and to understand the intentions behind communications from others. Both aspects are crucial for fostering a safer online environment.

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To achieve this, the module will provide practical tips for enhancing privacy and security on social media platforms. By including step-by-step guides with visuals, we aim to ensure that these concepts are accessible and easy to implement. This approach should enable young people to make informed decisions regarding their online presence and to seek help whenever necessary.

This module will also address the recognition of intent behind communications from others to strengthen the ability of young people with ID to discern what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate online interactions.

Understanding Privacy and Personal Information

Unit Objective:

This unit is designed to help young people with intellectual disabilities understand the meaning of privacy in online interactions and why protecting personal information is important. Participants will learn to tell the difference between public and private information and identify what is safe to share online.

A key focus of this session will be the sharing of photos and videos. Participants will explore how these can reveal personal information that might be misused. Examples of written and photographic information will be shared to encourage discussions and help participants express their thoughts.

Private vs. Personal Information

Privacy means being able to control who can see your personal information or online activity. It allows you to decide who can see your posts, photos, or details about where you are.

Personal information includes any details that could identify someone. This could be things like a name, address, phone number, or photos that show personal details, such as the location of your home or the people in your life.

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Why It Matters?

Research shows that social media users with intellectual disabilities, such as those with Williams syndrome, often share too much personal information on their profiles. They are also more likely to take part in risky online behaviours (Lough & Fisher, 2016).

Social media encourages sharing and connecting, but it can make it hard to know what is safe to share. Teaching young people with intellectual disabilities to separate public information (like hobbies or favourite movies) from private information (like addresses or passwords) is essential for their safety and independence online.

Practical Privacy-Protection Skills for Social Media

Facebook is the primary social media platform used for connecting with family and friends, according to a recent study (Bayor, A., Bircanin, F., 2018). Other social media platforms, such as Instagram and Snapchat, can also serve as breeding grounds for the harassment of individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID).

The following practical guides aim to empower young people with ID by enabling them to adjust and utilise privacy and security settings on social media platforms to maintain safety and control over shared content. This will help build participants' confidence in managing their online privacy settings and understanding their right to personal boundaries in digital spaces.

1. Facebook

Step 1. Access Settings
Open the Facebook app or website.
Click on the downward arrow in the top right corner (on desktop) or tap the three horizontal lines (on mobile).
Select Settings & Privacy, then click on Settings.
Step 2: Adjust Privacy Settings
In the left sidebar, click on Privacy.

Under Your Activity, adjust who can see your future posts by selecting Friends, Only Me, or Custom.

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Step3: Profile Visibility

Scroll down to How People Find and Contact You.

Change settings for who can send you friend requests and who can look you up using your email address or phone number.

Step 4: Review Profile Information

Go to your profile and click on About.

Edit visibility for each section (e.g., Work, Education) to control who can see this information.

2. Instagram

• Step 1: Go to Your Profile

Open the Instagram app and tap your profile picture in the bottom right corner.

• Step 2: Access Settings

Tap the three horizontal lines in the top right corner, then select Settings.

• Step 3: Set Account to Private

Tap Privacy, then toggle on Private Account. This means only approved followers can see your posts and profile.

Step 4: Manage Comments and Interactions

Under Privacy settings, adjust options for comments, messages, and story sharing to limit who can interact with your content.

3. TikTok

• Step 1: Open Your Profile

Launch the TikTok app and tap on Profile at the bottom right.

• Step 2: Access Privacy Settings

Tap the three dots (or lines) in the top right corner to open settings. Select Privacy.

Step 3: Set Account to Private

Toggle on Private Account. This will restrict your videos to only followers you approve.

Step 4: Control Interactions

Adjust settings for who can comment on your videos, send you messages, or duet with you under the respective sections in Privacy settings.

4. Snapchat

Step 1: Access Settings

Open Snapchat and tap on your profile icon in the top left corner.

Tap the gear icon in the top right corner to access the Settings menu.

Step 2: Adjust Privacy Controls

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Who Can Contact Me Scroll down to Privacy Controls.

Tap on Contact Me.

Choose Friends, so only people you have added as friends can contact you. Avoid selecting options that allow everyone to contact you.

5. Twitch:

- Step 1: Open the chat where the user you want to block is active.
- Step 2: Click on the username of the person you want to block. This opens their user card.
- Step 3: On the user card, click the three-dot menu (or settings icon).
- Step 4: Select "Block User" from the dropdown menu.
- Step 5: Confirm the action if prompted.

