

Safeguarding alert – Social media and TikTok

Videos originating from a violent film from 2011 'Megan is missing' are circulating social media, users are watching, recording and sharing their reactions after watching the film.

What we know so far

- The film was released 11 years ago and is very violent, has graphic sexualised content with in it and involves a young girl making a video diary trying to search for her friend Megan
- The film hit the headlines in 2011 due to New Zealand banning the film
- A disclaimer at the start of the film says it's based on a true story but this is not the case
- The film is available on Amazon Prime and you can watch the film on YouTube with a simple search for 'Megan is Missing'
- Young people are encouraging each other to watch the film on social media and share their reactions on TikTok
- Videos appearing on TikTok and social media don't actually say what is so violent about the film, leaving young people very curious and feeling as if they should watch the film

What can you do?

- I would not recommend that you watch this film or speak directly to children or parents about it, as it is important that young people are not encouraged to view this in any way. However, it is important to be vigilant in case your pupils do see this and require support as a result.
- It's so hard to shield children and young people from this sort of content online, as we know this is a huge concern with TikTok and other social media platforms. But you can show them the control they have in managing what they see and how they react.
- Older children may be particularly skilled in finding information quickly, talking to them about how videos, photos and content online can spread quickly will help them understand how viral content works
- We need to be discussing any worrying videos, movies or content online with young people – **without directly naming virial video(s) or the movie itself**

- You can also talk to young people and children about the importance of being sensitive online, and not sharing any graphic or distressing content for others to see
- If young people are aware of the video(s) online or the movie, you should explain the real benefit of staying offline for a few hours and have a digital detox if need be
- If young people have seen the movie or clips online they may need support for their mental health. We may also need to signpost young people to DSL's in schools or a family support worker.

If young people are watching video clips on social media that are violent or sexualised or have seen the film and encouraging other young people to watch the movie then:

Stop – if a young person is accessing disturbing material online or is watching the movie, tell them to stop what they are doing and turn off the phone, tablet or TV

Think – they should try not to think about what they have seen in great detail, and remind themselves that the film is not real, there is no immediate danger and they are safe

Talk – encourage young people and children to talk about what they have seen in the movie or online with a trusted adult rather than other young people

If you need any further support, please email us: onlinesafety@northamptonshire.gov.uk and we have also included our guide to keeping safe on TikTok that may be useful for parents and carers