



**Prevents Real Play**

Smartphone use can stop children from socialising and engaging in imaginative or active play.

**Emotional Impact**

The addictive nature of smartphones can lead to mood swings, sleep disruption, and over-reliance on digital validation.

**Undermines Mental Health**

Overexposure to social media and screens can negatively affect children's emotional and mental well-being.

**Safety Risks**

Smartphones reduce focus and attention, hindering learning.

**Attention Span**

Smartphones expose children to safeguarding issues, including cyberbullying and inappropriate content.

Local Schools are working together to support your children to have a smart phone free childhood



**SMARTPHONE FREE INFORMATION EVENING FOR PARENTS**

Join us @  
**Arden Academy**  
**B93 0PT**  
**18:30pm**  
**Wednesday 21st**  
**May 2025**

We will explore the impact of smartphones on childhood. You'll hear from a range of experts on how excessive smart phones usage affects children's mental health, social skills and learning.



**SCAN**  
to join the event



# Agenda



Gemma Thelwell

Head of School for  
EYFS & KS1 Dorridge Primary:

Welcome and Introductions



Dr Claire Lunham

Senior Educational Psychologist:

The impact of Smartphones on our children and young people. Evidence based research.



Susan Dunigan

Safeguarding Specialist and  
founder of The Enlightened Parent:

Keeping children safe from online risks and content.

Larissa Astra Grey

Positive Sex Education  
Practitioner:



Ease of access to inappropriate material. Dangers and how to tackle it.

PC Ben Lowe and Srgt Tim  
Bruton

Police:

Keeping children safe: do's and don'ts

Jodie Hales

Head of School for KS2  
Dorridge Primary:



Impact in Primary School and specific apps children are accessing.

Nick Burke

Deputy Head Arden Academy:

Dangers of Social Media and impact in school.



Gemma Thelwell

Head of School for  
EYFS & KS1 Dorridge Primary:

What next and signposting.





**SMARTPHONE  
FREE CHILDHOOD**

# Smartphones: the new frontier in parenting

Dr Claire Lunham, Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist  
Coventry Educational Psychology Service

Acknowledgements to Smartphone Free Childhood and Papaya Parents



## SMARTPHONES HAVE BECOME THE NORM



89%

of 12 year-olds  
in the UK own their own  
smartphone

25%

of 5-7 year olds

29 hours

is the average time a British 12  
year old spends on a  
smartphone per  
week



OFCOM Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes April 24



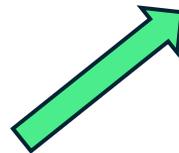
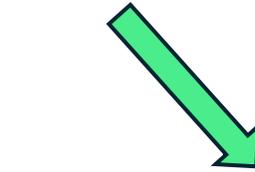
# THEY'RE NOT REALLY 'PHONES' AT ALL



2005

MOBILE PHONE

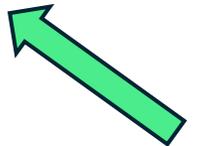
Make calls, send texts, play Snake



2025

POCKET SUPERCOMPUTER

24/7 internet in your pocket





## DESPITE WIDESPREAD CONCERNS...

94%

of parents think smartphones  
are harmful

Parentkind nationwide poll of 2,496 people,  
April 24

67%

of 16-18 year olds think  
smartphones are harmful

Parentkind poll, 2024

87%

of teachers think the  
negatives of smartphones  
outweigh the benefits

Teacher Tapp survey, 2025



## EVERYONE'S GOT ONE BECAUSE... EVERYONE'S GOT ONE



Most parents believe smartphones are harmful, yet almost all children have them by Year 7



Because resisting peer pressure becomes almost impossible when children's social lives migrate online

*The powerful network effects of smartphones and social media mean parents and young people feel like they have **no choice***

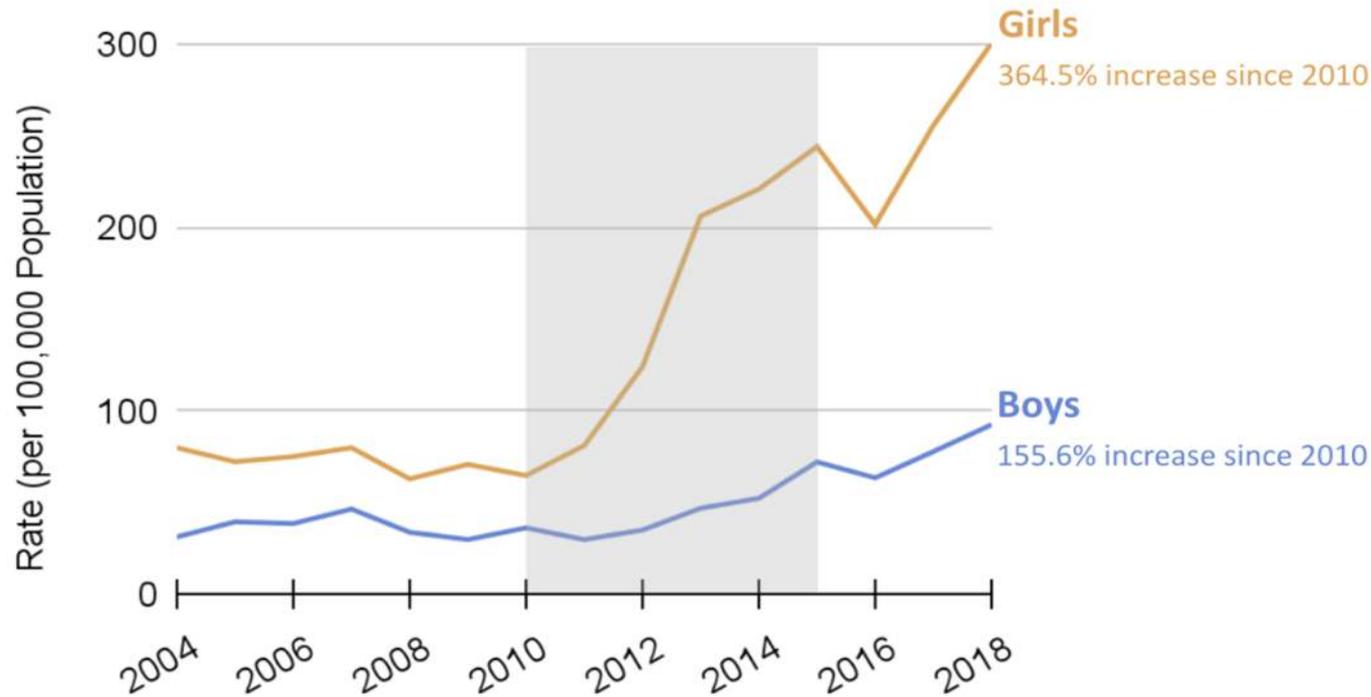


So what exactly *are*  
the problems?



