



## Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021- Safer Internet Day

### An internet we trust: exploring reliability in the online world

Safer Internet day started in 2004 and is now celebrated globally each year. It aims to promote the safe and positive use of digital technology and inspire important conversations about how young people can engage with the online world in a secure way.

**This year, the theme is “An internet we trust: exploring reliability in the online world”.**

#### Why is this important?

Now more than ever, we are aware of the fact that not everything we read online is true. We live in a world where opinions and beliefs can spread alarmingly quickly, and potentially give rise to what is now commonly known as ‘Fake news’.

Reading ‘Fake news’ and unreliable information can upset or worry people, particularly children. It does this unnecessarily.

Fake news helps create a culture of fear and uncertainty, with children trusting reputable news outlets less as a result of fake news.

#### How can I help my child spot fake news online?

Helping children understand and ask these questions for themselves may help them see if what they are reading online is reliable:

##### **What’s the source?**

Is it a reputable news source, and are mainstream news outlets (BBC, Sky) reporting it too?

##### **When was it published?**

Check the date an article was published, as sometimes old stories are shared on social media. This could be an accident, or it might be to make it look like something happened recently

##### **Have you seen anything similar elsewhere?**

What happens if you search for it on Google or check it using a fact-checking website like Full Fact?

##### **Do the pictures look real?**

Images might have been edited. They might also be unrelated images that have been used with the story.

##### **Why might this have been created?**

Could someone be trying to provoke a specific reaction, change your beliefs, or get you to click a link?



Encourage them to **read beyond the headline** too. Many people share stories having just read the headline, then discover the actual story is quite different.

Point them to the government’s SHARE checklist (<https://sharechecklist.gov.uk/>) and advice from Childline (<https://bit.ly/3oYfsgd>) too.