Being Kind Online

At Alec Hunter we believe all of our students have a responsibility to not only stay safe online but also to be kind to others.

Here are some tips as a parent for you to promote kindness online to your children.

1. Work Together on an Online Rules List

Ideas may include:
- The Golden Rule of kindness: treating others the way you'd want to be treated.
- Only sharing positive messages online that lift others up
- Sending personal goodwill messages to friends on birthdays and other celebrations.
- 'Think before you click' and ask yourself if you'd say this to someone's face, then use the THINK method to determine if you should type your thoughts:
- Only chatting online to people you know offline (like school friends).
- Only use the internet for a set period of time per day.
- Only use family-approved websites

2. Model how to be kind online

The odds are very good most children will witness cyberbullying. When your child witnesses cyberbullying, they need strategies to address it, because it can be frightening.
- Talk to your child and give them suggestions of kind, reassuring messages to the child who was cyberbullied.
- Remind your child their bullied peer feels hurt and alone right now and they can reach out with empathy and compassion.

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Online Safety Information

For Parents

Contributions by Mr Butler & Mr Lawman

3. Help your child start a blog or online diary

Take kindness online by helping your child to keep a blog. Have you ever considered blogging with your child?

By working with your child on a blog, you'll be able to guide them through the steps of sharing their thoughts online. In the process, make sure to edit the posts with your child and provide suggestions on how to craft messages that are appropriate, affirming of others, and safe to share online.

It could be a blog that reviews books or, you could consider a blog all about kindness.

The benefit of this approach is you are not just teaching your child to be kind online. You are giving them writing and computer literacy skills that will help them out at school, too.

4. Post uplifting messages with your child

It is likely your child will increase their usage of social media, so you could model ways to use it that spread kindness online.

You could have your child help out with posting images on your own social media accounts.

Give your child the choice about which images, text, and memes to post. Have them do an online image search for positive and uplifting messages to share online.

This is a great teaching opportunity because you will be able to talk with them about why they chose the images they did and what effect that may have on the people who see the images.

You could also let them "look over your shoulder" during an online conversation and give them the choice of which 'gif' or emoji to send back in return.

Guide them on finding a message or image that will spread positivity and happiness on the internet.

Modelling positive practices online will help show your child what you consider to be appropriate ways to use the internet when it's their turn.

5. Donate online together

It gets children into the habit of thinking about others and giving back to their community.

It will give them a taste of different causes and help them find issues that are close to their hearts

LITTLE REMINDERS OF HOW TO

BE KIND ONLINE

ONLINE ABUSE CAN HAVE A SEVERE IMPACT ON PEOPLE'S LIVES AND IS OFTEN TARGETED AT THE MOST VULNERABLE. CYBERBULLYING HAS BEEN SHOWN TO HAVE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL IMPACT. IN ORDER FOR US TO DEVELOP EMPATHY FOR OTHERS WE SOMETIMES NEED TO MOVE AWAY FROM FULFILLING OUR OWN NEEDS AND THINK ABOUT THE NEEDS OF OTHERS. THIS IS SOMETIMES MORE CHALLENGING ONLINE BECAUSE WE CANNOT SEE THE PERSON, CONNECT WITH HOW THEY FEEL NOR INTERACT FACE TO FACE.

THIS GUIDE WILL HELP YOU TO BE MORE CAREFUL ONLINE AND IS SUITABLE FOR ANY ENVIRONMENT I.E. GAMING, MESSAGING AND SOCIAL MEDIA. IT WILL HELP YOU TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF SHOWING KINDNESS AND HOW TO DEVELOP EMPATHY ONLINE.

TOP TIPS FOR EVERYBODY

#WAKEUPWEDNESDAY

UNDERSTAND WHAT 'EMPATHY' IS

EMPATHY IS THE SKILL OF RECOGNISING, UNDERSTANDING AND CARING ABOUT ANOTHER PERSON'S FEELINGS AND TAKING ACTION TO HELP. THIS IS TRICKIER ONLINE BECAUSE RECOGNISING AND IMAGINING HOW ANOTHER PERSON FEELS IS HARD WHEN WE ARE NOT WITH THEM FACE TO FACE. WHEN WE TRY AND UNDERSTAND HOW SOMEONE FEELS THROUGH WORDS ALONE, IT CAN LEAD TO CONFUSION OR A MISUNDERSTANDING.

