

Thinking for yourself:

Understanding extreme views and staying safe online

Rank your confidence in the objectives today

1. **I can explain** how online content can influence how we think and act.
2. **I can recognise** when online views might be extreme or unhealthy.
3. **I understand** what to do and who to talk to if something online feels wrong.



Click or scroll? Which one of these posts would you be most likely to click on? Why?

1

@#####

Why everyone is wrong!

Click here

365

2

@#####

The truth adults don't want you to know.

22

3

@#####

You've been lied to - find out why.

1007

4

@#####

Be **angry** - you should be!!!

9

In groups read one of the following case studies. Each example looks at how a young person has become influenced or manipulated by the harmful online content they have seen.

- As you read, place an amber or red flag next to behaviour that could be identified as a warning sign.

Case study 1: Aisha

Aisha loves watching YouTube and often clicks on videos suggested by an account called 'The Truth They Hide'. The videos claim to reveal secrets that adults don't want kids to know. The creator often replies to Aisha's comments, praising her for 'thinking for yourself'. Over a few weeks, Aisha begins to repeat phrases from the videos in class, like 'teachers are lying about history' and 'most people don't see the truth'. She also starts sharing these videos with her friends and when they say that these are disinformation she argues with them and refuses to look them up on a verification site.

Case study 2: Jordan

Jordan is interested in politics and global events and he follows several online discussion groups. At first, he reads posts to himself, but gradually he begins to share articles and leave comments. His comments become a little more angry and he copies what other users are saying and blames certain political groups for the problems in society. He posts messages like 'We have to stand up and fight back' and shares memes that label some groups as 'enemies'. His friends notice that he is becoming more argumentative online and seems angrier about things he sees on the internet.

Case study 3: Liam

Liam used to enjoy hanging out with friends and playing football, but recently he prefers staying in his room online. He's joined forums where people talk about conspiracy theories and controversial ideas. At home, he starts making strong statements like 'people who disagree are brainwashed' and 'you just don't understand what's really happening'. He avoids social events and stops going to football practice. His parents notice he seems angrier and more secretive about what he's reading online. He has started to follow accounts online that show violence and has created a private account so no one can see what he is looking at.

Review:

Were these young people becoming radicalised into having extreme views? What signs did you see? Write the name of each person next to where they reached on the scale. Be prepared to discuss your reasons for this.