Recognizing Safe vs. Unsafe Requests Online

Young people with intellectual disabilities (ID) face unique vulnerabilities when it comes to sexual harassment, particularly in online environments. Here are several examples of how sexual harassment can manifest for this demographic:

The objective here is to empower young people with disabilities to Identify and respond to risky situations: Recognize signs of cyberbullying, sexual harassment, or inappropriate requests online and know how to respond effectively, including, blocking and reporting users.

Encourage asking questions or seeking guidance if unsure about sharing specific information.

Reinforce the importance of saying "no" to sharing personal details when it feels uncomfortable or unsafe. Promoting Self-Awareness and Confidence:

Inappropriate Online Messaging: A young person with ID might receive unsolicited messages on social media platforms that contain sexual content or requests for explicit images.

Example: Mia receives a direct message on Instagram from someone she doesn't know. The message says, "Hey, I think

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you're really hot! Can you send me some pictures of you in a bikini?"

Sexual Comments and Jokes: Harassment can occur through verbal or written comments that are sexual in nature.

Example: During a live stream on TikTok, a viewer comments, "You should show us your legs; they look sexy!"

Grooming Behaviours: Perpetrators may engage in grooming behaviours, where they build a rapport with a young person with ID to gain their trust before making inappropriate requests.

Example: An adult posing as a friend online who gradually begins to ask personal questions about the youth's sexual experiences or pressures them into sharing private information.

Exploitation through Manipulation: Young people with ID might be manipulated into performing sexual acts or sharing explicit content in exchange for favours, such as help with schoolwork or social acceptance.

Example: A peer writing: "If you want to sit with us at lunch, you need to send me a picture of yourself."

Sharing Sexualized Content: Some individuals may share pornography or sexually explicit materials with youth with ID without consent.

Example: Sending inappropriate unsolicited videos or images through messaging apps.

Pressure to Engage in Sexual Activities: A young person may be pressured by peers to engage in sexual activities they are uncomfortable with, often under the threat of being ostracised by social groups. For instance, a group might say, "If you don't go out with him, we won't hang out with you anymore," putting undue pressure on the individual.

Media Attached: Picture guides for blocking accounts on Social Media Apps (Messenger, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Twitch) (S23)

1. Borgström, Å., Daneback, K., & Molin, M. (2019). Young people with intellectual disabilities and social media: A

Additional Material

Resources

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Icebreaker 1

Name of the Activity

What's Next?

Objectives

Sharing information in a fun way, that increases participants' understanding of the concept of boundaries and what is appropriate to share online. Furthermore, participants get comfortable discussing online safety in a positive and engaging environment.

Time allocated for the Activity

5-10 min

Instructions

In this game, young people use their imaginations to finish a sentence. There's no right or wrong way to finish it. Each sentence starter is designed to promote information-sharing, but is up to participants to decide what kind of information they share.

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Sentence Starters Examples:

"My favourite place to spend time is..."

"If someone asked where I live, I'd say..."

"If I had to describe my family, I'd say..."

"The thing I'd share about my day is..."

These starters can encourage participants to think critically about what is appropriate and safe to share versus what is private, making them valuable in the context of teaching online safety and personal boundaries.

Activity 1 of Module

Name of the Activity

Red Flag, Green Flag

Objectives

To help participants identify what personal information is safe or unsafe to share online.

Learning Methodologies

Practical exercises and interactive activities

Time allocated for the Activity

30 min

Resources Needed

- 1. Green and red flags for each participant.
- 2. A cardboard box full of Post-it stickers with information examples to read aloud (e.g., full name, favourite hobby, phone number, family photos).
- 3. Two cardboard boxes one green, with a sticker that says "Post", and a red one marked with "Delete."

Instructions

Introduction (5 minutes)

The facilitator pulls out and reads aloud Post-it stickers from the cardboard box. Participants use **green cards** (for safe information) and **red cards** (for unsafe information) to evaluate the examples. Then, the facilitator puts the green-flagged stickers into the green ("post") box, and the red-flagged into the red ("delete") box. Examples range from harmless hobbies to sensitive details like revealing photos addresses or passwords.

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Game Play (10-15 minutes)

Reading out examples of information one at a time (e.g., "Your favourite colour," "Your home address," "A funny photo with friends"). Ask participants to lift their green flags for safe information or their red flags for unsafe information.

After each example, there's a brief explanation of why it's safe or unsafe to share.

Safe to Share (Green Flag Examples):

- The name of a favourite movie or TV show (e.g., "I love Frozen!").
- Your favourite type of food (e.g., "I love pizza!").
- Hobbies or interests (e.g., "I like drawing" or "I enjoy playing soccer").
- General feelings or positive comments (e.g., "Today is a great day!" or "I love dogs").
- Favourite music or song (e.g., "I love listening to Taylor Swift").
- Fun or non-personal photos (e.g., a photo of your art or a group picture at a public event).
- Public events or activities you are attending (e.g., "I'm going to the community picnic this Saturday").

