

STAYING SAFE ONLINE

Lesson plan on:

Using the Internet responsibly.

Adaptation tips to suit different contexts and realities:



- Suitable for children who have access to the Internet inside and outside of school.
- Consider amending elements of the lesson plan that do not fit your environment.

Learning objectives:



By the end of the lesson, the children should be able to:

- Recognize potentially unsafe, dangerous or risky online situations and behaviours.
- Identify rules for avoiding unsafe, dangerous or risky online situations and behaviours.
- Identify strategies to use when encountering potentially unsafe, dangerous or risky online situations and behaviours.

How to use this lesson plan:



The lesson plan is divided in three parts: **Start**, **Learn** and **Reflect**. There are also **Guidance** boxes to help you deepen your knowledge of the specified topics. In addition, there are **Family** activity and **Extension** activity boxes that suggest optional activities and ways of further exploring the topics of the lesson.

Lesson overview:



The lesson starts by helping children understand the similarities and differences between the real world and the online world. The children should identify positive elements of the online world and reflect on unsafe online behaviours or situations that they might encounter.

The children should think about strategies to adopt when they encounter a potentially unsafe situation, when they do not feel safe online or when they encounter anything online that they do not understand or have questions about. At the end of the activity, the children should work together to create child-friendly guidelines for online safety. The activity also helps them recognize the importance of using the internet respectfully and ethically, and why we should behave respectfully also when no one is watching or when some are not being respectful.

Please note that this activity is not designed as a means of detecting whether children have had negative experiences online. This is a sensitive topic and it needs to be handled carefully. Children might feel ashamed or uncomfortable about something they have seen, heard, done or received online. Avoid asking them to share their negative online experiences. However, should any problematic experiences emerge, be mindful not to shame or embarrass them.

Key question:

How can I make safe and responsible choices online while still having fun?

Age:

6 - 9

Values:



Skills:



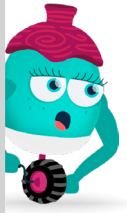
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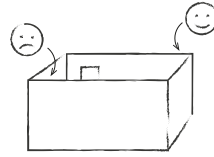
Preparation and materials:

- Draw a happy face and a sad face on two pieces of paper. Place them in two corners of the room.
- Draw a line on the floor and make some space for the children to move freely around the classroom.
- Flipchart or blackboard.
- Marker pen.
- If possible, The Zorbs [video](#) Big Trouble with the Small Screen or the corresponding [comic book](#), both available on the [GRACE website](#).

In addition, check out the [colouring book](#) and [children's book](#), both available on the GRACE website.



1. Explain to the children that you are going to talk about the Internet and how to use the Internet safely.
2. Show the children the happy face and the sad face in the two corners of the room and explain that you will read a few statements.



They should walk to the happy face if they think that a situation makes them feel happy or to the sad face if a situation makes them feel scared, sad or not at ease. They can stay in the middle of the room if they are unsure about how they feel.

3. Read out loud the following statements:
 - I am eating an ice cream.
 - I am playing a game I like.
 - I can't find my backpack.
 - I made a kite and I am going to try it out with my friends today.
 - A stranger in the park asks me to accompany him/her to the candy store.
4. After each statement, allow the children enough time to choose a corner of the room. Ask the children in each corner to answer and discuss the following question within their group:
"How does this situation make you feel? And why?"
5. Invite a child from each group to share a few of the answers with the class.
6. Do not forget to involve those who chose the middle by asking:
"Why have you decided to stay in the middle? How do you think you might feel in this scenario?"
7. Explain to the children that there are plenty of situations that make us feel happy, but we should also be aware that some situations might make us feel uncomfortable and may even put us at risk.
8. Invite the children to reflect on the following:
 - "What are some situations that might put us at risk?"**
 - "How could my behaviours put other people at risk?"**
 - "What should we do when something makes us feel uncomfortable, unsafe, at risk or scared?"**
 - "What should we do if we have made other people feel uncomfortable, unsafe, or scared?"**
9. Reflect together on the importance of telling a trusted adult when we feel uncomfortable, unsafe, at risk or scared. Also, discuss together how our intentional or unintentional behaviours could put others at risk, and discuss why is it important to recognize this, and how to address the issue. This is a good moment to discuss with the children about rules and behaviours which can ensure the safety of their peers online and offline: everyone is responsible for building a just, safe, and respectful world.

Guidance box: offline and online safety

The **Start** activity is a good opportunity to discuss child safety more broadly. It is important to explain to the children that one of the key strategies when feeling unsafe or uncomfortable, whether online or offline, is to approach a trusted adult.

It is recommended that you share with the children the **NO-GO-TELL** approach. If something or someone is making them feel uncomfortable or unsafe, they should do the following:

- Say **NO** when someone is making you feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
- Then **GO**: leave or run away from that person or situation.
- And **TELL**: talk to a trusted adult about the situation.



Learn



Note: If it is possible to watch The Zorbs [video](#) *Big Trouble with the Small Screen* or read the corresponding [comic book](#) with the children, you should follow all the steps below. If it is not feasible, skip step 3.

1. Explain that, just like the real world, the online world has plenty of useful and enjoyable things to offer. Invite the children to form small groups, discuss together for 2-3 minutes the following questions and be ready to share their ideas with the class:

“What are things you find enjoyable online? What do you like doing online?”
2. Explain that, just like in the real world, we can face situations online that are unsafe or that we do not understand. Remember: do not ask children to share their negative experiences. They might feel ashamed or uncomfortable.
3. Show the children The Zorbs [video](#) *Big Trouble with the Small Screen* or the corresponding [comic book](#). After watching the video or reading the comic book, use the following questions to start a discussion:

“What do you think the story is trying to teach us?”