# SMARTPHONES ARE FUELLING A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

### UK Teens, Self-harm Episodes (Ages 10 – 12)



Aurum and GOLD datasets of the Clinical Practice Research Datalink

2x

Twice as likely to  
have  
anxiety

3x

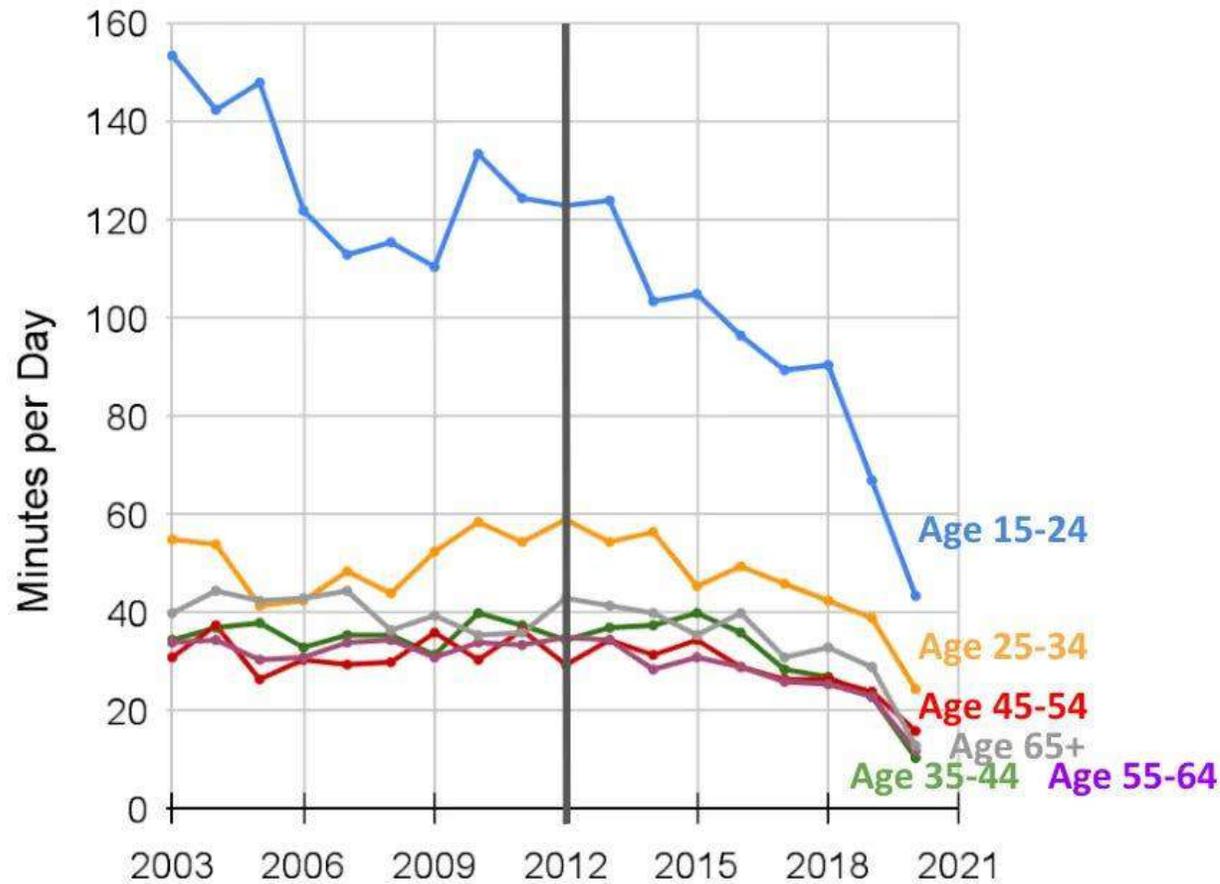
Three times as likely  
to have  
depression

King's College London, 2024



# Smartphones are rewiring childhood

## Daily Avg Time with Friends (minutes)



65%

The daily average time that teenagers spend with friends has plummeted by 65% since 2010



~Susie

In the last decade there have been 70% less outdoor accidents and 93% more incidents of self harm in children... as a GP I can promise you it's much easier to mend a broken bone than a broken mind.



24

Dr Susie Davies, founder of Papaya Parents, citing NHS DATA



## SMARTPHONES ARE A SAFEGUARDING RISK

*“GIVING SMARTPHONES TO KIDS HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST CHILD SAFEGUARDING MISTAKE IN HISTORY”*

51%

of UK 11-13 year-olds  
have seen hardcore  
pornography online.

British Board of Film Classification Report,  
March 2019

75%

of UK 15 year olds have  
been sent beheading  
videos.

Digital Childhoods, children's  
commissioner report, 2022

90%

of girls and 50% of boys  
say they are sent  
unwanted explicit  
content.

Ofsted review of sexual abuse in  
schools, 2021



## PARENTAL CONTROLS AREN'T THE SOLUTION

- Even the most tech-savvy parents struggle to manage parental controls
- Some apps require updates to hundreds of settings to make them age appropriate
- Even if your child's phone has parental controls, their friends may not so they may be sent inappropriate content regardless

**58%**

of teens say they've never had controls put on their phone by parents

(Parentkind poll, May 2024)

**47%**

of teens with controls in place say they have bypassed them

(Parentkind poll, May 2024)

And teens find multiple ways to bypass controls:

Performing a factory reset

Using VPN software

Hacking the WiFi router

Memorising your passcode



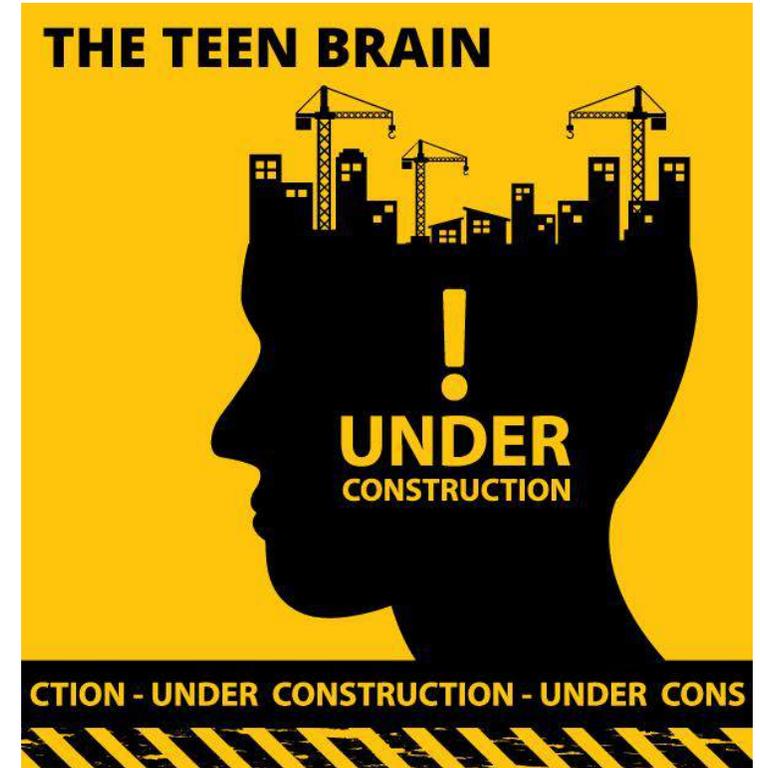
## SMARTPHONES APPS ARE ADDICTIVE BY DESIGN

“Behind every screen on your phone, a thousand engineers have worked to make it maximally addicting. Children are particularly susceptible to this kind of manipulative design.”



**Aza Raskin**

Co-inventor of ‘infinite scroll’, turned campaigner



**“Childhood is being rewired” Jonathon Haidt, Social Psychologist**



It's little wonder that many of the people who created this technology keep it away from their kids

STEVE JOBS

“We don't allow the iPad in the home. We think it's too dangerous for them”



EVAN SPIEGEL

Grew up without a TV and credits his own success on that tech restriction. Limits his kid to 1.5 hours screen time per week