Unsafe to Share (Red Flag Examples):

- Full name (e.g., "My name is Jane Smith").
- Home address (e.g., "I live at 123 Main Street").
- Phone number (e.g., "My number is 555-1234").
- School or workplace (e.g., "I go to Maple High School").
- Passwords or login details (e.g., "My password is 1234").
- Private family information (e.g., "My mom works late, and I'm home alone").
- Location details (e.g., "I'm at the park on Elm Street right now").
- Photos of yourself in private spaces (e.g., in your bedroom or bathroom, or in a swimsuit).
- Intimate or private photos (e.g., sending selfies that show private areas or suggest inappropriate behaviour).
- Messages or comments that make you feel uncomfortable

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 Discussions about personal relationships or sexual topics (e.g., "I'm dating someone, here's all the details about them").

Group Reflection (5-10 minutes)

Discussion about the common mistakes people make when sharing online. Encourage participants to share their tips or experiences with what they use to stay safe online.

Through this process, participants actively think about the risks of oversharing and gain practical insights into safe online behaviour.

Conclusion

Through this activity, we learned how to decide what information is safe to share online and what to keep private. Using these "green flag" and "red flag" skills can help protect participants and others on social media.

Icebreaker 2

Name of the Activity

"My Safety Superpower"

Objectives

This icebreaker is designed to encourage participants to reflect on their strengths and qualities that help them stay safe, and help them feel confident about discussing safety and boundaries.

Time allocated for the Activity

15 minutes

Resources Needed

1. Pre-made cards with simple pictures or words that represent safety or strengths (e.g., a shield, a lock, a phone, a stop sign, or words like "trust," "bravery," "help," etc.).

2. A soft object that participants can pass around (ex. softball).

Instructions

The group of participants is seated in a circle and the facilitator gives a stack of safety cards for each participant to choose. When everyone has a safety card, the facilitator gives a soft object to one participant. The participant holding the soft object

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should state his/her online superpower according to the image on the safety card. After sharing their superpower, they pass the object to someone else, who will reveal their card and their superpower.

For example, the card might have a shield on it, and the person might say, "My superpower is protecting myself by blocking people who make me uncomfortable online."

Or the card might show a lock, and the person might say, "My superpower is keeping my information safe by never sharing my phone number online."

Examples of safety cards:

- Shield Protection (blocking people who make me feel uncomfortable).
- Lock Strong passwords (inventing strong passwords).
- Stop Sign Ending unsafe conversations.
- Phone Asking for help (from a trusted person).
- Magnifying Glass Checking twice (carefully checking messages and links).
- Happy Face Sharing positive information.
- Camera Taking a screenshot from an inappropriate message/comment for proof.
- Heart Listening to your feelings (when something feels wrong).
- Megaphone Reporting profiles of people with inappropriate behaviour.
- Garbage Bin- Deleting comments/contacts you don't like
- Signpost
 – Asking and following advice.

Activity 2 of the Module

Name of the Activity

"What Would You Do?" Scenario Cards

Objectives

Differentiating safe from unsafe online requests. Participants learn simple and useful tips to respond appropriately to unsafe requests or situations online.

Learning Methodologies

Practical exercises and interactive activities

Time allocated for the Activity

20 min

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Resources Needed

- 1. Scenario Cards for each participant group and the facilitator: Printed-out chat-bubble-like cards describing situations involving sexual harassment or inappropriate behaviour.
- 2. Response cards for each participant group with symbolic visuals (block sign, talk bubble..) and simple, clear responses such as "Respond", "Share", "Ignore," "Block," "Talk to Someone," and "Report."

Instructions

Introduction (5 minutes)

The facilitator will read 4 scenarios aloud and pose the question "What would you do?". The participants in groups of 3 will be given time to reflect and choose a response by picking one, two or three response cards. The mentor provides positive reinforcement for correct answers and clarifies misunderstandings.

Game Play of the Main Activity (10-15 minutes)

The facilitator reads and explains the cards simply and engagingly.

Scenario 1. A friend says: I was just thinking about you. Did you end up finishing that puzzle you were working on?"

Scenario 2. "Someone you don't know sends you a message asking for intimate or personal photos."

Scenario 3. "A person on social media comments on your photo saying something inappropriate like, 'You look hot, send me a private picture."

Scenario 4. "Someone sends you a message saying, 'You're so beautiful, we should meet up, just the two of us."

