THE WAY

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FROM THE DIRECTOR OF STUDENT WELLBEING - SENIOR SCHOOL

Talking to teens about AI, Social Media & Deepfakes

You may have seen in the news stories about use of AI and social media. In fact, as technology evolves, we are finding that the challenges our young people face online also increase. One of the most powerful things parents and carers can do is have regular conversations with their children about social media, artificial intelligence (AI), and deepfakes.

According to the eSafety Commissioner, over 80% of children aged 8–12 are already active on social media—often before the age requirement of 13. With the rise of AI-generated deepfakes and chatbots, the risks go beyond screen time. These tools can spread misinformation or lead to harm, especially when young people aren't aware of how easily images, videos or even relationships can be faked.

So… is there any good news? Talking about these issues early builds digital awareness, critical thinking and resilience. We have several presenters and wellbeing lessons that we will be tackling these issues with each year group in the next couple of terms. However, here are a few tips:

- **Keep conversations open and judgment-free** so your teen feels safe coming to you.
- **Explain deepfakes and AI simply:** not everything online is real—even if it looks convincing.
- **Encourage healthy tech habits** like taking breaks, questioning content, and checking sources.

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The eSafety Commissioner offers excellent parent guides and advice on this topic:

eSafety Guide – AI Chatbots & Companions

Advice for Parents – Online Safety Basics

Wellio is also running a free presentation for parents on Managing Device Use: Creating Healthy Tech Habits at Home:

Register Here

If you have questions on how to better support your child or have concerns regarding some recent behaviour around social media and device use, please reach out to the relevant year advisor.

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