



Episode Discussion Guides



False Online Identities

The term “catfishing” has been commonly used to describe luring someone into a relationship using a fictional online persona. Often it is used in an online dating context, but people use false identities across all digital platforms, including social media and online gaming.

Though some children may be tricked into doing/saying embarrassing things online by peers using fake online identities, in a NCMEC analysis of CyberTipline reports, **98% of users who contacted children in an attempt to acquire sexual content from them were unknown to the child offline.** The most common techniques used to entice children to send sexual content were:

- Engaging in sexual conversation/role playing as a grooming method.
- Asking the child for sexually explicit images of themselves or mutually sharing images.
- Developing a rapport through compliments, discussing shared interests, or “liking” their online posts as part of the manipulation process.

EPISODE SUMMARY

Having finally found Dr. Vera Tas, Nettie and Webster get a glimpse of what has been happening in the NetSmartz Neighborhood since they’ve been gone, and it’s not good. The Webville Outlaws are up to something; they’re using fake profiles online to talk to kids, asking them to send photos and personal information. Nettie and Webster must work with Dr. Vera to get home ASAP.

LESSONS LEARNED

Not everyone is who they say they are online.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

For children in grades K-2

- » *Do you think Dr. Vera Tas is a trusted adult? (Answers: She might be. Harold knew of her from his father. She has a reputation for making the internet safer. She knows Clicky. She was trying to stop Look-at-this-Louie before she crashed.)*
- » *We see the Webville Outlaws chatting with lots of kids online. Do you think they’re being good digital citizens? Why or why not?*
- » *What would you do if someone you didn’t know outside of a game or app sent you a message?*

For children in grades 3-5

- » *What do you think the Webville Outlaws are up to? Why do you think they were chatting with all those kids?*
- » *Are your social media and gaming profiles public or private? Do you know and trust all of your friends and followers on the games/apps you use?*
- » *Do you know how to block and report users who are cyberbullies or being inappropriate? Could you show me?*
- » *Has anyone ever tried talking to you online about inappropriate or sexual things? What did you do?*

Episode 2 Guide:

“The Picture”

ABOUT THE ISSUE

Livestreaming

Livestreaming is a video feature available on many popular apps. It allows users to share video in real-time. Who can see the video depends on privacy settings. These videos are not moderated, and those watching can often leave comments on the video. After the livestream is concluded, unless otherwise specified by the user, the video “disappears.” However, videos could be recorded, saved, and later posted by users who were watching the initial livestream. The “impermanence” of livestreaming makes it popular with younger users, but the lack of moderation and ability to surreptitiously record streams presents challenges to protecting children’s safety on these platforms.

EPISODE SUMMARY

Nettie and Webster return to Harold’s garden shop to request his assistance in finding *ice diamonds* for Dr. Vera’s *realm hopper* machine to take them back home. Zion is also at the shop. He has come to confide in Harold about a problem. While

Zion was livestreaming on his gaming channel, some of his followers dared him to moon the camera. Thinking it was funny, he did it. Later, a user Zion didn’t recognize messaged him; they said they had a screen capture of Zion showing his bottom and that they’d send it to all his friends/followers if he didn’t send him 1,000 goldies (game currency). Zion is scared to talk to his dad- he doesn’t want to get in trouble. But he needs help to make the blackmail stop and to remove the picture from the server.

LESSONS LEARNED

Nothing done online is completely private.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

For children in grades K-2

- » *What problem is Zion facing?* (**Answer:** He showed his bottom during a livestream video and someone took a screen capture of it. That person is now threatening Zion.)
- » *Why did Zion go to Harold to talk about his problem? Who would you go to if you had a problem like Zion’s?* (**Answer:** Harold is Zion’s neighbor. He is one of Zion’s trusted adults.)
- » *Why wasn’t it a good idea for Zion to show his bottom while on video, even if he was just goofing around?* (**Answer:** It was not a good idea because you can’t be sure if someone is recording a livestream or might take a picture. In this case, Zion’s privacy settings weren’t set up to make the stream private, and people he didn’t know could watch the video.)

For children in grades 3-5

- » *Why doesn’t Zion want to tell his Dad about his problem? Who would you go to if you had a problem like Zion’s?* (**Answer:** He is afraid his dad will get mad.)
- » *Is Harold being unfair when he insists that Zion must talk to his father before Harold will help him? Why or why not?*
- » *Zion was livestreaming video when he got into trouble. What elements of livestreaming make it risky?* (**Answers:** It’s hard to be sure exactly who is watching. You can’t tell if someone has recorded or taken a screen capture. People can pressure you or say (mean/inappropriate) things in the comments.)
- » *Have you ever watched a livestream video? What was it of? Say you’re 13 or older, and you are old enough to download a social media app that allows livestreaming. When do you think it is OK to livestream?* (**Answers:** When you have a trusted adult’s permission. When the people in the video say it is OK. When your privacy settings are such that only selected people can see the video.)

