



Primary: That's risky stuff

Having secrets can seem fun or exciting but if you hurt the people around you it's not worth it.

What's the issue?

The online world can be an amazing place to explore and experiment with being different to how you are in the physical world but sometimes you can end up doing things you wouldn't normally. Pretending to be a person who doesn't really exist is lying, and pretending to be someone else is illegal. Once you start doing these things it can get complicated because you might not want to get caught and that can lead to lying to people or bullying them to try to cover up your actions.

Why does it matter?

- When you pretend to be someone else online you are breaking the law. You also risk their personal information being shared with people they wouldn't want it shared with, or even stolen and used for illegal activities.
- The online world is a part of the real world and what you do in one affects the other.
- Your family are the people who have known you the longest and to whom you are most closely connected. When you lie to them, you are affecting some of your closest relationships.
- You feel better about yourself when you make choices that you feel are the right thing to do—if you're not a liar, or a bully, make that obvious by what you do and don't do.

Advice

Draw the line between 'pretending' & 'lying'

- When you create an avatar for yourself in a game you can experiment with how you look. When you are on social media, you might use a pseudonym (a fake name) to protect your personal data, but you are still you—sharing thoughts, ideas and opinions with other people who you expect to be honest too.

Respect other people's personal information and trust in you

- Little white lies start out pretty innocently but they can get out of control. If you do something that makes you feel ashamed, then try to sort it out quickly so that you can rebuild the relationship.

'Online' doesn't mean 'out of this world'

- Having secrets can seem fun or exciting but if you hurt the people around you it's not worth it. It is amazing how what you do on social media or in other online situations can suddenly become exposed.

You create your self worth

- Even if it is only you that knows about it, if it makes you feel bad about yourself, don't do it.