

The N.O.I.S.E. check: A guide for parents, carers and trusted adults

How to use the tool with young men and boys

Key information

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About this guide

Young people are exposed to huge amounts of online content every day. Some of it can be positive, motivating and genuinely supportive. But some content is designed to keep young men and boys emotionally hooked, often by making them feel angry, insecure or isolated.

The N.O.I.S.E. check is a simple conversation tool you can use to help young men and boys think critically about the content they consume online.

The goal is not to shame or lecture them. It's to help them recognise patterns, reflect on how content makes them feel and build resilience to manipulative messaging.

Try looking at some content with your young person and working through the following prompts with them.

If they share some content with you or you become aware of them watching content online, use the conversation starters and prompt questions below to open up a conversation with them about what they're seeing.

Alternatively, to help them use the tool independently, you can also share the [version made for young men and boys](#).

The N.O.I.S.E. check

N: Negative

Does this content leave them feeling worse?

Some creators keep audiences engaged by triggering strong negative emotions such as:

- anger
- shame
- jealousy
- anxiety
- feeling "not good enough"

You might ask:

- "How do you usually feel after watching this?"
- "Does this content leave you feeling better or worse about yourself?"
- "Do you think this creator wants viewers to feel upset or angry? What clues can you look for to work this out?"

O: Opposition

Does this content frame women as the enemy?

Some creators build large audiences by convincing boys and young men that women – or feminism – are responsible for men's struggles.

This can encourage resentment, distrust and an unhealthy "us vs them" mindset.

You might ask:

- "Does this content encourage conflict between men and women?"
- "Is it blaming women for complicated problems?"
- "Does it make relationships seem like a battle?"

I: Insecure

Does this content profit from insecurity?

Many online creators target common insecurities around:

- appearance
- money
- dating
- status
- confidence
- masculinity.

They may imply that boys are not "real men" unless they change how they look, act or live.

You might ask:

- "Does this content make you feel like you're not enough?"
- "What does the content tell you men should look and act like? Do you know any men who are actually like that all the time?"
- "Who benefits if young men feel insecure?"

S: Simplistic

Does this content offer simple answers to complicated problems?

Growing up, relationships, identity and masculinity are all complicated. Be cautious of creators who claim:

- there is only one way to be a man
- one group is causing all men's problems
- they alone have the answers
- success or happiness can be achieved through one simple formula.

You might ask:

- "Does this content oversimplify difficult issues?"
- "Is it presenting life as more black-and-white than it really is?"
- "Does it encourage you to ask your own questions, or just tell you what to do?"

E: Earning

Is someone making money from attention and outrage?

A lot of online content is driven by engagement. Creators may profit through:

- clicks
- subscriptions

- advertising
- donations
- paid courses
- controversy and outrage.

The longer viewers stay emotionally hooked, the more attention and revenue creators receive.

You might ask:

- "What does this creator gain from keeping people watching?"
- "Is outrage part of the business model?"
- "Would this message be different if money wasn't involved?"

The bottom line

Some online content makes money by encouraging young men and boys to feel:

- angry
- insecure
- isolated
- suspicious of others
- fearful about their future.

Helping young people recognise these patterns can support healthier online habits, stronger critical thinking and more balanced ideas about masculinity, relationships and self-worth.

The aim is not to tell boys what to think.

It is to help them notice when someone else is trying to do their thinking for them.

Spot the pattern. Ignore the noise.

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