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Episode 3 Guide: "The Plan"

ABOUT
THE ISSUE

Sextortion

Sextortion is a type of blackmail that involves an offender using a sexual image of the victim for extortion. In cases of sextortion, the extorter often requests more sexual content from the victim, in exchange for keeping the original image private. Sometimes the extorter will use the image to try to force a former romantic partner to return/stay in a relationship, or will use it to extort money or other items of value from the victim.

In a NCMEC analysis, it was found that the age of **sextortion victims ranged from 8-17 years old**. These victims were extorted on every type of digital platform; from social media to open-world gaming to messaging apps. Seventy-eight percent of offenders' primary goal in the extortion was to acquire increasingly more explicit sexual content from the child. Sextortion is illegal, no matter how the extorter acquired the original sexual image. You can report sextortion to **CyberTipline.org**.

EPISODE SUMMARY

We learn more about the Webville Outlaws' evil plan; the four are working together, using fake profiles, to chat with kids, build a relationship, and then entice them to send pictures or meet offline. Back in Badromeda, Nettie, Webster and Harold accompany Zion to his house to tell his father what has happened.

LESSONS LEARNED

If you are in trouble, you are never alone. It might be hard to tell people you care about, like your family, what has happened to you, but their support is very helpful. It is also OK to go to a trusted adult who is not a family member when you need help.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

For children in grades K-2

- » How did Zion's dad respond when Zion told him about the picture? (**Answer:** At first, he was mad, we see that in his body language, but then he realizes how scared Zion is and becomes comforting and wants to help Zion.)
- » What is Zion's plan for getting the picture off the internet? What could you do in real life? (**Answer:** Zion's plan is to go to Ledus with Harold to 'The Server' where his video channel's data is kept and ask them to remove it. In real life, you can ask a trusted adult to help you report the picture to the website/game/app and have it removed.)
- » Zion's dad tells Zion they can report the person threatening him to the video site where it happened. What other things do you think you should report to a website/game/app? (**Answers may include:** Cyberbullying, threats, inappropriate pictures, offensive language).
- » Have you ever blocked a user on a website/game/app you use? If so, why? Did you tell a trusted adult about what happened? If so, why? If not, why not?

For children in grades 3-5

- » Webster tells Zion "Remember, what happened isn't your fault", but Zion did something inappropriate on the livestream video. Why is this situation not Zion's fault? (**Answer:** Yes, Zion did something inappropriate, but what is causing this problem is that someone took a screen capture of him and is blackmailing/threatening him. That is illegal.)
- » If the user who took a screen capture of Zion had simply asked for a picture, should Zion have sent them one? (**Answer:** No! Kids should never send pictures of any kind to someone they only know from the internet.)
- » If someone you didn't recognize sent you an inappropriate picture, what would you do?
- » If someone you knew from school or a sport sent you an inappropriate picture, what would you do?

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Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is harassment conducted through digital means. **Twenty to thirty percent of kids report having been cyberbullied in their lifetime.** Cyberbullying happens across all digital platforms including on social media, messaging apps, gaming platforms, in forums, etc. Cyberbullying is often characterized by a user sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful or false content about someone else. It can also include sharing personal or private information about someone, causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some signs that a child may be a victim of cyberbullying include:

- Avoiding their phone/computer
- Appearing stressed when receiving messages
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Acting reluctant to attend school and social events
- Avoiding conversations about computer use
- Exhibiting signs of low self-esteem including depression and/or fear

EPISODE SUMMARY

As Nettie, Webster and Harold travel to Ledus to locate The Server and remove Zion’s picture, Zion is at home, and dealing with cyberbullying. While gaming online, users send him mean messages- they’ve seen the picture taken during his livestream, and they’re making fun of him for it. One user even asks if he’d send more pictures. Zion is hurt by these comments, but knows he can report the users for inappropriate behavior. He flags each of their comments and accounts for cyberbullying. The users can no longer see Zion’s online activity, cannot contact him, and will have their behavior reviewed by the game’s safety team.