FEEL, SEE AND UNDERSTAND

IF WE IMAGINE OURSELVES IN THE SITUATION OF ANOTHER PERSON, WE TAKE ANOTHER STEP DOWN THE PATH OF EMPATHY. IT DOESN'T MEAN AGREEING WITH THE OTHER PERSON, BUT IT MEANS UNDERSTANDING HOW THEY FEEL. IF YOU FEEL YOURSELF BECOMING DETACHED AND UNCARING PERHAPS DEVELOP A MENTAL PICTURE OF THEM, SO YOU CAN IMAGINE THEM AS REAL PERSON AND NOT JUST A BUNCH OF WORDS. IF YOU KNOW THE PERSON, CONSIDER A VIDEO CHAT OR VIDEO CALL.

DEVELOP SELF EMPATHY

ALTHOUGH WE TEND TO SHOW THE BEST OF OUR LIVES THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA, THE REALITY IS WE ARE NOT ALL PERFECT. HAVING EMPATHY FOR OTHERS MEANS WE NEED TO ALSO HAVE SELF EMPATHY. IF WE UNDERSTAND THAT WE ARE NOT ALL PERFECT, INCLUDING OURSELVES, WE CAN FIND KINDNESS.

OFFER HELP

ACCORDING TO DR DAN SEIGEL, A CLINICAL PROFESSOR OF PSYCHIATRY, BEING KIND IS REALLY ABOUT RESPECTING EACH OTHER'S VULNERABILITY AND WANTING TO HELP. SO, WHEN SOMEONE IS SHARING THAT THEY ARE STRUGGLING OR FINDING LIFE HARD, OFFER HELP, EVEN IF THE HELP IS A LISTENING EAR OR SAYING, 'I CAN UNDERSTAND YOU WOULD FEEL THAT WAY, I'M HERE FOR YOU'.

TRY TO ADD VALUE

CONSIDER, BEFORE YOU COMMENT ON A POST OR IMAGE, HOW CAN I HELP THIS PERSON TO LOWER THEIR SADNESS? HOW CAN I ADD SOMETHING TO IMPROVE THEIR DISTRESS AND HAPPINESS? SHOWING OTHER PEOPLE'S PAIN AS ENTERTAINMENT AS A WAY TO GET NOTICED OR MORE LIKES DOES NOT ADD VALUE.

BE RESPONSIBLE

THINK TWICE BEFORE YOU ACT. CONSIDER, ARE YOU ACTING ON ANGER, FRUSTRATION OR IN A MOMENT OF JUDGING A SITUATION WITHOUT KNOWING THE TRUTH? ONLINE, IT IS EASY NOT TO HAVE ALL THE FACTS AND REACT TO A SITUATION WHICH IS BEING PORTRAYED.

UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT OF YOUR ACTIONS WORDS

COMMENTING ONLINE SOMETIMES MEANS THAT WE DON'T ACTUALLY 'SEE' THE IMPACT OF OUR COMMENTS AND WORDS. THIS MEANS IT CAN BE EASIER TO DETACH FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR ACTIONS. UNKIND COMMENTS DO HAVE CONSEQUENCES AND CAN ADD TO SOMEONE'S DISTRESS AND FEELING ABOUT THEMSELVES.

DISASSOCIATE FROM PACK MENTALITY

ONLINE, IT IS EASY TO GET CAUGHT UP WITH POSTING NEGATIVE COMMENTS BECAUSE EVERYONE ELSE SEEMS TO BE. GET COMFORTABLE WITH STANDING OUT, AND NOT GETTING CAUGHT UP POSTING NEGATIVELY BECAUSE EVERYONE ELSE IS. EVEN IF THIS MEANS STANDING ALONE AND REMINDING OTHER PEOPLE THAT THEIR BEHAVIOUR IS UNKIND. YOUR COURAGE COULD SAVE A LIFE.

#BEKIND

National Online Safety®

MEET OUR EXPERT

THIS GUIDE HAS BEEN WRITTEN BY ANNA BATEMAN. ANNA IS PASSIONATE ABOUT PLACING PREVENTION AT THE HEART OF EVERY SCHOOL, INTEGRATING MENTAL WELLBEING WITHIN THE CURRICULUM, SCHOOL CULTURE AND SYSTEMS. SHE IS ALSO A MEMBER OF THE ADVISORY GROUP FOR THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION, ADVISING THEM ON THEIR MENTAL HEALTH GREEN PAPER.

For further info, check out these online resources too

https://www.themix.org.uk/

https://youngminds.org.uk/

https://www.mind.org.uk/

#WAKEUPWEDNESDAY