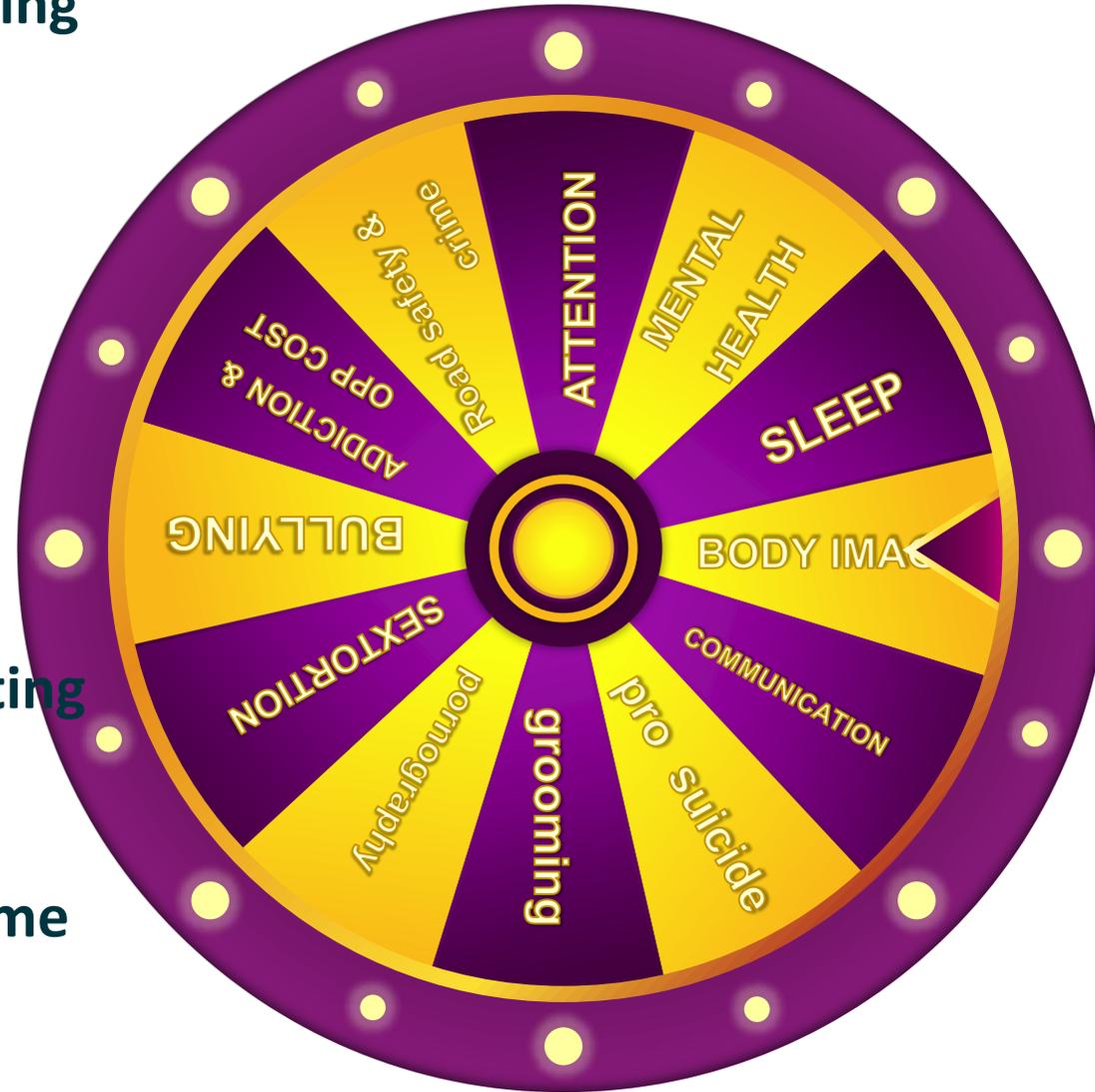
BILL GATES

Didn't allow his 4 children smartphones or their own computers until they were 14



# SMARTPHONE ROULETTE

- Attention and learning
- Addiction & opportunity cost
- Mental health
- Sleep
- Body image and eating disorders
- Road safety and crime



- Pro self-harm and suicide
- Grooming
- Pornography
- Sextortion
- Online bullying
- Speech, language and communication



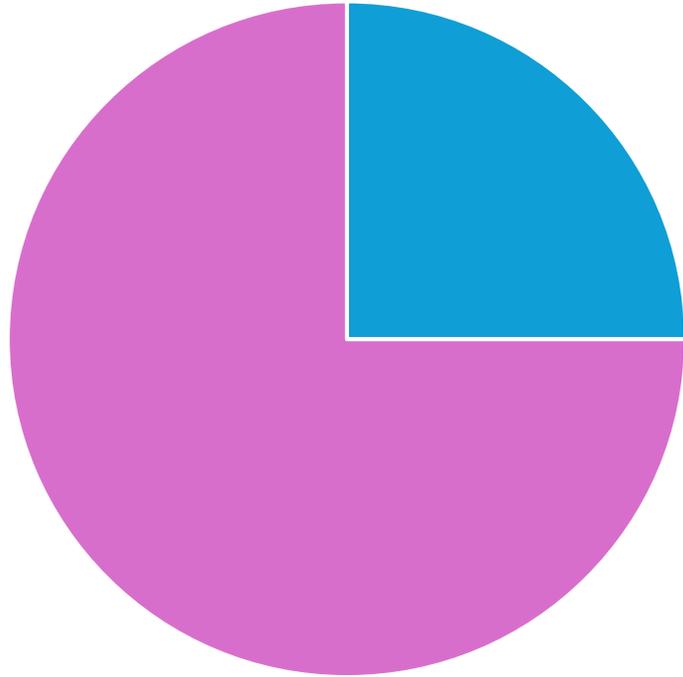
# SOLUTIONS

## What can we do?





# Collective action – delay the smartphone



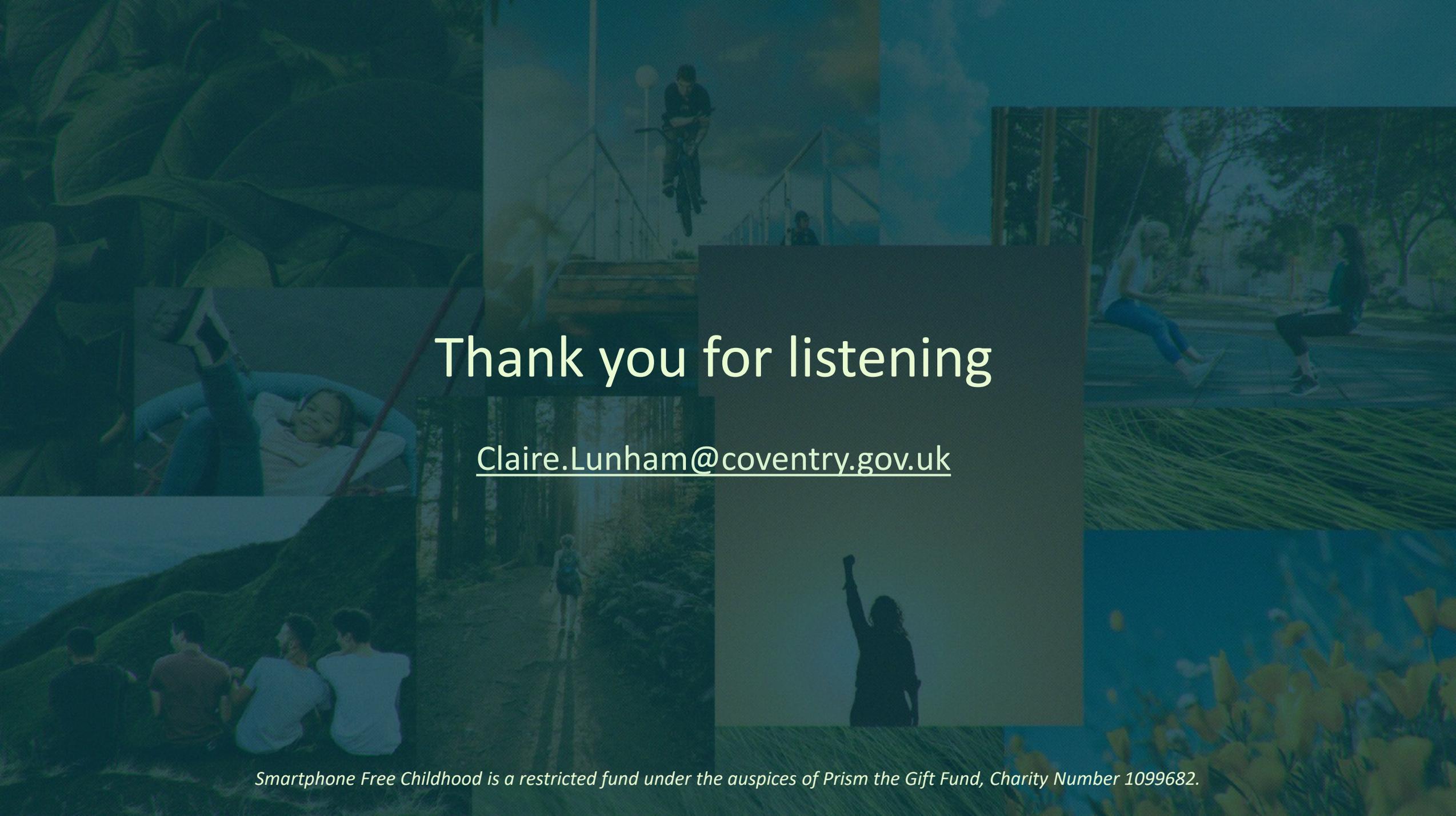
If we all agree to delay giving our children smartphones, and instead give them basic phones until at least the end of Year 9, the peer pressure instantly reduces.

