

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 TACKLER 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 TOWARD 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 UNHEARING, 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 AUDIO 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 SIEGEL, A CLINICAL PROFESSOR OF PSYCHIATRY, BEING KIND IS REALLY ABOUT RESPECTING EACH OTHER'S VULNERABILITY AND WANTING TO HELP. SO, WHEN SOMEONE IS SHOWING THAT THEY ARE STRUGGLING OR FINDING IT 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 STRESS? HOW CAN I ADD SOMETHING TO **IMPROVE** THEIR STRESS AND HAPPINESS? SHOWING OTHER PEOPLE'S PAIN AS ENTERTAINMENT AS A WAY TO GET RETweeted 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 PORTAYED.



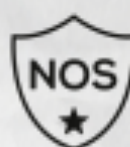
UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT OF YOUR ACTIONS WORDS

(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 DO. GET COMFORTABLE WITH STANDING OUT, AND NOT GETTING CAUGHT UP POSTING NEGATIVITY 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"



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#WAKEUPWEDNESDAY

MEET OUR EXPERT

THE GUIDE WAS WRITTEN BY ANNA DIXON. ANNA IS PRESIDENT ABOUT PEACING PREVENTION AT THE HEART OF EVERY SCHOOL, INTEGRATING POSITIVE 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/>

www.nationalonlinesafety.com Twitter - @natonlinesafety Facebook - /NationalOnlineSafety Instagram - @nationalonlinesafety

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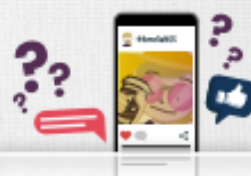
Let's Tackle Online Hate Together



Make sure you know how to report content on any sites or apps that you use. Don't be afraid to report any hateful posts that you see.



Don't respond to the people positing hate: sometimes an ongoing conflict is exactly what they want. Instead, report, block and unfollow them.



Set a positive example through your own online behaviour. Before you post or share anything, ask yourself if you would say it to someone offline.



Show support for online campaigns against hate and 'like' posts that you see promoting positive messages. You could leave an encouraging comment, too!



If you see upsetting messages online, talk to your friends and family about them. Maybe take a break from the app or site you saw them on.



Remember that you have the power to shape your online world. Engage with posts or accounts that inspire kindness and connection, and block or unfollow the ones that don't.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about VALORANT

AGE RATING

PEGI
16

Valorant is one of the hottest first-person shooters on the market. Developed by Riot Games (makers of the hugely popular League of Legends) its gameplay is similar to titles like Overwatch and Counter-Strike: Global Offensive. Players choose a character and face off in teams of five against five opponents. Currently available only on PC through the Riot Games site, Valorant requires quick reflexes and dedication to progress. However, between dealing with other players, navigating the online store and avoiding possible addiction, there's plenty for parents and carers to consider before allowing children to play.

Violence & weapons

The violence in Valorant isn't gory, but players nevertheless use weapons like guns, knives and explosives to kill opponents and win a round. The selection of guns that can be bought and used ranges from fairly authentic looking to brightly coloured and cartoonish. The game's PEGI 16 rating should give parents and carers a useful indication of the intensity and realism of the combat.



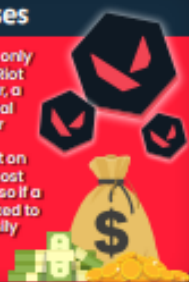
Risk of addiction

Games with a high skill ceiling – which require dedication and repetition to master – can quickly become addictive. Developers design games like Valorant to hook players and keep them coming back every day: this practice has seen online shooters cultivate vast user-bases over the last decade. Children are particularly susceptible to these tactics, which can unfortunately lead to obsession and eventual addiction.



In-game purchases

Valorant is free to download, only requiring an account on the Riot Games site. There is, however, a built-in digital store where real money can be exchanged for points: Valorant's in-game currency, which can be spent on weapons. Bundles of points cost between £4.99 and £99.99 – so if a card or PayPal account is linked to the game, children could easily rack up a large bill without realising it.



Other Players

When millions of gamers from around the world discover a new title, it's sadly inevitable that some will harbour more sinister aims than winning games and having fun. In Valorant, teams audio chat via headsets – potentially exposing children to hazards such as name calling, harassment, inappropriate language and grooming. Players could also befriend each other online and then communicate outside the game via third-party apps like Discord or Teamspeak.



Advice for Parents & Carers

Watch for signs of addiction

If you're concerned that a child is becoming addicted to a game, it's important to step in. Warning signs include irritability when not playing, hiding the extent of their game time, an inability to stop when asked and a lack of interest in other hobbies. Encourage a healthy mix of activities and perhaps agree a set amount of gaming time each day. Seek expert help if the symptoms worsen: it's better to have all safeguarding options on the table than let an addiction go too far.



Remove payment methods

The simplest way to prevent children accidentally (or deliberately) spending money on in-game purchases is to remove their ability to. If there is a bank card or PayPal account linked to any online games your child plays, the safest option is to disconnect them. Valorant supports prepaid gift cards, so you could consider purchasing these as an alternative which gives you more control.



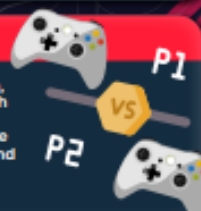
Report problem players

If another player becomes a problem, your child could mute them or report them to the game's developers. From the 'Career' tab on the main menu, they can view previous matches and should select the match featuring the abusive player. Highlight that player, and the option to report is in the dropdown menu. To mute other players in a game, go to the scoreboard and either mute or drag the volume slider of that player all the way down.



Try it yourself

Games like Valorant can seem overwhelming to start with, but they are designed to be easy to pick up and play – with a level of depth for those who want it. If you have another computer, you could download a second copy of the game and play alongside your child. It's an enjoyable way to bond over something they're already interested in, while also keeping an eye on them online.



Give eSports a chance

As a popular eSports title, Valorant has many professional players who compete in tournaments for sizeable prize pots. Watching a high-octane competitive game with professional shoutcasters (commentators) on platforms like YouTube and Twitch can be exciting. You could find out when live games are being played and watch them with your child, just like you might with football or rugby.



Meet Our Expert

Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for several years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world: UNILAD Gaming and GAMINGible. Having started gaming at a young age with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work – but, more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.



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#WakeUpWednesday

SOURCE: <https://guides.gamespress.com/valorant/guide.asp?ID=5492&W=3&T=120&G2=2&G3=2&G4=2&G5=2&G6=2&G7=2&G8=2&G9=2&G10=2&G11=2&G12=2&G13=2&G14=2&G15=2&G16=2&G17=2&G18=2&G19=2&G20=2&G21=2&G22=2&G23=2&G24=2&G25=2&G26=2&G27=2&G28=2&G29=2&G30=2&G31=2&G32=2&G33=2&G34=2&G35=2&G36=2&G37=2&G38=2&G39=2&G40=2&G41=2&G42=2&G43=2&G44=2&G45=2&G46=2&G47=2&G48=2&G49=2&G50=2&G51=2&G52=2&G53=2&G54=2&G55=2&G56=2&G57=2&G58=2&G59=2&G60=2&G61=2&G62=2&G63=2&G64=2&G65=2&G66=2&G67=2&G68=2&G69=2&G70=2&G71=2&G72=2&G73=2&G74=2&G75=2&G76=2&G77=2&G78=2&G79=2&G80=2&G81=2&G82=2&G83=2&G84=2&G85=2&G86=2&G87=2&G88=2&G89=2&G90=2&G91=2&G92=2&G93=2&G94=2&G95=2&G96=2&G97=2&G98=2&G99=2&G100=2>



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