LESSONS LEARNED

Reporting inappropriate behavior online makes the platform safer and more fun for everyone.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

For children in grades K-2

- » *Why are the users cyberbullying Zion?*
(**Answer:** They saw the embarrassing picture of Zion.)
- » *It seems like Zion doesn’t recognize many of the users who are cyberbullying him. What does that tell us about his privacy settings?* (**Answer:** They are likely not set correctly. He should review them to make sure only certain people – people he knows offline – can play with him and contact him.)
- » *Have you ever been cyberbullied? If so, what happened? How did it make you feel? What did you do about it?*

For children in grades 3-5

- » *When Zion’s dad asks what’s going on, Zion says “Nothing, dad”. Why do you think he didn’t share with his father what was happening? Should he have shared? Why or why not?*
- » *Why do you think people cyberbully others?*
- » *Have you ever been a cyberbully? Maybe even on accident? If so, what happened? How did you feel about what was happening?*

Removing Explicit Content of a Minor

Hosting sexually explicit content of a child is illegal. You can anonymously report online explicit content of a minor to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) via [CyberTipline.org](https://www.cybertipline.org). NCMEC staff can assist minors and their guardians with contacting electronic service providers in order to remove explicit content of that minor from their platforms.

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) requires companies to provide a way for people to notify them and request the removal of certain online content, including explicit images/videos. For a full list of popular websites and apps, and instructions on how to contact them regarding the removal of explicit content, visit [MissingKids.org/takeitdown](https://www.missingkids.org/takeitdown).

EPISODE SUMMARY

Nettie, Webster and Harold arrive at The Server where Zion's video channel data is stored. They work with a member of the Safety Team to locate the inappropriate picture of Zion. The Safety Team member, Spyder, finds that the image had been shared 10 times on their site. Spyder takes down the images, but reminds Nettie and Webster that if the image has been shared on another site or app, Zion will need to make another report and work with that site or app to remove it from their platform.

Nettie and Webster call Zion to tell him the picture's been removed from the server. While they've been away, Zion and his dad have learned that this type of situation – someone threatening another person online with an inappropriate photo – happens to more young people than they ever thought.

LESSONS LEARNED

It's hard to control the spread of content online, though it is possible to remove explicit content of a minor from the internet. Reporting once may not be enough, users must make multiple reports to multiple platforms if their explicit content has been shared.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

For children in grades K-2

- » *Were Nettie and Webster able to get Zion's picture off The Server by themselves? (Answer: No, they needed the help of trusted adults.)*
- » *Is the picture gone for good? (Answer: Maybe not. If someone shared it on another game/app/site, Zion will have to make another report to that platform.)*
- » *At the end of the episode, Zion and his dad go to check the privacy settings on Zion's other devices. What are some of the devices you think he should check? (Answers may include: Cellphone, tablet, game console, mobile game console, smart watch/wearables.)*

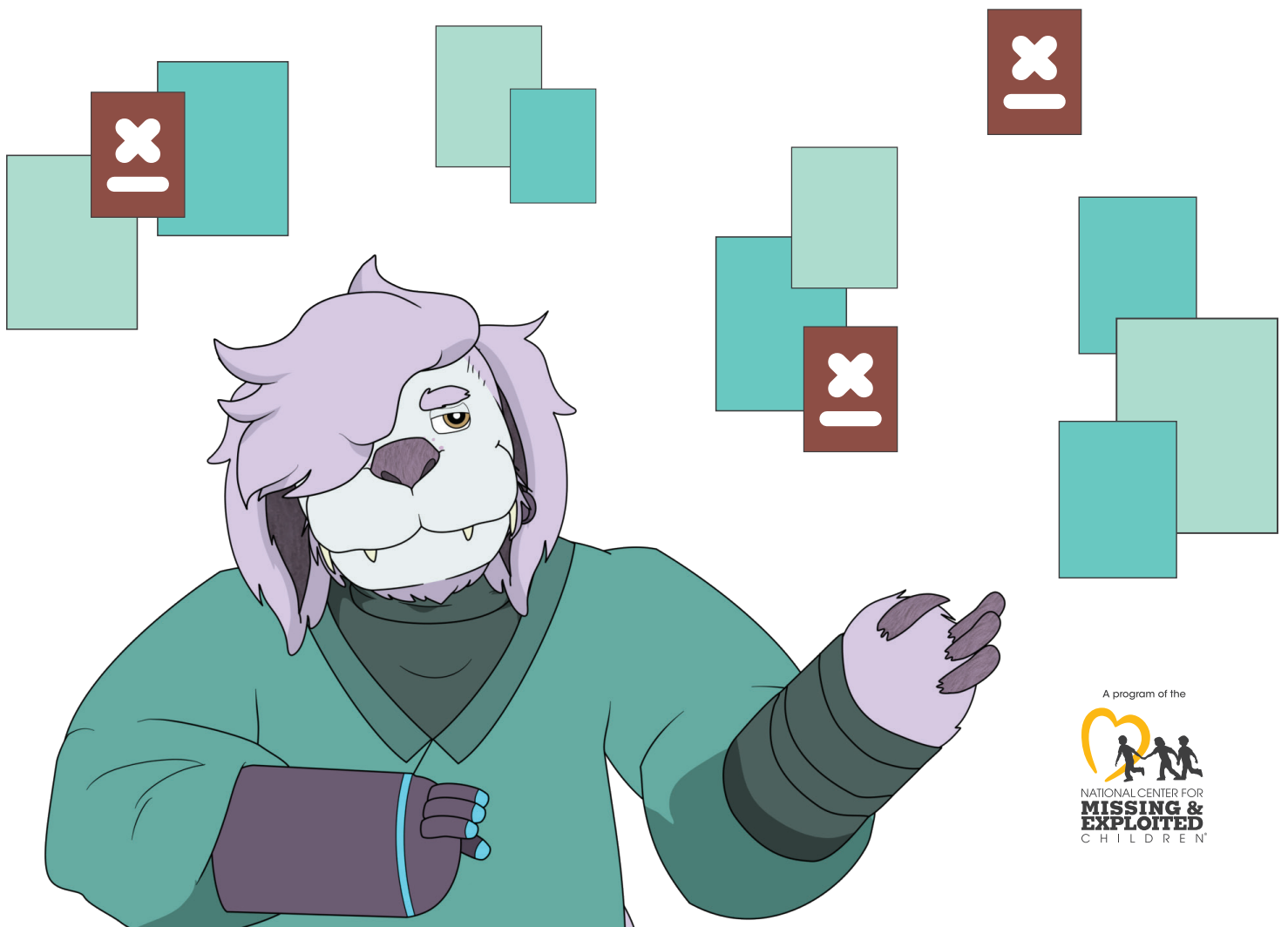
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“The Server”