When **25% of a group** of people do something differently that can be enough to change the norm.



## IF YOUR CHILD HASN'T ALREADY GOT A SMARTPHONE

1. Continue to inform yourself about this issue
2. Talk to other parents and share information
3. Join **Smartphone Free Childhood (SFC)** and sign and share the Parent Pact
4. Keep talking to your child and acknowledge their feelings
5. Model good screentime habits
6. Consider alternatives to smartphones – such as a simple/basic phone ([alternatives — Smartphone Free Childhood](#))
7. Check out the [FAQs and common pushbacks document](#) on the SFC website for responses to common concerns about delaying



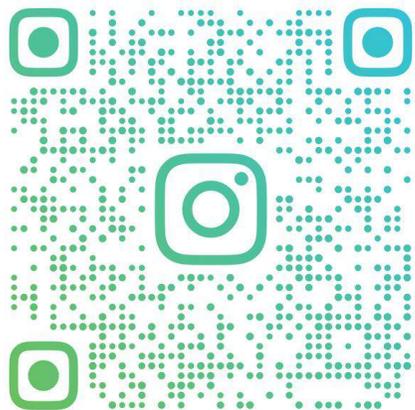
Thank you for listening

[Claire.Lunham@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:Claire.Lunham@coventry.gov.uk)

*Smartphone Free Childhood is a restricted fund under the auspices of Prism the Gift Fund, Charity Number 1099682.*

# Susan Dunigan

## Founder of The Enlightened Parent



THE\_ENLIGHTENED\_PARENT

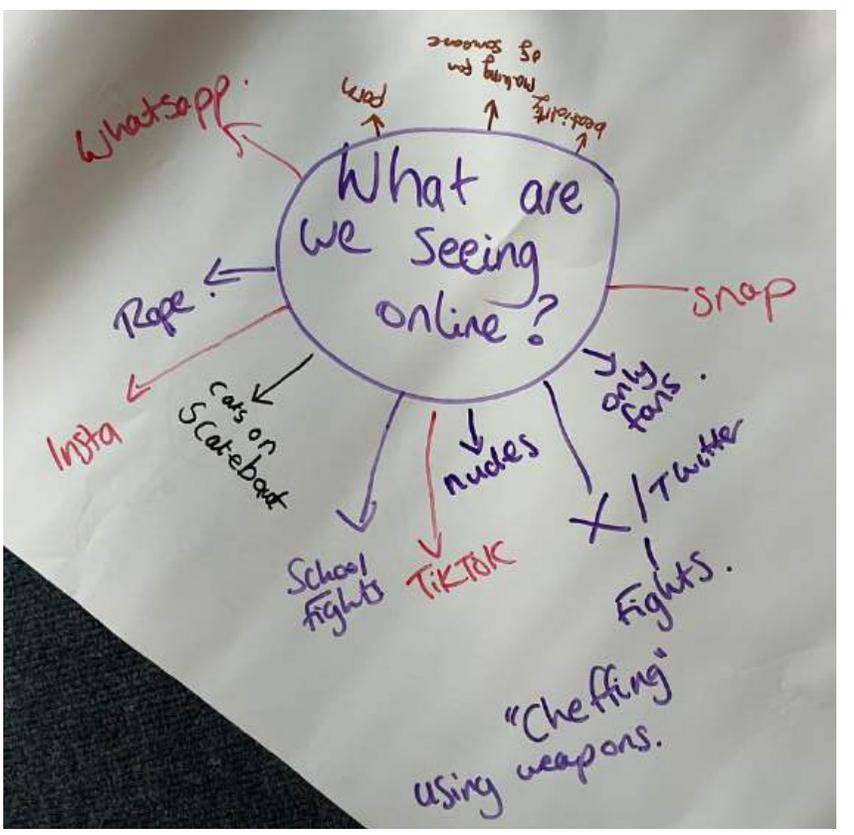
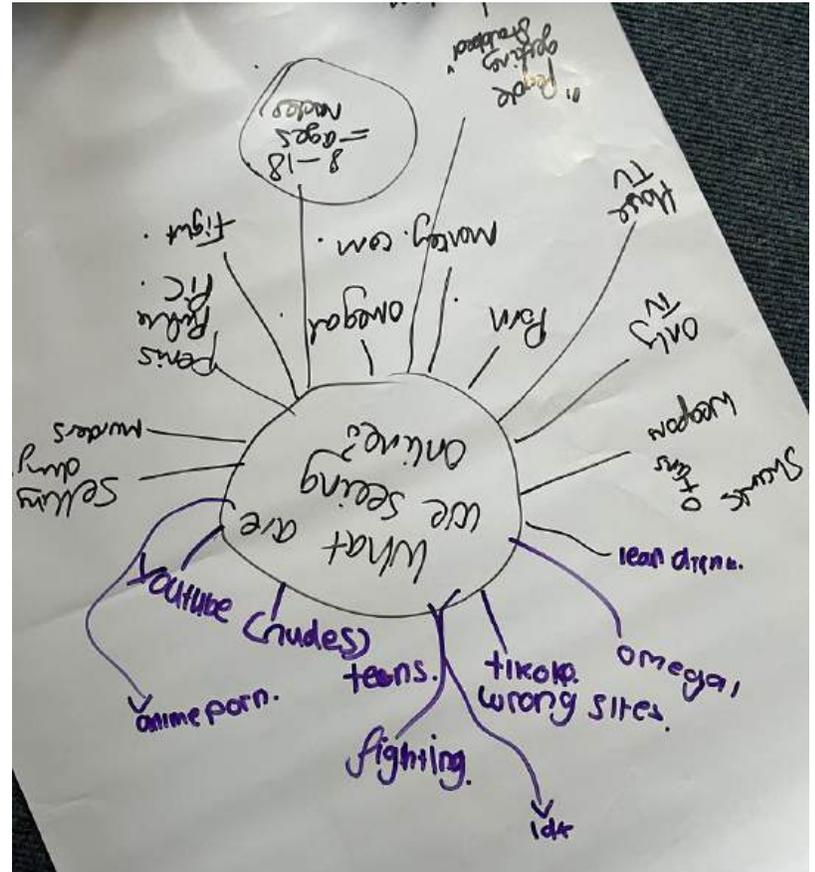
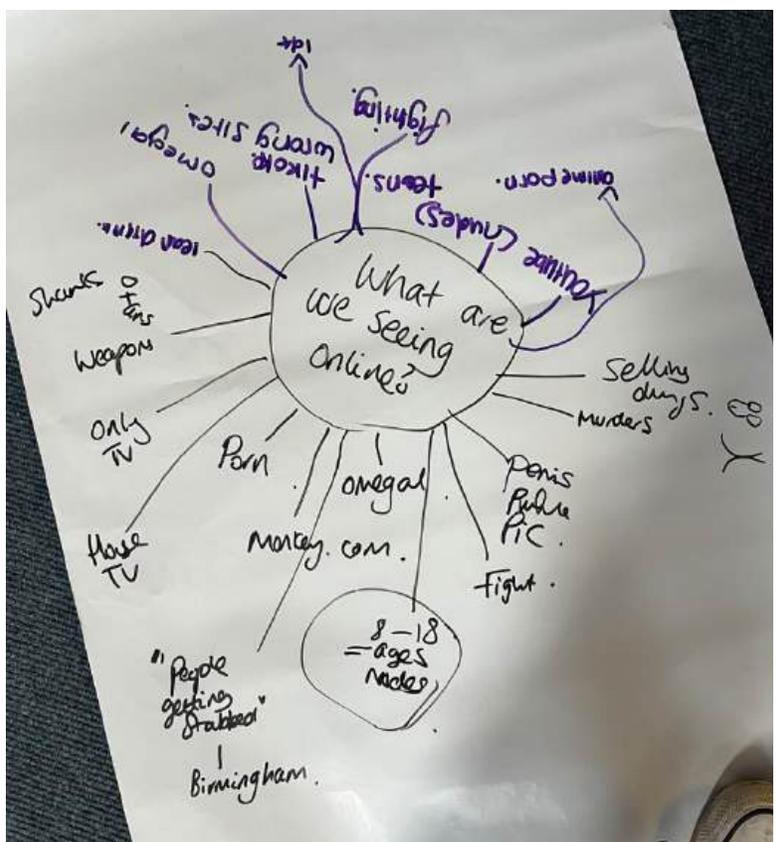


