

Solve It Together – Solutions

Solution 1

Hack the algorithm with targeted searching and engagement.

They could prioritise searches that include very specific language about positive role models for young people, confidence boosting and young people sharing positive life experiences e.g. 'positive football role models' or 'women in STEM success'. Follow creators that consistently share uplifting content that makes you feel good when watching it. Avoid following or searching for content that makes them feel uncomfortable, confused and angry.

This could give them confidence to gain control of what they see online and choose what to engage with.

Solution 3

Avoid online influencers and content..

They could choose not to use social media and instead look for positive influences in their everyday life, perhaps friends, club/ group leaders or family members. They could make a list about how and why they are positive influences in their life. They could try to read uplifting fiction or news stories that contribute to them feeling confident, empowered or positive.

This would significantly reduce the chances of seeing online influence, there is no algorithm to train or hack and they have choice and agency about who they look up to and what they read.

Solution 2

Question the content.

They could start to question the content they see online; "Who made this? Why did they make it? Is this fact or opinion?". They can also check the content they see online with their peers and trusted adults; what do they think of what they have seen? How do they feel about what they were shown? Check in with themselves; 'How does this make me feel?' 'Is this going to have a positive impact on me and my choices and behaviours or not?'. If it leaves them feeling positive and other people in their lives agree it could have a positive impact, keep engaging and don't engage if it doesn't.

This could empower them to challenge their own and others' thoughts and develop a sense of personal autonomy about their views. It encourages them to think mindfully and critically about what they see online.

Solution 4

Build media resilience

1. Set personal rules like "If I see three negative videos in a row, I'll take a five-minute break."
2. Curate their feed: unfollow or "not interested" on content that leaves them feeling angry or small.
3. Schedule intentional "positive content time" e.g. 10 minutes before bed searching for inspiring videos, instead of random scrolling.

This does not completely restrict access to social media but instead gives them autonomy about how they engage with social media and is a good way to build healthy habits for using social media, encouraging them to take responsibility for how they engage with it.