DISCUSSION STARTERS

For children in grades 3-5

- » We learn that Zion's image had been shared. We also know Zion didn't have enough goldies to send the person, even if he wanted to. Do you think the person would have simply deleted the picture and gone away if Zion had sent the goldies? Why or why not? (**Answer:** Unlikely. Extorters rarely stop making threats and demands, even if the victim complies.)
- » Imagine a friend comes to you with a situation just like Zion's. What would you say to them? What steps would you tell them to take to limit the spread of the inappropriate content? (**Answers will vary. May include:** 'It'll be OK. It's not your fault. It's normal to make mistakes.' Encourage the friend to talk to a trusted adult, have the friend block the blackmailer after saving evidence, tell the friend to contact the platform where the threats are happening.)
- » At the end of the episode, Zion and his dad go to check the privacy settings on Zion's other devices. Imagine they have no idea where to start. Describe where privacy settings are commonly found on a device or within a game/app/website. (**Answers will vary. May include:** In an app there are often three dots in a corner of the screen. Click them. There you will often see a settings wheel icon, a profile picture, or words that say 'privacy' or 'security'. The privacy preferences can usually be found in one of those sections.)



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Using the Internet for Good

Each day, the internet grows. YouTube alone reported **over 500 hours of new video content is posted to its platform each minute**. With so much content out there, it can be easy to get caught up. The added ability to act under a false persona, or to act with relative anonymity, makes some people behave differently online than they would offline. Conversely, this empowers some people to grow and explore themselves and their interests in ways they wouldn't be able to offline.

The risks that the internet can pose to children can be scary, but helping them understand and implement basic safety concepts early on can set the groundwork for a lifetime of using the internet and its tools for growth and for good.

EPISODE SUMMARY

Harold takes Nettie and Webster to an ice diamond cavern to mine diamonds for Dr. Vera's realm hopper. Meanwhile, Clicky and Dr. Vera discuss their progress. Clicky has been posting all about the Outlaws' plans and has shared ways kids can stay safer from their ploys, but he feels discouraged, like his positive posts are getting lost amongst all the other content that's online. Vera reassures him that he's doing the right thing, and shares that she's been working on something to defend against the Outlaws' attacks, too.

Meanwhile, Nettie and Webster find a huge ice diamond and transport it back to Dr. Vera's lab. They place it into the realm hopper and the machine buzzes to life. Their way home is in sight!

LESSONS LEARNED

The internet is an amazing tool, that though not without risks, is used by most for good!

DISCUSSION STARTERS

For children in grades K-2

- » *Why is Clicky discouraged when he begins talking with Dr. Vera? (Answer: He feels like his safety messages are being lost among all the other stuff on the internet.)*
- » *Describe the ways you use the internet for good!*

For children in grades 3-5

- » *What would you tell Clicky when he shares that he is afraid his positive safety messages 'are getting lost in the shuffle?'*
- » *Have you ever seen anything online that was upsetting? Maybe you witnessed cyberbullying, or someone saying mean things or posting inappropriate images. If you're OK talking about it, what happened?*
- » *What's your favorite thing to do online? How do you make sure that you are leaving a positive mark on that online space?*
- » *In the future, how do you think the internet will change? Will it become a better place, or a darker place? Why?*