“Why did Intella feel uncomfortable or unsafe online?”

“What are some online situations that might make you feel like Intella?”

“What do you think you should do when you feel unsafe or uncomfortable while surfing online?”
4. Ask children to form small groups. Create a line on the floor and show it to the children. Provide each child with the following scenarios (you can display the scenarios on a blackboard or flipchart):
 - Maria is watching some videos on an online video platform called Kids World. It is all about songs and dances for children.
 - Antonio and Carlos are bored. They are playing with Antonio's mum's phone and start clicking around online. They end up seeing a video of some adults fighting in a language that they do not understand.
 - Jamila is searching for a new game to play online. She follows a series of links and finds herself reading some comments in an adult online forum. People use such bad language!
 - Sarah is playing an online game and someone who she doesn't know starts sending her aggressive messages through the game's chat channel.
 - Luis is playing his favourite online game and invites his school friend Bienaimée to join him online. They are both looking for hidden treasures.
5. Invite each group to take a few minutes to read the statements and agree together whether they think the scenarios are:
 - a. **Safe:** so far it is a safe situation and nothing harmful or unsafe is happening.
 - b. **Unsafe:** some of the people involved might be at risk, they might feel unsafe, uncomfortable or might not know what is happening.
6. Explain to the children that you will read out loud each statement and that they should stay behind the line if they think the scenario is safe or cross the line if they think it is risky.
7. After each statement, ask each group the following questions:

“Why do you think this is a safe/unsafe situation? Who thinks differently?”



Learn



8. As a class, discuss the following:
 “What should we do when we fear we have ‘crossed the safety line’ and we are in an uncomfortable or unsafe situation? What could be some key rules to keep us safe online?”
9. Orient the discussion by following the guidelines in the **Guidance** box below (basic rules for online safety). Please feel free to amend the content to make it more relevant to your environment, context and the developmental needs of your students.
10. Let the children work together to create and share their own rules, making some notes on a flipchart or blackboard.
11. Make sure you highlight the rules that you find more relevant. Suggest and explain other rules that you think are crucial and that they might have forgotten to mention.

Guidance box: basic rules for online safety

Rules on online safety vary according to the age of the child and the exposure and access that each child has to online materials. For example, younger children might accept media content at face value and therefore need extra support to make sense of what they are seeing.

Below we suggest a few rules that children should follow when using the Internet. Please refer to the list if you think that the children’s notes need to be added or that the children might have missed a crucial rule.

Please note that these are just suggestions: you are the expert in your classroom. Feel free to adapt the rules to what you think is appropriate in your environment.

1. I will discuss with my parents the rules for going online.
2. I will always think carefully before clicking on online content. I should not click on any content that I feel uncomfortable with or unsure about. For example, do not click on a video, if the preview video picture looks in any way scary or makes you feel uncomfortable, or if you do not understand it.
3. I will stop watching any programme that makes me feel uncomfortable right away. As soon as I realize it is making me feel uncomfortable or unsafe, or I do not understand what is happening, I will turn it off.
4. I will not share personal information, such as my name, address or phone number, without my parents’ permission.
5. I will not make friends online with people who I do not know.

The most important rule is:

I will tell my parents or a trusted adult right away any time I come across something online that makes me feel unsafe, uncomfortable or that I do not understand.



Reflect



1. As a class, create a poster on Rules for Online Safety. Invite the children to form small groups. In their groups, ask the children to come up with two rules that they should always follow to stay safe online.
2. Ask each group to share their rules with the class. As a class, put all the rules on a poster and hang it on the wall as a visible reminder. Refer to the poster any time that you do activities that involve the use of the Internet.
3. If needed, refer to the notes from the **Learn** activity. Make sure to integrate the rules that you consider crucial and others that the children might have forgotten to include on the Rules for Online Safety poster.

Family activity

If the children use the Internet on a regular basis at home, it is a good idea to encourage them to share the rules with their parents.

Invite children to take home copies of the Rules for Online Safety poster. Encourage them to think about what other rules they could set together with their families. For example, parents can make sure that appropriate filtering for online content is set up or they can block any content that the children might feel uncomfortable with.

Invite the children to share their revised rules during subsequent lessons.

Remember that there are many ways to approach and ensure online safety. It might be that the parents have rules that are different from the ones that you have suggested.



Reflect



Extension activity

It is always crucial to talk to a trusted adult when you feel uncomfortable, but it is not always easy to talk about something that is bothering you or that you feel uncomfortable with. You might be afraid of being judged for what you have done or be embarrassed about what you have seen.

One of your friends might confide in you instead of going to an adult when they see something uncomfortable online. What should you do?

Invite volunteers to role play the following scenarios and think about what they would say to their friend if they were upset by something that they had seen but did not want to talk about to an adult.

- Jenny does not want to talk to an adult because she is ashamed of what she has seen.
- Marco does not want to talk to an adult because he thinks he will be blamed for what he has seen.
- Ahmed does not want to talk to an adult because he got the link from Rania and he is worried that she will get into trouble if he talks to someone about it.
- Zahid does not want to talk to an adult because he is worried he will be a tattletale if he does.

After each scenario has been presented, discuss with the children the importance of:

- **Listening to friends who need help.** Listening without judging, or making jokes, and reassuring your friends is the best way to show that you care.
- **Offering help.** When a friend comes to you, be available and try to give suggestions. Propose that they speak to a trusted adult and reassure them that no one will get angry.
- **Being patient and not too intrusive.** Let your friend talk to you freely but do not overwhelm them by asking too many questions.
- **Going to a trusted adult if needed.** If you are worried about your friend and the problem seems too big for you to handle alone, talk to a trusted adult, even if you are sworn to secrecy.

