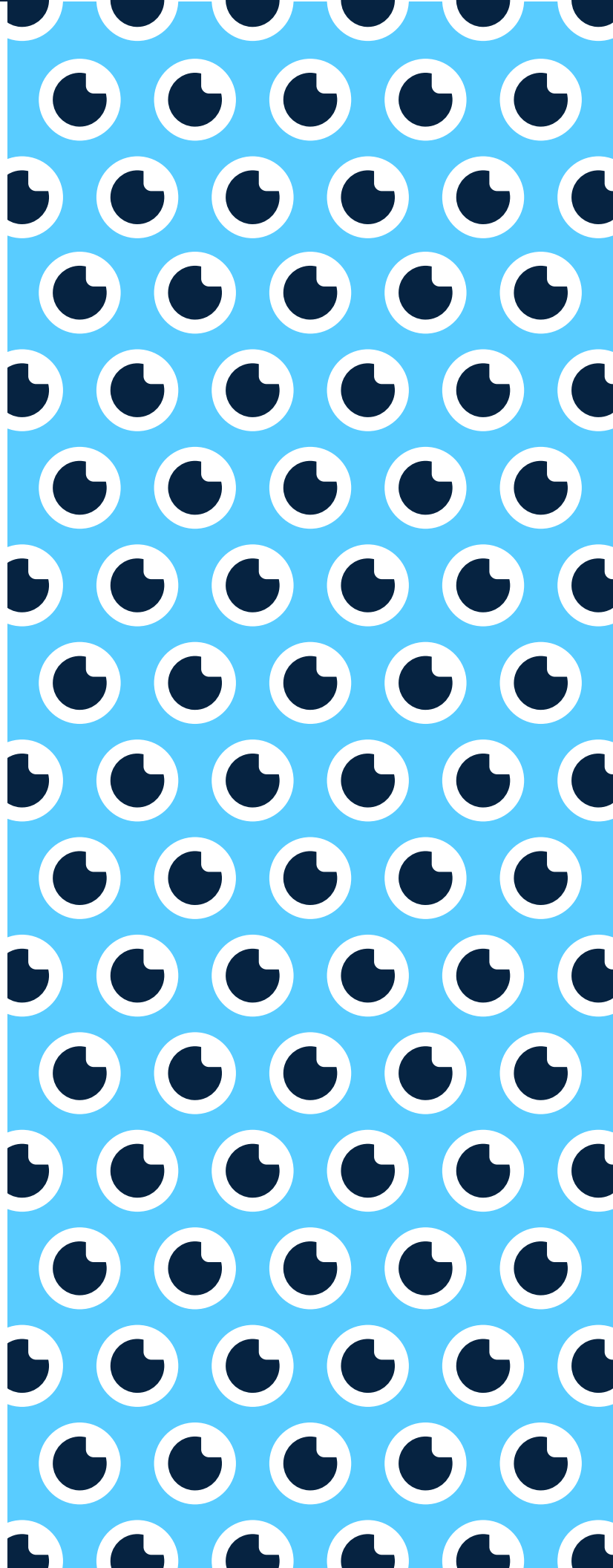


Building Healthy Relationships with Media

→ A Parent's
Guide to Media
Literacy

NAMLE





Where do our children get their beliefs? What messages are they receiving?



We learned a lot of our values and beliefs based on the influence of the people we grew up around. Parents. Teachers. Coaches. Grandparents. Neighbors. Friends. Today, kids learn an incredible amount and develop some of their values and beliefs based on the media messages around them. **Media impacts our kids' lives today in almost every way.** Whether they are interacting with friends on social media, clicking on advertising to see the latest trend, watching their favorite videos on YouTube or reading a book, media influences the way they live their lives and how they see the world.

How do we help our kids create a healthy relationship with media?

How do we balance the digital world with the real world experiences we want for our kids? How do we help them navigate the information flow and teach them about everything from kindness to safety to credibility? It may seem overwhelming, but what if we simplified it? What if we gave you one tip that could change the way you talk to your kids and alter the way your kids see the world? Just one. **Let's try.**



Teach your kids to ask questions.

That's it. Teach your kids to ask questions. By teaching them to be critical thinkers and informed skeptics, you will give them the ultimate tool to succeed in the digital world. They will learn how to analyze and evaluate the messages they are receiving. They will grow to be aware of issues like bias and credibility. They will learn empathy and compassion. They will learn to be an active participant in the world as opposed to being a passive consumer.

At the core of this idea is media literacy. Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create and act using all forms of communication. Media literacy is an essential skill in the 21st century. Media literacy educators along with The National Association for Media Literacy Education suggest asking questions while analyzing media messages.

Sample questions include:

— Why was this made?

— Who made it?

— What is missing?

— How might different people interpret it?

— What techniques are used and why?

— Who might benefit from this message?

— Who might be harmed by this message?

You'd be amazed at how these types of questions open up a world of critical thinking! How do you begin introducing the habit of questioning into your daily life? Again, it's simple. Start introducing the idea of asking questions in normal conversation.

Let's explore some real life examples of conversations that may come up at home.



Fake News

Your 12-year-old has an assignment for science class to explore a current events issue. While searching the web for information, they see an article about a new type of robot destined to take control of humans. This makes them nervous and they tell you about it at dinner that night.

Child: I read today that there is a new type of robot that is smarter than humans and might take over the world.

Dad: Hmm...I'm not sure that is accurate. Where did you read that?

