



Under 11s

Tackling online hate: What you need to know

If you've completed the [Tackling online hate interactive quiz](#) or just want to learn more about the topic, this summary advice and guidance can help you make the online world a little more positive.

Use it on your own or together with friends or family to build your understanding and help stop online hate.



1. Online hate is posting and sharing hateful and biased content against an individual, group or community. Which of the following things are examples of this?

What you need to know

Online hate comes in many different forms and is hurtful to those who are targeted. Sending nasty messages, making hurtful comments or sharing content that makes fun of a person or group of people are all ways to spread hate, and it is considered unhealthy behaviour.

Some hate is also against the law, whether it's online or offline. If you see someone targeting another person or group of people online, it's important to speak with a trusted adult like a parent or carer.

For parents & carers

Explore the platforms your child uses with them to learn more about the community and the different ways users might communicate with each other. Make sure that these platforms and the content they interact with are age-appropriate to reduce risk of exposure to hateful material. For example, most social media platforms require users to be 13 or older.

[See the platforms made for children under 13 here.](#)

Discuss these questions

- *Do you ever see hateful comments being shared online?*
- *What does it look like and who is targeted?*
- *How does online hate make you feel when you see it?*
- *How might it make others feel when they are targeted by it?*



2. Which of these things are seen as positive things to do online to support others?

What you need to know

Even though online hate can make people feel really upset, there are things you can do to support victims and help stop it.

Many of the games that you play and the apps you use to interact with other people should have features to help stop online hate, which is usually against their rules.

Report – this lets you report content or users who spread online hate. Even if the hate isn't against you, you can help others by reporting users who show hateful behaviours.

Block – this keeps users from talking to you when you don't want them to.

Some platforms might have other features you can use too. Talk with a trusted adult to help you explore the right ones to use.

For parents & carers

Discover the safety features on the platforms your child uses to help inform them about the things they could do to stop hate from spreading online. Features like reporting, blocking and muting can help keep them safe. Encourage them to use these features even if the hate isn't towards them to teach them the importance of being an upstander instead of a bystander. You can also set [parental controls or privacy settings](#) on a variety of platforms, consoles, broadband networks and more to help filter the language and content they see, limit who can talk with them and more.



Discuss these questions

- *Think of your favourite app or game. What features does it have to help stop online hate?*
- *Have you ever used any of these features? Why or why not?*
- *What would help you use these features more? Could a trusted adult help?*

3. A friend shares a post online about a TV show they do not like. They say, “I just can’t see why anyone would like it.” What is this an example of?

What you need to know

Sometimes disagreements can make us feel angry, but it doesn't mean it is online hate or bullying. It's important to understand the difference so that when something is bullying or hateful behaviour, people get the right support.

Disagreement: when two people don't agree on something. You can say you dislike something but need to be kind and respectful about it.

Bullying: bullying is behaviour from a person or group of people that keeps happening and is meant to hurt the victim(s). It can happen online or offline.

Online hate: posting and sharing hateful content online that discriminates against an individual, group or community. Unlike bullying, it might just be one comment that happens once. Also, it might not be intended to hurt. For example, if someone makes a racist comment that they mean to be funny, it is still considered online hate.

For parents & carers

At this age, children may call any disagreement 'bullying', but it's important they understand the difference between bullying, disagreements and hate, so they can spot when something needs to be reported and when something can be ignored. For instance, it's okay to keep moving past someone saying they don't like a TV show, but it's not okay to ignore someone calling an actor in the TV show a racist name. Get more guidance below:

- [Tackling online hate and trolling](#)
- [Cyberbullying advice hub](#)
- [How to help young people deal with negative or hateful comments online](#)



Discuss these questions

- *Have you ever argued with someone online? How did it end? Is there something that could have been done better?*
- *Think of any bullying you've seen online or offline. What was done to stop it?*
- *Is there a way a disagreement or bullying could change to online hate? What could be done to stop it from getting to that point?*

4. It is illegal to treat someone with a 'protected characteristic' worse than others. Which of the following is a protected characteristic?

