HELPING YOUR CHILDREN IMPROVE THEIR DIGITAL DETECTIVE SKILLS

As a parent or carer, you have the perfect opportunity to help your child or children develop their digital detective skills.

Help them to spot clues and decide whether they have come across misinformation or disinformation online.

Let's recap:

Misinformation
describes things online which are a mistake or misunderstood. They are things that are spread often by accident and not meant to cause problems or harm.

Disinformation
describes things which are shared online that are disgusting, disgraceful and is something shared deliberately to cause problems, harm or distress.

Who? What? Why?

When coming across content or people online, I find it useful to use the '3 Ws' to work out whether what they say is true or false, whether it could be misinformation or disinformation. You could use them with your children too.

Who – who has sent or created the content?

Is it a friend? Someone you trust? Or does it come from someone else online that you don't know?

Most good friends, or people you trust, would not deliberately want to cause you upset or hurt you online – they probably would not create or share **DISINFORMATION.**

What – what is the content saying?

Is it being nasty to someone or a group of people? Is someone being hurt? Is it trying to get you to believe in things that you don't agree with?

If so, this is likely to be **DISINFORMATION.**

Is the content funny, possibly shared by accident and is not being nasty about anyone?

This could be **MISINFORMATION.**

Why – why has the content been sent?

Is someone trying to change what you believe in? Is someone trying to get you do to something that might be harmful to you or someone else?

This is probably **DISINFORMATION.**

Has the content been sent by accident, as a joke, or because one of your friends doesn't understand it may not be true?

This could be **MISINFORMATION.**

If you support your children and get them to ask these questions about content that they see, hear or read online, you are helping them become expert Digital Media Detectives.

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