Child: It was on the internet. I found it when I was looking up info for homework.

Dad: Whenever I read an article that seems scary like that, I ask myself **"how do I know this is reliable information?"** Since there is so much information out there, it's always good to question.



Child: I just saw it quickly. I didn't really have time to look it up.

Dad: That happens to me sometimes. I don't have time to really dig in. Do you know what site you saw it on? **It's always good to find out where the story came from. Before I believe it or share it, I try to find a few more sites that are reporting it.** Do you want to look it up with me after dinner? I bet if we did some research we'd understand the issue a bit better.



Ads

Your 7 year old is watching cartoons after school and sees a commercial for a new toy they absolutely must have. They pause the TV and come to get you so you can watch the commercial, too.

Dad: Wow, they sure do make that toy look cool. Do you think it's that cool in real life?

Child: Yes! It's so cool. I really want it! Can I get it??? Please????

Dad: Well, let's think about it. Does the commercial say how much it costs?

Child: No, but I am sure Grandma will buy it for me!

Dad: I'm just thinking about how badly you wanted the new Soaker Surfer Water Gun a few months ago. Remember, when you got it, you didn't think it was even half as cool as it looked on TV? Why do you think that is?

Child: I do remember that. They made it seem like the water would go really, really far but it was kinda lame.

Dad: I know. Commercials are really good at making us want to get things. I always like to ask myself **"Is this really going to be as cool as it is on TV?"** I don't want the ads to fool me. **Let's check out the online reviews about the toy.** If you still want it, we can put it on your birthday list.

Original Content

Your teenager and their friends have been working on a short film they want to upload to YouTube. After their friends leave, you ask if you could see what they have been working on because it sounds really cool. They bring their laptop out and screen it for you.



Mom: Wow, that's really great. How long did it take you to make that

Teenager: We've been working on it all week.

Mom: That's great. How did you decide where to film and who would be in it?

Teenager: Well, we love the pier and the lighting at sunset is awesome. Some of us just wanted to do the behind the scenes stuff but Sam and I really wanted to be in it.

Mom: What is the song you chose?

Teenager: It's called "Bad Habits" by Ed Sheeran.

Mom: It's an awesome song. **Did you get permission to use it?**

Teenager: We used my Spotify account to get it.

Mom: Did you know that just because you can access the song doesn't mean you have the rights to use it?

Teenager: I don't think it's a big deal.

Mom: If someone took a song you worked really hard on and used it without asking, I'd bet you'd be pretty upset. Wouldn't you want them to ask permission? You guys worked so hard on this. You don't want it posted and then taken down, right?

Teenager: Well, what are my options?

Mom: **You could email the record company and ask permission, sometimes they grant rights to their songs.** If not, do you want help finding some music you can use? **Did you know there are a lot of great sites that offer music specifically for making your own videos?** You usually don't need to ask for permission. You just need to include the creator's name and song name in your video. I bet there are tons of options that could go with your film.

Scams

You overhear your 8 year old and 12 year old arguing in the living room. You go in to see what is going on. They are in front of the computer.



Dad: What are you fighting about?

11 Year Old: They just clicked on an ad for a free iPhone and are now entering our home address. I told them it's a scam but they won't believe me.

8 Year Old: How do YOU know? It doesn't cost anything to try!

Dad: Show me what you are talking about. Oh, I see how this could have tricked you. Seems like a great offer, huh?

8 Year Old: I just thought it would be cool.

Dad: It would be. **Did you know that these types of offers are pretty much always fake?**

8 Year Old: How do you know?

Dad: Well, I'll ask myself a few questions before clicking. How do I know it's credible? Does it seem too good to be true? Where is this offer coming from? That helps me think things through. I know that most sites gather my personal data to sell to other companies and to continue sending ads to us. It could also be a criminal trying to hack into our computer and maybe steal from us. It's good practice to always ask yourself **"why do they need my information?"** and think about this offer. Ask yourself **"will they really give me an expensive iPhone just for entering my address or phone number?"**

These are just a few examples of how to incorporate questions into the conversation when discussing media and related topics with your children. It is vital for parents to model curiosity and skepticism in their discussions with their children. Teaching the next generation to be critical thinkers allows them to hone this important skill for navigating life in a digital world.

→ About Namle

The National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE) is a professional association for educators, academics, activists, and students with a passion for understanding how the media we use and create affect our lives and the lives of others in our communities and the world. NAMLE organizes national conferences, publishes the Journal for Media Literacy Education and hosts U.S. Media Literacy Week. NAMLE's members and partners are leaders in the media literacy education community who provide their own expertise and resources to classrooms around the country each and every day. For more information about the work of NAMLE, its members and partners, visit namle.net .

→ About Trend Micro

A global cybersecurity leader, founded in 1989 and fuelled by decades of security expertise, global threat research, and continuous innovation; protecting hundreds of thousands of organizations and millions of individuals across clouds, networks, devices, and endpoints. Being security experts, Trend Micro is passionate about promoting the safe, successful and responsible use of the internet. Since 2008, their global Internet Safety for Kids and Families Program (ISKF), has delivered free internet safety sessions to more than 3.1 million parents, educators, and youth worldwide. Trend Micro's strategic partnerships and collaborations aim to empower communities; delivering free educational programs where they're needed most. This includes a robust series of online programs, events and resources for every age. For more information visit trendmicro.com/internet-safety .

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