What you need to know

Protected characteristics include:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment (transition from the sex they were assigned at birth to the one they identify as. For example, if someone was assigned male at birth but identifies as female, they might transition to become female)
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief

- sex (being male, female or nonbinary)
- sexual orientation (the sex someone is attracted to. For example, a man attracted to a man)

'Protected' means it is against the law for people or companies to treat you differently or take away opportunities because of these characteristics.

For parents & carers

The idea of protected characteristics and law can be difficult for children of this age to understand, but it's good to start the conversations early so they can recognise that when something they see online targets a protected characteristic, they should take action by reporting and blocking on the platform and talking to you or another trusted adult.

Discuss these questions

- *Why do you think these characteristics have been made to be against the law?*
- *How could having laws against this kind of hate help people?*
- *Have you ever seen online hate against one of these characteristics?*
- *Are there any characteristics on this list that surprise you?*
- *How could knowing about protected characteristics help someone spot hate online?*



5. What emotions might someone feel if they see a nasty message about themselves online?

What you need to know

Online hate can hurt many people, even if the hate isn't aimed at them specifically. Unlike bullying, which targets one person, hate can target a lot of people at once. This might cause anger, which might lead to arguments and more hate being spread online. It could also lead to someone feeling sad, confused or upset about who they are.

Spreading support and positivity online will help people feel happy and confident about staying online, so it's important to report any online hate you see.

For parents & carers

Discuss with your child the emotions they feel being online. Maybe they feel happy when they win a game or upset when they lose. Help them recognise and be aware of the positive and negative emotions they feel. Decide together what they should do if they feel sad or angry (for example, taking a break), and encourage them to share things that make them happy (for example, someone saying something nice). Explore these resources to help:

- [How video games can help children manage their emotions](#)
- [Wellbeing apps to learn about emotions](#)



Discuss these questions

- *How do you feel when someone says something kind? What about if they say something mean?*
- *What do you do when you feel sad or angry about something online? What else could you do?*
- *Why might online hate make someone feel sad even if it isn't for them?*

6. Someone shares a photo that makes fun of a friend's religion with a hateful caption. The message isn't directed at them, but how do you think they might react in a way that negatively affects their wellbeing?

What you need to know

When someone sees a hateful comment about something that is a part of who they are, they may feel sad, confused or hurt. Religion and beliefs are a protected characteristic because no one should be treated less than someone else because they believe something different.

If someone sees online hate about a group they are a part of like their race, religion or other characteristic, they might feel like they need to hide who they are.

So, when they're online, they might pretend they are a different race or have different beliefs, or they might feel like they can't talk about important parts of themselves even if they need support. That's why it's important to think about what you share with others and how it might make them feel.

For parents & carers

Sometimes children might not realise how what they say can make people feel. It's good practise to talk with them about how they would feel if someone said something nasty about a group they are a part of, and what they could do to find support for how they feel. It's also important they know to never retaliate as this could lead to more upset emotions and spread online hate even further.



Discuss these questions

- *What are some important parts of who you are?*
- *What do you do to keep things positive online?*
- *What does 'wellbeing' mean to you and what do you do to have positive wellbeing online or offline?*

7. A football player who is gay (a man who is attracted to men or a woman who is attracted to women) misses the penalty goal for an important game. Their team loses and the team's fans start calling the player nasty names all over social media. Most of the hate comments mention and blame their gay identity. How could that affect other LGBTQ+ people in a negative way?

What you need to know

Words have a lot of power, even with people who are famous for sport and entertainment. The only difference is that people who are famous might see a lot more online hate and bullying about them.

If someone in the LGBTQ+ community sees someone they look up to receiving online hate because of their identity or sexual orientation, they might feel like they need to hide who they are, which is wrong. This is the same for anyone, including those of different races, genders and religions. It is not okay to put people down online or offline for any reason.

