



Age-Appropriate Conversation Starters

What to say to children about deepfakes at every age

Ages 8-10

Keep it simple and feelings-focused

'Sometimes people use computers to make fake videos that look real. If you see something that feels weird or yucky, show me straight away. You won't be in trouble.'

'The people in the video might not have actually said or done those things. That's why we check together.'

'If something makes you feel confused or worried, that's your brain telling you to ask a grown-up.'

What to focus on:

- Keep accounts private and comments off where possible
- Name feelings first: 'How did that make you feel?'
- Build trust so they feel safe showing you confusing content

Ages 11-13

Teach critical thinking and spotting fakes

'You know how filters change how people look? Deepfakes are like that, but much more convincing. They can make someone appear to say or do things they never did.'

'If you see a video of a celebrity or someone from school that seems off, let's check it together. We can look at the lighting, the voice, and where it was posted.'

'If someone shares something that could hurt another person, even if it's meant as a joke, it's serious. Let's talk about it before you forward it.'

What to focus on:

- Practise the 3 Rs: React (pause), Record (screenshot), Report (show an adult)
- Turn off auto-play on short-video apps like TikTok and YouTube Shorts
- Review privacy settings each term together

Discuss consent, reputation, and the law

'Deepfakes are being used to bully, manipulate, and even blackmail people. Creating or sharing a sexualised deepfake of someone without consent is illegal under the Online Safety Act 2023.'

'If you see a deepfake of a classmate or friend, don't forward it. Report it to the platform and tell me or another trusted adult. Supporting your friends means stopping the spread, not resharing.'

'Even if something looks real, ask yourself: who benefits from me believing this? Where did it come from? Can I verify it with a trusted source?'

What to focus on:

- Discuss the legal consequences of creating or sharing harmful deepfakes
- Practise writing a clear report with evidence (useful life skill)
- Encourage them to support friends by reporting, not resharing

For All Ages: Keep the Door Open

Make it clear they can show you something worrying without punishment. Reinforce: 'You can always come to me. I won't take away your devices unless I'm worried about your safety.' Trust builds over time through small, consistent conversations, not one big talk.

More resources from Digital Safety Squad™:

- [What If My Child Is Deepfaked? A Parent's Response Guide](#)
- [How to Talk to Your Kids About Deepfakes](#)
- [How to Set Age-Appropriate AI Rules](#)
- [What Is a Deepfake? How AI Voice and Video Scams Work](#)