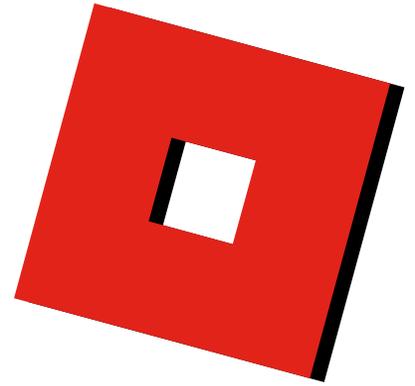
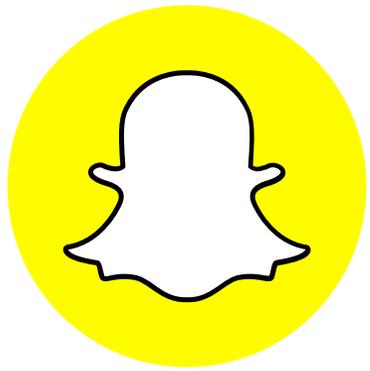




- **Poor mental health**
- **Social skills**
- **Perception of healthy relationships**
- **Addiction**
- **Gambling**
- **Sleep disturbance**





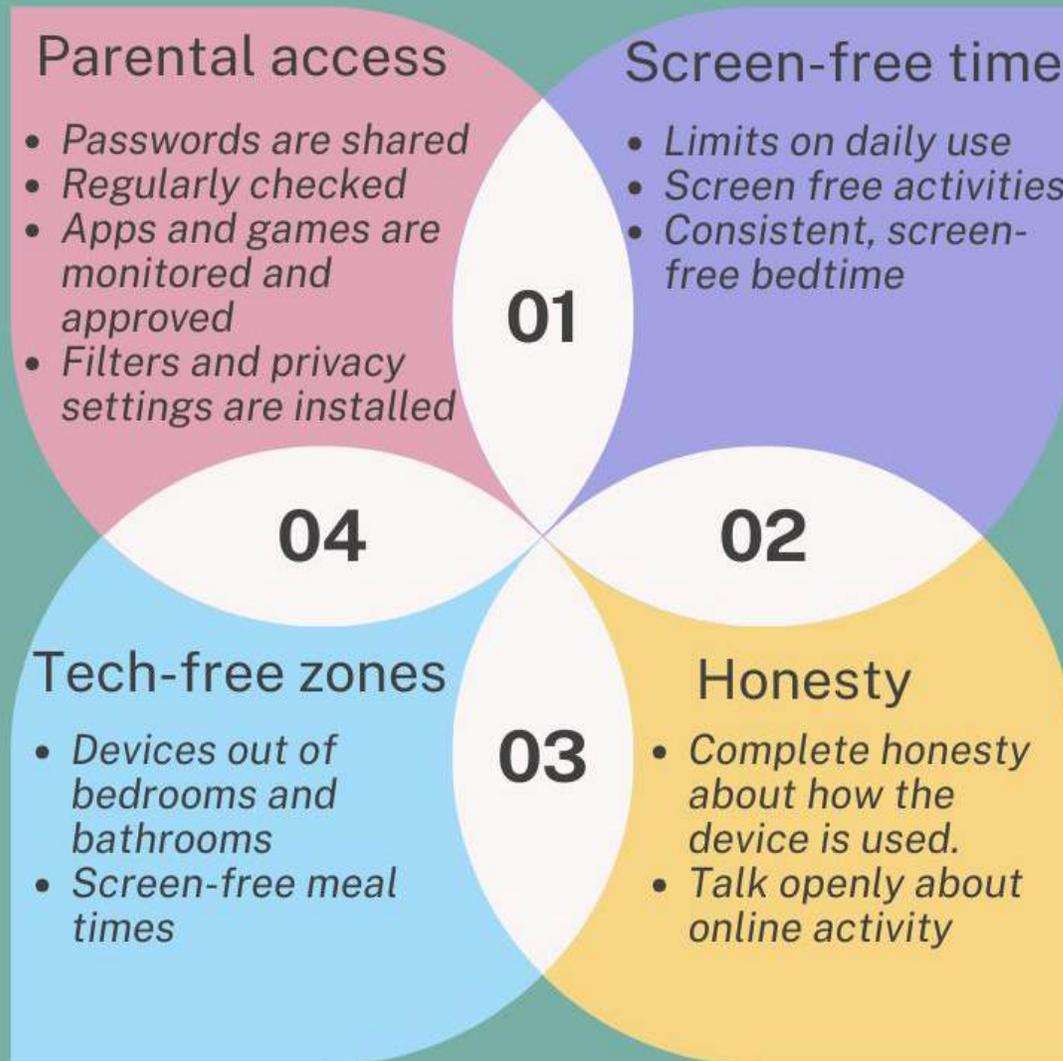


twitch





# 4 KEY DEVICE BOUNDARIES



# How to put boundaries in place



## Stage: 1

Express  
concern



## Stage: 2

Start  
conversations and  
listen



## Stage: 3

Talk about  
boundaries



## Stage: 4

Put a  
plan in place

# How to put boundaries in place



## Stage: 1

Express  
concern

### Conversation starters:

### Make a connection!

‘Have you seen this article in the news today?’  
Have you heard about that incident?’ ‘What do  
you think about...?’

# How to put boundaries in place



## Stage: 2

Start  
conversations and  
listen

### Conversation starters:

‘Have any of your friends experienced....?’

‘Have you ever seen anything like that online?’

# How to put boundaries in place

## Conversation starters:



### Stage: 3

#### Talk about boundaries

‘It’s my responsibility to keep you safe, what things do you think I should be doing?’

‘What can I do, at home, to keep you safe online?’ ‘How about we ...\*name one of the device boundaries\*... for the next few days?’

‘I think one of the things I need to do, as your parent is...\*name one of the device boundaries\*. If I do this, I know you will be safer online’

# How to put boundaries in place



## Stage: 4

Put a  
plan in place

Begin to implement the device boundaries one at a time.

LARISSA ASTARA *g*RAY  
Positive Sex Education Speaker

[www.larissaastaragray.co.uk](http://www.larissaastaragray.co.uk)



