Lesson Title: Keeping Kids Safe Online

Content Area: Parental Roles

Overview:
This lesson shares the importance of keeping young people safe in digital environments. Being the parent or guardian of a young person using the internet and smart devices can be stressful. An adult's role must include child supervision, but the adult must have the necessary background information to provide the oversight that is needed.

Objectives:
After participating in this lesson, adult learners will be able to:
- Identify resources for reviewing digital materials designed for youth
- Create a family social media contract, outlining expected behaviors of family members

Materials & Supplies:
The following materials and supplies are needed for this lesson:
- Digital devices: computers, tablets, smartphones (activity 2)
- Access to Internet (activity 2)
- Flip Charts & Markers (activity 1)
- Blank Paper & Writing Devices (activity 1)
- Family Media Contract Handouts (activity 3)

Preparation:
In preparation for this lesson, facilitators should:
- Review lesson plan
- Ensure Internet connectivity & check website links
- Print family media contract handout

Terminology:
The following terms will be discussed during the lesson:
- **Parental Control** – program, application, feature, etc. that allows an adult to set limits on a device; typically used to control what sites/apps a youth can't visit, the amount of time a youth can spend on a device, etc.

Background Information:
Parents and guardians can teach their children about online safety and model safe online behaviors. While some of these concepts may be taught in schools and clubs, it is still important for parents and guardians to take an active role in ensuring their children are safe in the digital world. However, some adults may not feel equipped with teaching safe online practices and appropriate behaviors, especially if there are inexperienced with digital technology. Empowering parents and guardians to know about resources that can help them teach digital safety and skills to youth is important.

Activity 1: Technology Feelings

Every person has their perception of the world. Parents/guardians and youth may have different feelings about technology, which could vary based on their background, age, experiences, how they use technology, etc. Feelings should not be deemed right or wrong but rather validated because they all stem from a person's personal experience. To gauge the participants' feelings about technology, facilitators should lead a simple acrostic activity.

Each participant will write their name vertically down the left side of a piece of paper. For each letter in their name, they will write a word that describes their feelings towards technology. For example, if their name is Shawn, their acrostic could be

  S – scary
  H – helpful
  A – addictive
  W – worldly
  N – nerdy

Facilitators will then ask the participants to code their words as having either a positive or negative connotation. Participants could highlight all the positive words with a yellow highlighter and all the negative words with an orange highlighter, or they could draw a plus sign beside all the positive words and a minus sign beside all the negative words.

NOTE: *The positive and negative coding is not an activity that has correct and incorrect answers.*

If participants are comfortable sharing, facilitators should collect responses and form a table of positive and negative responses on chart paper. Facilitators can ask guiding questions, trying to determine if the overall perception of technology is positive or negative, and why those feelings exist.

Activity 2: Resources & Parental Controls

Chances are, many parents/guardians may have a negative perception of technology because they are unsure about how to use technological devices and do not know how their children use their devices. In this activity, facilitators will guide participants to visit Common Sense Media, a leading independent nonprofit organization dedicated to helping kids thrive in a world of media and technology.

Common Sense Media: https://www.commonsensemedia.org/

Common Sense Media has an entire website section called "Advice for Parents" which is subcategorized into information by age of child, general topic, and specific programs/applications (Fortnite, YouTube, SnapChat, etc.).

Using personal devices, participants will explore this website for approximately 5 minutes. The intent is for parents to become more familiar with these resources, know how to find and access this content in

the future, etc. At the end of the exploration period, facilitators can ask parents to share interesting information they learned with the group.

NOTE: *Facilitators may want to prompt participants to explore Common Sense Media's Family Media Agreement (if time permits) as a way to introduce the third activity.*

https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/pdfs/common_sense_family_media_agreement.pdf

Many parents choose to use different programs or applications to set limits, monitoring services, etc. on their children's phone.

The Consumer Advocate group recommended 10 parental control apps:
- Bark: https://www.bark.us/
- Qustodio: https://www.qustodio.com/
- WebWatcher: https://www.webwatcher.com/ca
- Eset: https://www.eset.com/
- Net Nanny: https://www.netnanny.com
- Screentime: https://screentimelabs.com
- Family Time: https://familytime.io/?clickid=WadSw12fJxyJTMZxTV1LXQupUkgSXIQCE0kUxk0
- Circle: https://meetcircle.com/
- Norton Family Premier: https://pr.norton.com/norton-family-premier
- Identity Guard with Watson: https://www.identityguard.com/

If time permits, participants could explore these different resources.

Activity 3: Family Media Plan

It is recommended for a family to establish a media plan that outlines what the family members promise to do in regards to using technology devices. This plan could include the limitation of certain sites they can visit, the amount of time family members can spend on the devices, what to do if they encounter an unsafe situation online, etc.

The facilitator should guide a discussion about how a family media plan could benefit a family. Participants could begin to brainstorm actions that could be included in their family media plans. Although it is assumed parents/guardians would be attending the workshop without their children, it is important for all members of a family to contribute ideas to the plan, have their opinions valued, and contribute to the final signed document. Consider encouraging a family media plan party – after the plan is accepted and signed by all family members, celebrate with fun food, an activity, etc.!

Reflection:

While the intent is for the activity to build information literacy skills related to being a parent/guardian having their children using technology, it is important for the facilitator to lead a debrief discussion at the end of the lesson. Potential debrief questions could include:

- Why is internet safety for a young person important?
- What are some things you need to consider before allowing your child to use the internet?
- How can a family social media contract help with managing internet usage?

Resources:

- http://www.pewinternet.org/2011/11/09/part-4-the-role-of-parents-in-digital-safekeeping-and-advice-giving/
- https://tinyurl.com/y5dvg58j

Family Media Contract

As a family, we promise to

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Family Member Signatures