Scenario 5. "A person you don't know asks you to chat privately and starts saying things like, 'What are you wearing?'"

Scenario 6. Message in Group Chat: "Hi everyone! What was your favourite part of yesterday's art class? I loved seeing everyone's paintings of animals!"

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Scenario 7. "While playing an online multiplayer game, another player you don't know sends you a private message saying: 'You're really good... do you want to video chat with me later? I bet you look cute when you play.'"

Discussion and Reflection (5-10 minutes)

Participants discuss the reasons behind their given responses. The facilitator validates and provides multiple other appropriate choices from the response cards.

Conclusion

Facilitators make the following points:

- 1. It's never okay for someone to ask for or send unsolicited inappropriate messages or photos.
- 2. Always trust your feelings—if something makes you uncomfortable, it's okay to take action.
- 3. You can block, ignore, report, or talk to someone about inappropriate behaviour.
- 4. You are never alone—you can always turn to trusted adults or friends to talk to if need be.

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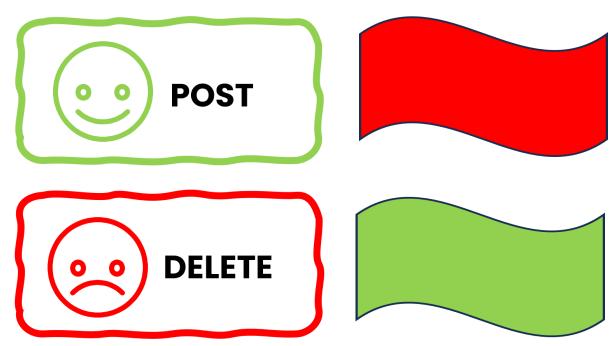




Annex 1.

Activity 1: Red Flag, Green Flag

Cardboard Stickers and flags



Information Examples:

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Phone number

Home address

Public events or activities you are attending

Full name

Hobbies or interests

Location details

Naked photos of yourself

General feelings

Non-personal photos

School or workplace

Favourite music or song

Passwords

Positive comments

Photos of yourself in the bedroom

Photos of yourself in the bathroom

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Discussions about sexual topics

Favorite movie or TV show

Annex 2.

Icebreaker 2: My Safety Superpower

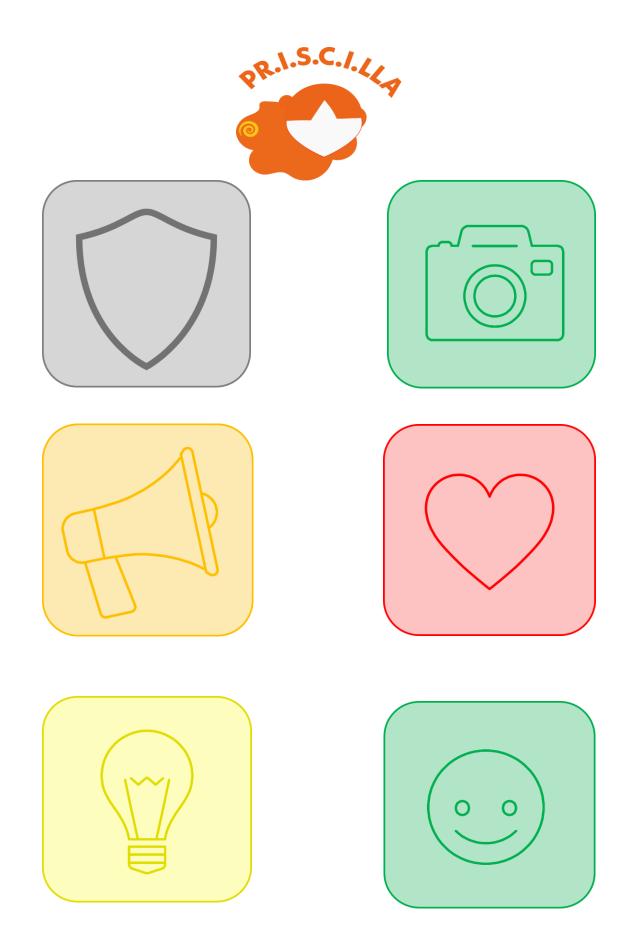
Superpower Cards:





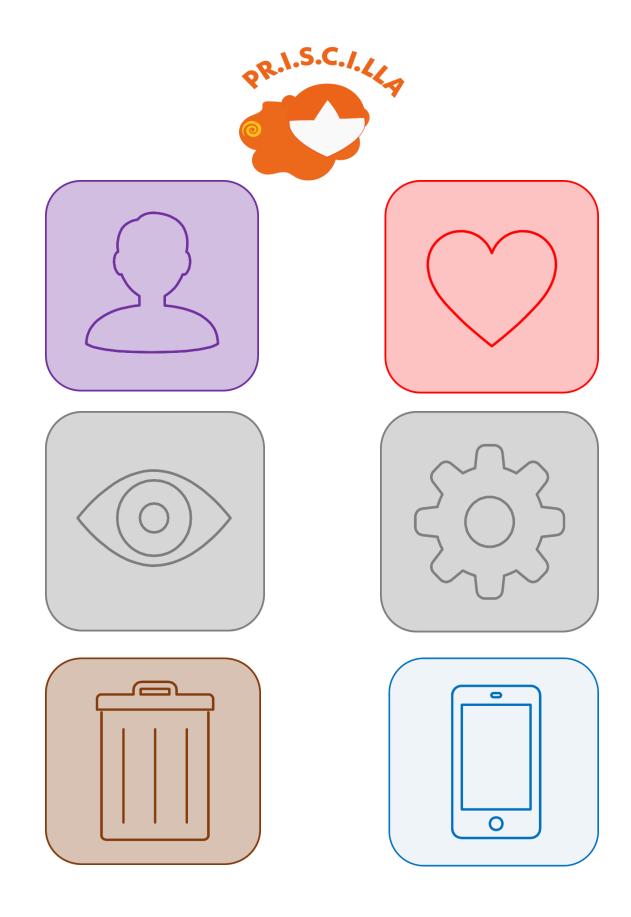
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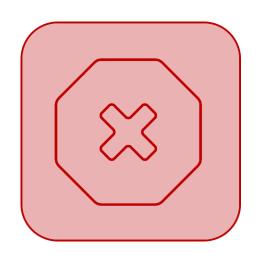


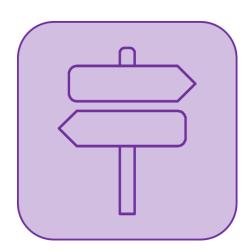
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Annex 3: Activity 2: "What Would You Do?"

Scenario Cards

Scenarios:

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- A friend says: I was just thinking about you. Did you end up finishing that puzzle you were working on?"
- A person you don't know asks you to chat privately and starts saying things like, 'What are you wearing?
- Someone sends you a message saying, 'You're so beautiful, we should meet up, just the two of us.
- Someone you don't know sends you intimate photos or videos.
- Message in Group Chat: "Hi everyone! What was your favourite part of yesterday's art class? I loved seeing everyone's paintings of animals!"
- A person on social media comments on your photo saying something inappropriate like, 'You look hot, send me a private picture.

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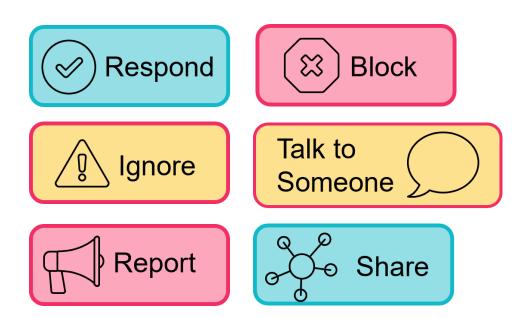




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While playing an online multiplayer game, another player you don't know sends you a private message saying: 'You're really good... do you want to video chat with me later? I bet you look cute when you play.

Response cards:

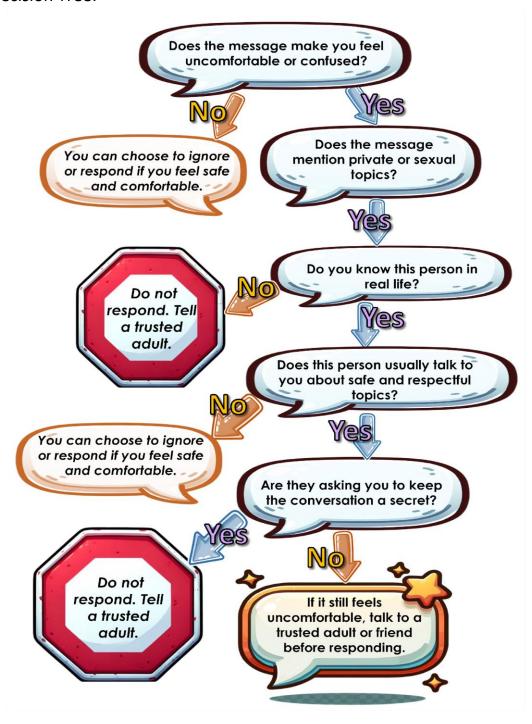


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Decision Tree:



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