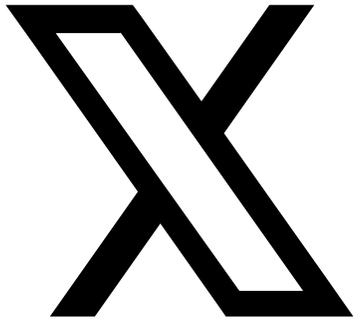
Let's change the way we talk about sex

LARISSA ASTARA *g*RAY  
Positive Sex Education Speaker

# Porn Truths

**14 million UK**

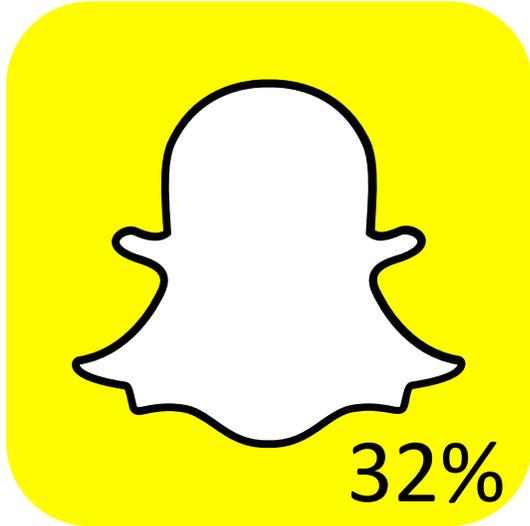
Let's change the way we talk about



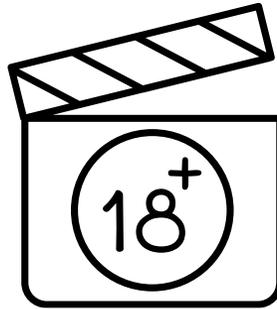
41%



33%



32%



37%

30%



Let's change the way we talk about



43% Peer pressure

Let's change the way we talk about

**Objectification  
/Dehumanization**



## Young Porn Exposure



Let's change the way we talk about

# What's it doing to the viewer ?

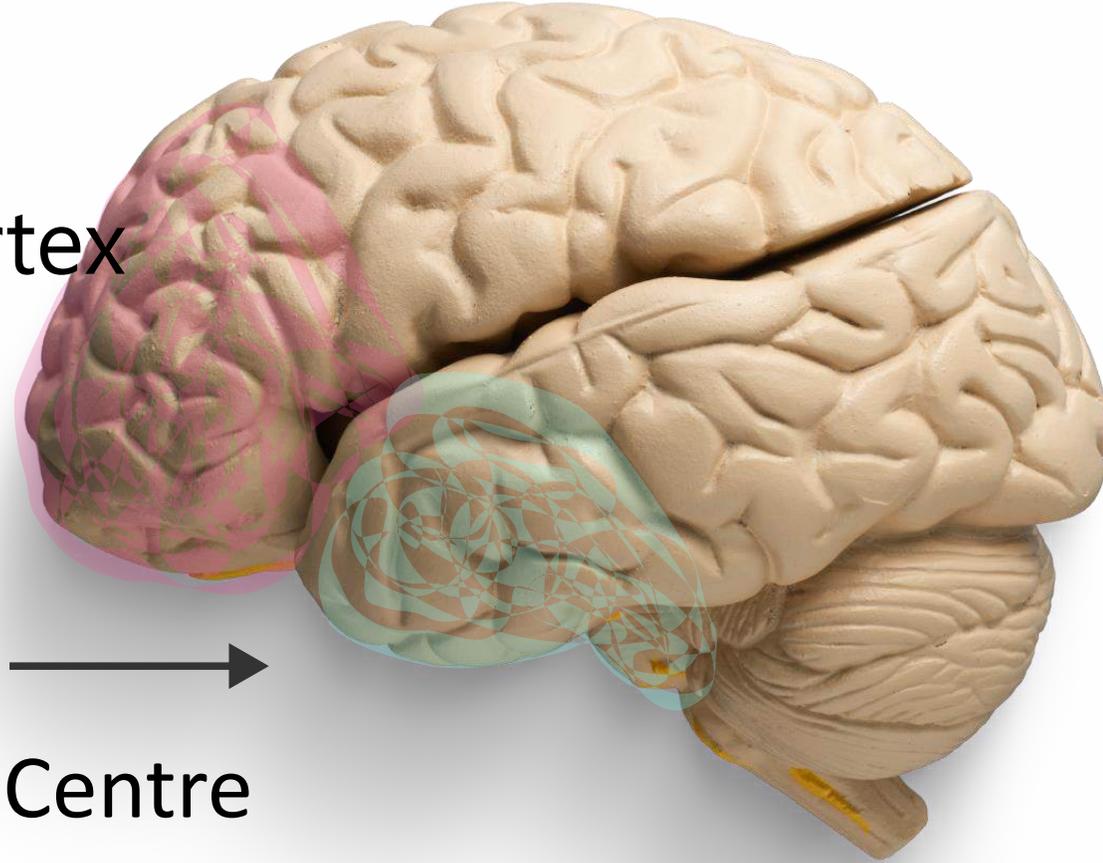
The Prefrontal cortex



Reward Centre



Dopamine



Let's change the way we talk about

**FALSE**



Let's change the way we talk about

# Positive Dopamine hits ?



Lets change the way we talk about



Exercise

Breath work

Achieving things

listening to music

Your passions

meditate

**Good relationships**

Dancing

Food

Nature fresh air

Getting enough sleep

Having good sex

Let's change the way we talk abo

# What can Parents do?

Be super aware of what they are looking at and protect them.

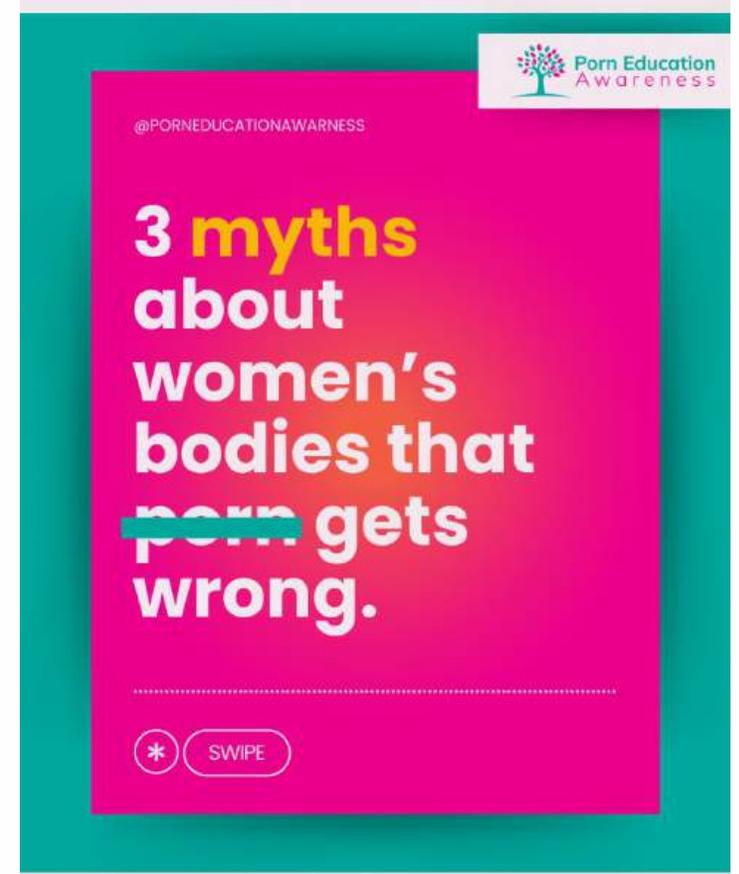
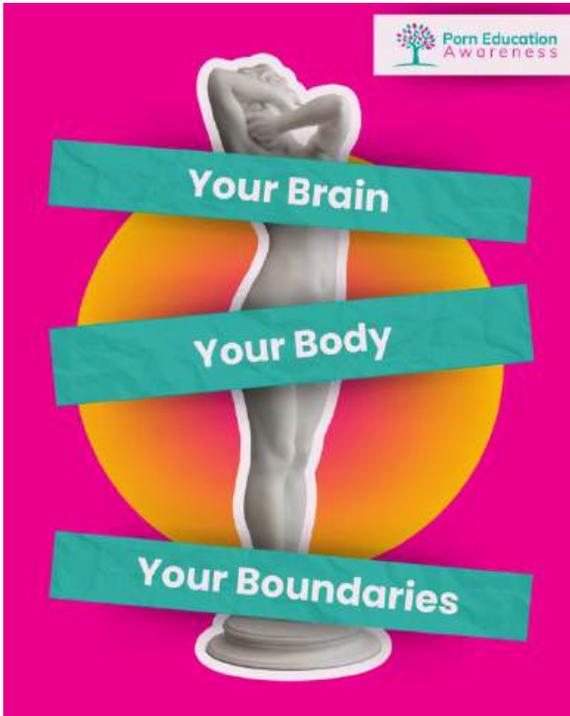
Start conversations with them about inappropriate content

Let's change the way we talk about



# Porn Education Awareness

Let's change the way we talk about



Let's change the way we talk about

# Protect our Children



Let's change the way we talk about

# New Bill in July to prevent children Accessing porn through Age verification

80% drop in Louisiana

Dark web which made it more unsafe for children and adults !

