Murder Games
The Life and Death of Breck Bednar

Clip 3: Am I safe online?

Themes: grooming, online relationships, personal safety, age ratings for games

Watch **Clip 3**, **Am I safe online?,** alongside the **Student Notes** for this film

Activity 1: Where does grooming happen?

Teachers can remind students of the definition of the NSPCC definition of grooming:

> **"**
> *Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation.*
>
> *Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional.*
>
> *Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age.*
>
> *Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse.*

Students should then divide into small groups, and spend a few minutes making a list of the types of places online where grooming might occur, before feeding back to the class.

Grooming can happen anywhere online, including social media sites, gaming platforms, and dating apps – basically anywhere where an abuser might find young people to talk to and connect with.

An abuser might spend time researching a young person, learning about their friends and interests and then use this to help them build a relationship.

Online predators may target young people with usernames or profile pictures that are flirtatious, or respond to public comments that suggest a child has low self esteem or is vulnerable. They will often target many children at once, and wait to see who responds.

Activity 2: How do I stay safe online?

Gaming platforms and social networks provide are places where young people from all over the world can connect over their mutual interests and play online together. Talking online can be fun and sociable, but taking some simple precautions can help make it safer.

Students should think about what they can do to help ensure their safety online. Some good advice on how they can do this includes:

Private: Keep settings private, and do not use sexy nicknames or profile pictures.

Nothing personal: Do not give out personal information such as your phone number or address to people you only know online.

Know them: When adding online friends to your private networks, check to see who else knows them in real life first.

Think first: Think carefully about what you post online, or what you share over webcam. Once it's out there you have lost control of it.

Fakers: Remember that not everyone online is who they say they are – it's easy for someone to create a fake profile, pretend to know your friends, or create a fake webcam feed.

Meeting up: Never meet up with someone you only know online without taking a trusted adult with you. Always meet in a busy public place.

Turn it off: If you see anything online that upsets you or makes you feel uncomfortable turn off your computer. Children should be encouraged to talk to a trusted adult, or use one of the confidential advice services below.

Activity 3: Gaming and me

What are PEGI ratings?

PEGI Stands for Pan European Game Information. PEGI is responsible for giving ratings to games according to their content:

> *Age ratings are systems used to ensure that entertainment content, such as films, videos, DVDs, and computer games, are clearly labelled by age according to the content they contain. Age ratings provide guidance to consumers (particularly parents) to help them decide whether or not to buy a particular product.*

Ask students to think of reasons why age ratings might exist, and why it's not a good idea to play games which are not age appropriate. They can feed back to the class.

Games are rated 16+ if the depiction of violence or sexual activity looks the same as would be expected in real life.

Games are rated 18+ if there is a 'gross' level of violence, which may make the viewer feel a sense of revulsion.

Remember that playing games suitable for an older age group over an online network also puts young people into contact with those much older than them on forums, groups and chats.

Gaming safely

Gaming does have positive benefits. Gaming not only exercises your grey matter but it also helps with creativity, strategic thinking, and teamwork. Good safety pointers for gamers include:

Avatars: If you upload an image of yourself, use an avatar rather than an actual picture.

Nothing personal: When talking to other players online, follow all the same rules as you would during other online interactions and keep personal information hidden.

Blocking: Explore with your parents or another trusted adult how to block another player.

Tell someone: If anything makes you feel uncomfortable or unsure, always tell a trusted adult.

Break it up: Take regular breaks. Every 45-60 minutes is recommended.

Teachers: Key themes and questions

You should always assume that some children in your class may have experienced behaviours similar to those being discussed. Therefore, it is not appropriate to ask how they might feel personally, but rather how they think Breck might have felt, his friends might have felt, or someone of a similar age might have felt. Useful questions might include:

The risks

- Are all online interactions with strangers online dangerous?
- What are the best ways to protect yourself online?
- Where are you most likely to be groomed online?

Gaming safely

- Is gaming safe?
- What should you be aware of when you're gaming?
- What are the risks of playing games rated 18+?
- PEGI ratings – what are they and why do they exist?

Sources of help and advice

CEOP - The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre is the UK's national law enforcement agency that focuses on tackling the sexual abuse of children. They have a facility for reporting abuse directly via the CLICK CEOP button on their website.
ceop.police.uk

CEOP Thinkuknow
Thinkuknow is an education initiative by CEOP providing a wide range of resources for young people and those who work with them.
www.thinkuknow.co.uk

ChildLine
Free helpline and website for young people who are worried about anything, including grooming and exploitation.
www.childline.org.uk
Call 0800 1111 (this number will not show up on a phone bill)

The Breck Foundation
Raises awareness about playing safe whilst using the internet. A resource for parents and children to "Play Virtual / Live Real."
www.breckbednar.com

UKIE Ask About Games
Advice on how to play games responsibly and information for families about video game ratings.
www.askaboutgames.com

Safe Network
Safeguarding information for activities outside the home from NSPCC and Children England.
www.safenetwork.org.uk