For parents & carers

Consider some of the news stories that your child might have come across online or offline. Talk with them about what has happened and how that might make people feel. For example, the racism faced by footballers in England is commonly in the news and could be an opportunity to discuss what happened, how it makes them feel and why it's wrong along with what they could do if ever they see similar online hate.



Discuss these questions

- *Why do you think some people blame a characteristic like race or sexual orientation when something goes wrong in sport and entertainment?*
- *What would a better way for these people to manage emotions when something goes wrong? Think of all the positive things they could do.*
- *Think about a time when you were angry about something. What did you do to help yourself feel better? Did it work? Is there something else you could have done?*

8. You see a video that spreads online hate about people with autism. What should you do first

What you need to know

Sometimes online hate spreads through people who don't realise it's hate, so it's good to educate people by sharing positive resources. However, it's really important that this doesn't turn into an argument because this could make the online hate worse.

If you have a good resource to share with someone spreading online hate like a reputable website, it's okay to share that (as long as sharing content like this is allowed on the platform). However, it's important that you also report the content or user to stop the content from spreading further. It's also important that you don't keep engaging in conversation if it seems like the other person is angry.

Talk with a trusted adult if you're ever unsure or need their help.

For parents & carers

Encourage your child to be an upstander in their community by teaching them to report content they believe is hateful. Even if the platform does not agree, your child should know that they won't be punished for being wrong and should keep reporting content they think is hateful or goes against a platform's community guidelines. It's a good idea to also go through the community guidelines with your child so they know a little more about what to look out for.

- [Roblox community guidelines](#)
- [YouTube community guidelines](#)



Discuss these questions

- *What do you know about autism or other learning difficulties? What could you do to learn more?*
- *Why is it important to learn about people who are different from you?*
- *Why might someone spread online hate against a person different from them?*

9. If you receive online hate messages from someone online, either publicly or privately, what is the BEST thing you could do to make them stop

What you need to know

There are a lot of ways to make online hate stop, but the best way is to block and report the user who is making you upset. When you block someone, you can't see their messages and they can't contact you anymore. It's important to report them as well to help others who might be targeted. However, if you only report them, they can still contact you, so make sure you do both.

In some cases, you can also tell the user to stop. For example, if a friend says something hateful, you can explain that it isn't kind and makes you feel upset. They might then stop and apologise. However, if they continue or if they've sent lots of messages, it's better to block them right away.

Writing down how you're feeling is very important as well and can help you feel better. However, it won't stop the online hate, so you need to make sure you take action online to stop it and then speak with a trusted adult.

For parents & carers

Giving children different tools to tackle online hate will help them feel more confident to take action when needed. Explore which options are necessary for immediate action, which ones can help them feel better, and which ones will help them get support with their feelings about it all. Sometimes, tackling online hate might require them to take more than one action.

Start the conversation on online hate with [talking points about cyberbullying.](#)



Discuss these questions

- *Have you ever blocked or reported anyone online?*
- *Is there anyone you should have blocked or report online but didn't? Why not?*
- *Why might some people not want to block or report another user? What could you tell them to encourage them to block and report users who spread online hate?*

10. If you feel upset about online hate that you've seen or experienced, which of these groups would be best to talk to about it?

What you need to know

If you've seen or experienced online hate, it's best to talk to a trusted adult because they will have experience and good advice to help. A trusted adult could include a parent or carer, a family member like your aunt or grandad, a teacher, school counsellor or online counsellor like those on Childline.

A friend, sibling or cousin are good options to talk to about how you're feeling or to help make you feel better but be careful about following their advice for what to do. Sometimes listening to our friends might accidentally cause more trouble.

You should avoid arguing with the original poster or other commentators and instead report negative behaviour.

For parents & carers

For parents & carers: Discuss with your child who the trusted adults are in their lives. For some children, they might have many options while others may only have a few. Some children may also feel shy or silly about coming to you or other adults they know and would prefer to speak with a counsellor or someone they don't know. In this case, share with them the safe resources they can use:

- [Childline \(UK-wide\)](#)
- [Meic \(Wales only\)](#)
- [Childline Ireland](#)



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