Let's change the way we talk abo



# Lost Learning



"Think before you click"



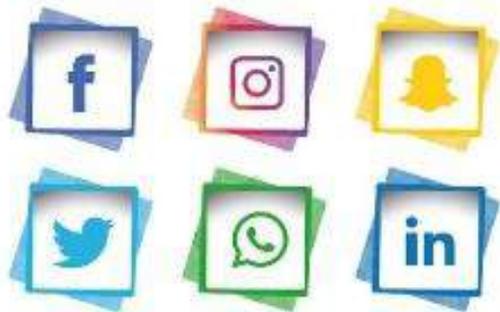
me:

"Safety matters in cyberspace"



13

"If you don't know the sender, it might be a pretender"

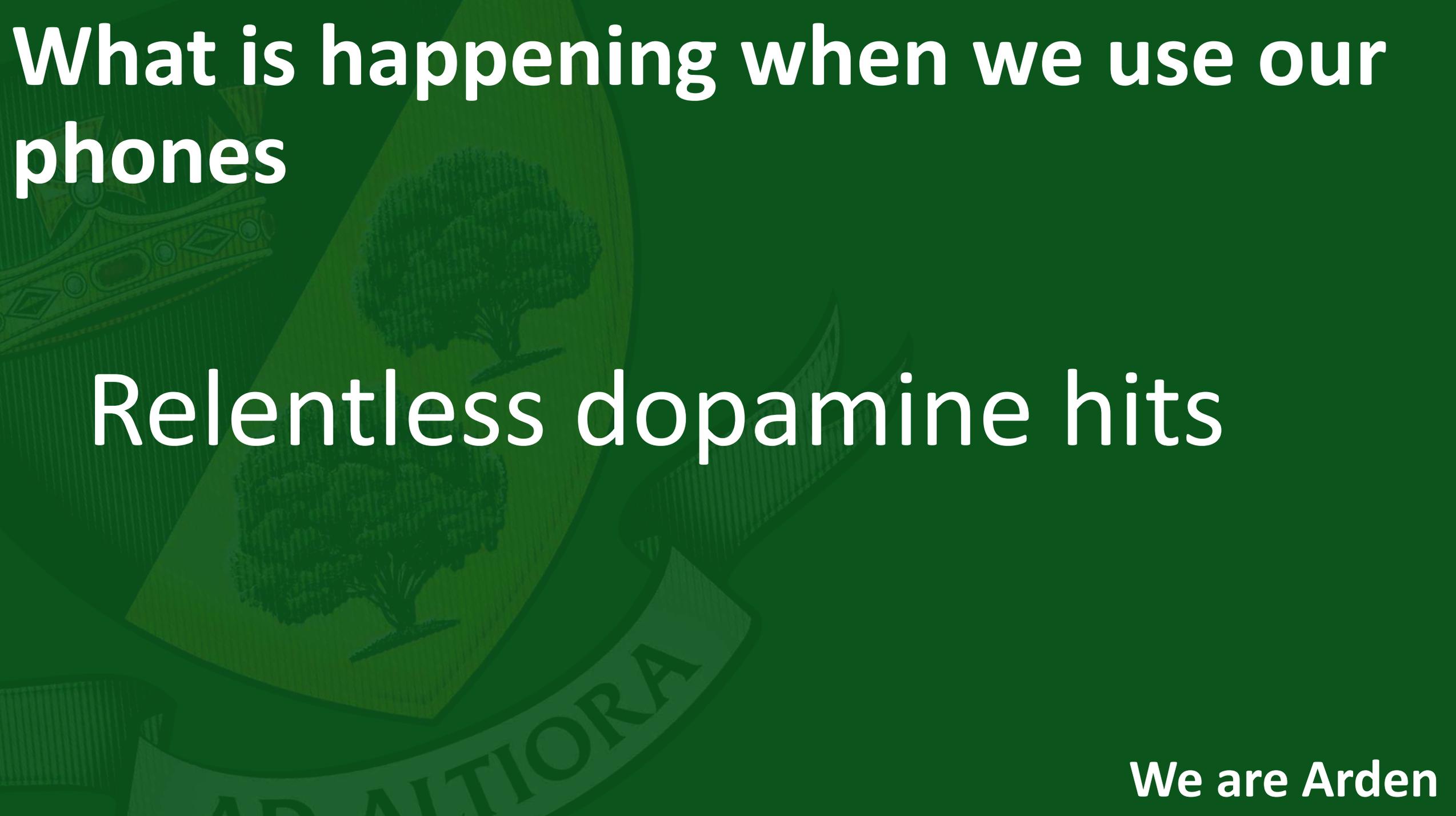


"THINK before you speak"

The background features a large, semi-transparent watermark of the Arden University crest. The crest is a shield-shaped emblem with a crown on top, a tree in the center, and a banner at the bottom with the Latin motto "AD ALTIORA".

# Dangers of Social Media

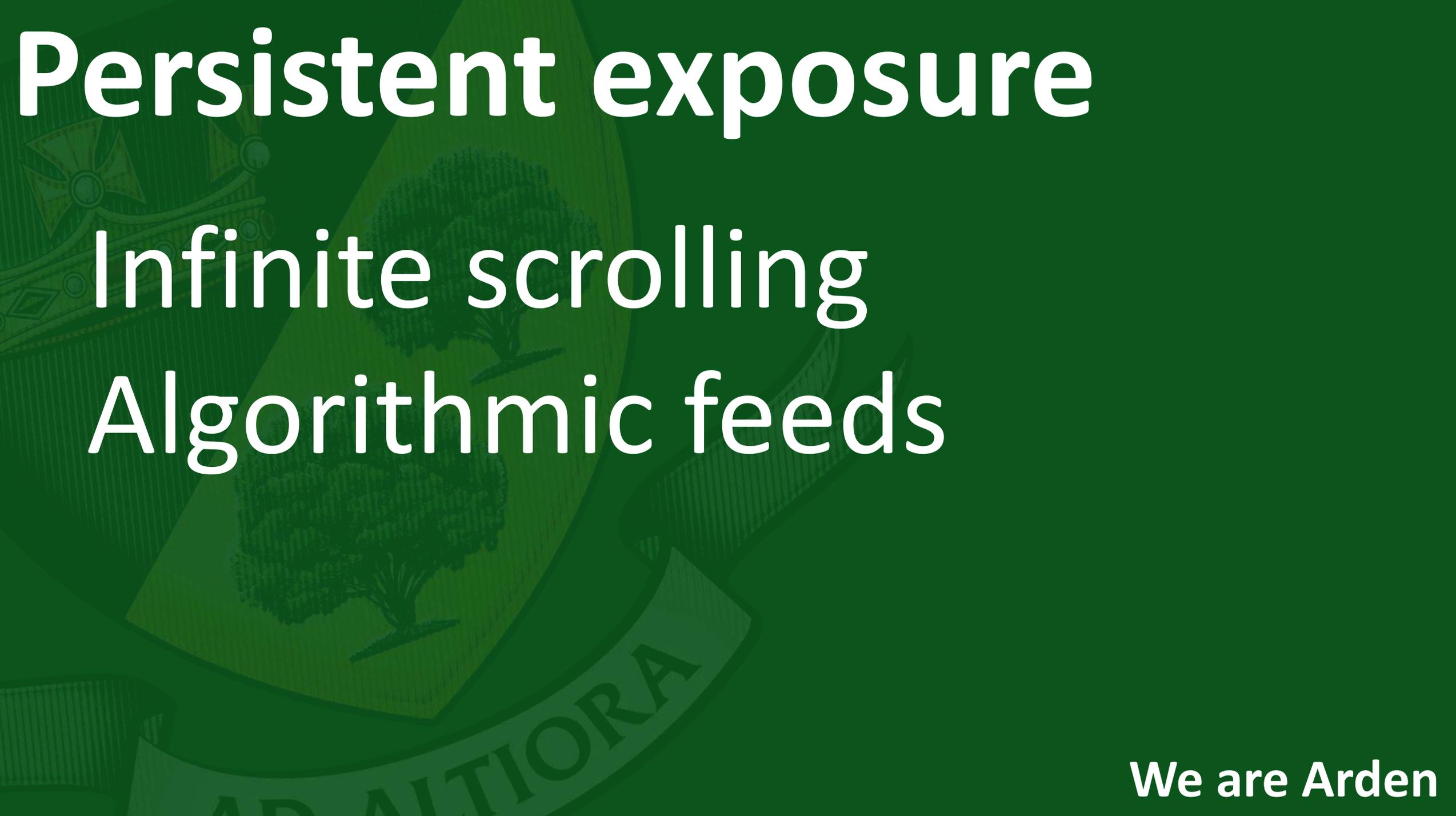
**We are Arden**

The background features a large, semi-transparent watermark of the Arden University crest. The crest is a shield-shaped emblem with a crown at the top, two trees in the center, and a banner at the bottom with the Latin motto 'AD ALTIORA'.

**What is happening when we use our phones**

**Relentless dopamine hits**

**We are Arden**

The background of the slide features a large, semi-transparent watermark of the Arden University crest. The crest is a shield-shaped emblem with a tree in the center, a crown at the top, and a banner at the bottom with the Latin motto "AD ALTIORA".

# Persistent exposure

Infinite scrolling

Algorithmic feeds

We are Arden

# Dangers to all social media platforms

Harmful content

Cyberbullying

Unwanted contact

Grooming and exploitation

Self – image

Overuse and addictiveness

Location sharing

Privacy issues

Online scams and fake accounts

Fake news and misinformation

Secret accounts

# Snapchat

Location sharing via Snap Map

Unmoderated public stories

Stranger Interaction in quick dd

Snapstreak pressure and over  
Sharing

Phishing and malware Links

Unwanted screen recording

Deepfake and AI generated  
snaps

Privacy exploits in third party  
apps

Location based stalking in live  
snaps

# Group chats

## Snapchat and WhatsApp

Racism

Homophobia

Misogyny

Unkindness

Bullying

Inappropriate image sharing

The background features a large, semi-transparent watermark of the Arden University crest. The crest is circular and contains a tree, a book, and a banner with the motto 'AD ALTIORA'.

**Unfiltered  
and  
unmonitored  
access**

**We are Arden**

# Unfiltered and unmonitored

Lying about a child's age to access the platforms

Not checking the use of the platforms

Assumption your child won't engage with the 'bad stuff'

# In addition!

Changing icons on apps

Specialist apps that hide photos  
and videos

Use of proxy servers and VPN's

# What can you do

Engage with the phone use

Stick to the rules!

Ensure you engage with safety  
measures

YouTube is a great help

For more information and support, consider joining the Smartphone Free Childhood movement. [Smartphone Free Childhood](#). Full of advice and support. Connect with like minded parents and carers in our community.



[ABOUT](#) [THE PROBLEM](#) [MANIFESTO](#) [RESOURCES](#) [JOIN US](#)  



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## Together we're powerful

Join the thousands of parents across Britain working together to make childhood better for their children, and future generations.



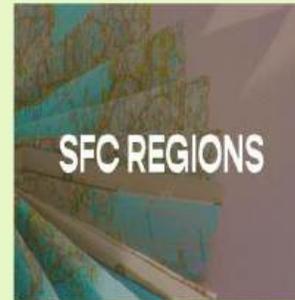
Join the growing movement of parents choosing to delay. It takes 30 seconds - and could change the world!

[SIGN THE PARENT PACT](#)



Join your local SFC WhatsApp community for solidarity, support and inspiration. There are thriving groups all over Britain.

[FIND YOUR LOCAL WHATSAPP](#)



Volunteer to become a Regional Leader to help build the movement in your area. Find out more [here](#) or apply below.

[BECOME A REGIONAL LEADER](#)



Sign to receive the latest news and campaign updates from SFC HQ as momentum builds across the country.

[SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER](#)



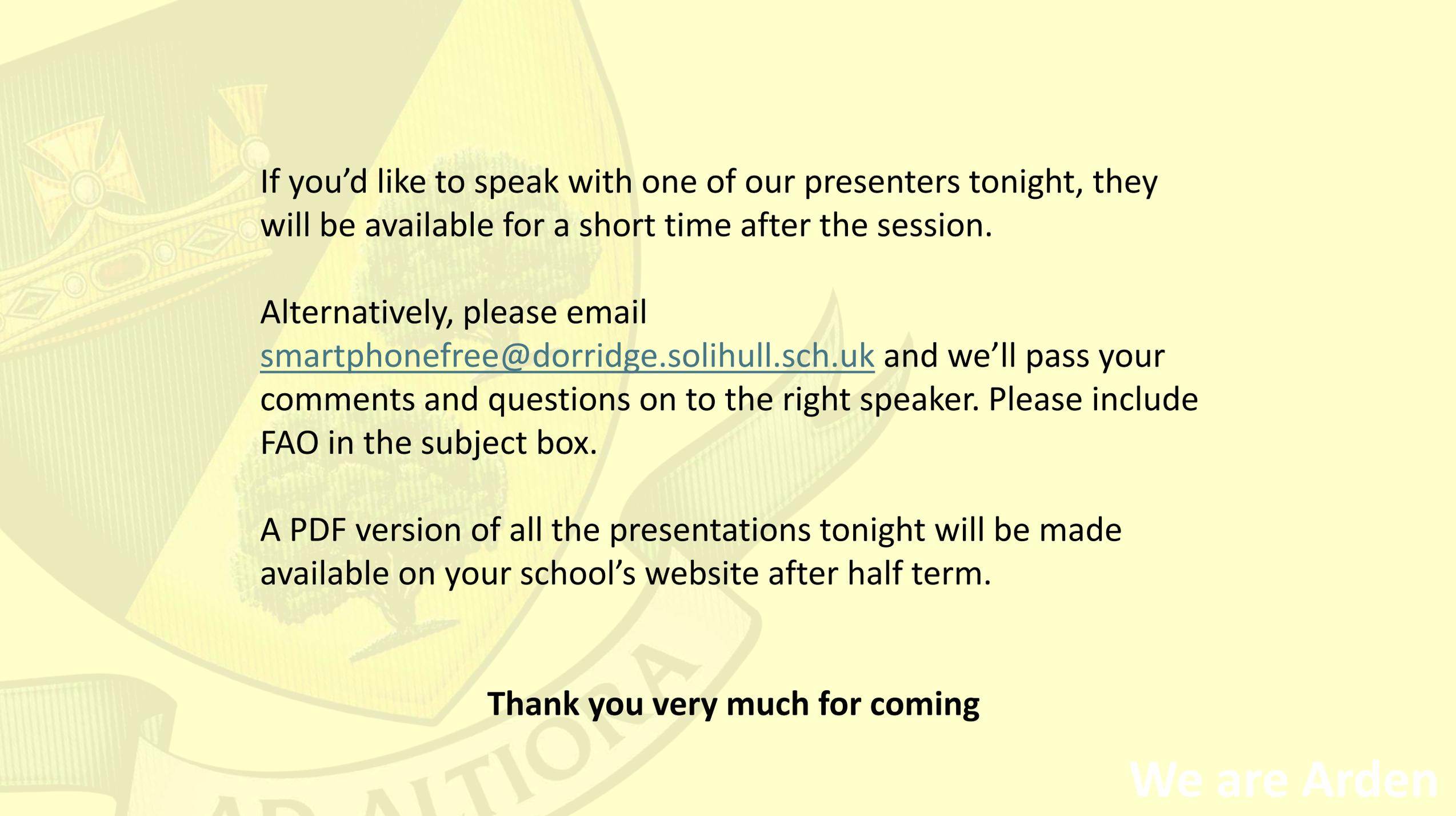
Want to find an international SFC group, or find out how to start one?

[SEE OUR GLOBAL GROUPS](#)

## SCHOOL NAME

## PACTS

Knowle CE Primary Academy, Knowle ↗	153
Dorridge Primary School, Dorridge ↗	126
St Nicholas RC Primary School, Sutton Coldfield ↗	104
St Augustine's RC Primary school, Solihull ↗	91
Our Lady of the Wayside RC Primary School, Shirley ↗	63
Dickens Heath Community Primary School, Dickens Heath ↗	59
St George & St Teresa RC Primary School, Bentley Heath ↗	57
Bentley Heath CE Primary School, Bentley Heath ↗	48
Arden Academy, Knowle ↗	23
Bournville Village Primary, Bournville ↗	22
Kings Heath Primary School, Kings Heath ↗	22
Holland House Infant School, Sutton Coldfield ↗	21
Abbey Junior School, Smethwick ↗	19
Hill West Primary School, Four Oaks ↗	19



If you'd like to speak with one of our presenters tonight, they will be available for a short time after the session.

Alternatively, please email [smartphonefree@dorrige.solihull.sch.uk](mailto:smartphonefree@dorrige.solihull.sch.uk) and we'll pass your comments and questions on to the right speaker. Please include FAO in the subject box.

A PDF version of all the presentations tonight will be made available on your school's website after half term.

**Thank you very much for coming**

**We are Arden**

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**Thank you  
for coming**

**We are Arden**