

WHAT ARE SENSITIVE TOPICS?



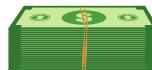
THE SOCIAL CONNECT MODEL

Sensitive topics are topics which may cause offence, upset or conflict. If these topics are not handled sensitively they may cause relationships to be strained or lost. If the person is not known well, it may halt the progress of the relationship before it has been established. In extreme cases, mishandling of sensitive topics can result in aggressive verbal or physical conflict.

As a result of this, it may be helpful to use the following rules when discussing sensitive topics

SENSITIVE TOPICS

MONEY



WE ONLY DISCUSS MONEY WHEN BUYING SOMETHING OR WHEN ASKING OUR PARENTS FOR MONEY



AVOID ASKING SOMEONE ELSE HOW MUCH THEIR HOUSE/CAR/PERSONAL BELONGINGS COST OR HOW MUCH THEY EARN.

If you really want to buy something that somebody else has, discuss with your parents or another adult if it is okay to ask how much it costs. You can phrase it like this

"Do you mind me asking how much that was?"

This will give them the option of refusing

WEIGHT



IT IS NEVER OKAY TO COMMENT ON SOMEONE'S WEIGHT. WHETHER YOU THINK THAT THEY ARE TOO HEAVY, TOO THIN OR LOST WEIGHT, GAINED WEIGHT.

If you think that a woman is pregnant, do not comment unless they tell you themselves.

If you are unsure, you can ask your parents or another adult. We never ask when the person can hear, so be sure to do it in private.

The only thing that is okay to say to a pregnant woman about her appearance is
YOU LOOK GREAT!





RELIGION



People can hold very different religious beliefs. Some people do not believe in religion at all. Some people wear items that indicate their beliefs. For example, a star of David or Yarmulke if they are Jewish, or a cross and chain if they are Catholic or Christian.

Religion is very important to some people and not at all important to others. It is a highly sensitive topic to some people. Asking people about their beliefs, whether they are the same as your own or different, is a sensitive topic of conversation.

You may not understand their beliefs or you may even disagree with some aspects of their religion.



IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT YOU RESPECT THE OTHER PERSON'S BELIEF.

DEATH



The death of a loved one can be a very difficult time for people. While we may talk about the topic briefly by telling the person that we are sorry for their loss, we should not talk about the topic in any great detail with them at that time.

Questions that should be avoided when talking to someone who has lost a loved one include

How did they die?

Did you see the body?

What does a dead person look like?

Is it weird that they are dead?

THE WAY A PERSON SPEAKS



Different areas and countries have different accents. An accent is the way you pronounce your words. Sometimes a persons accent can be hard to understand or they might find it hard to understand your accent. Some people speak differently because they have speech difficulties. They may have difficulty pronouncing sounds or saying words.

THE PERSON HAS NO CONTROL OVER THIS.

IF A PERSON HAS A SPEECH DIFFICULTY, IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT WE DO NOT POINT OUT THEIR DIFFICULTY.

They may already feel nervous or worried about speaking and they may feel worse if other people point out their difficulty.





RACE



You may have noticed that not everyone has the same colour skin as you. We inherit our skin colour from our parents and grandparents. We do not choose the colour of our skin.

Commenting on someone's skin colour in a negative way, whether intentional or not, will not only upset them but also may make them extremely angry.

EVERYONE'S SKIN IS DIFFERENT.

THERE IS NO RIGHT OR WRONG COLOUR.

One **exception** to this rule is if a person has been away on holiday and their skin is tanned from the sun.

You can say "you got a great tan"

If they were away and they don't have a tan, don't ask why! They may be insulted or annoyed by this comment.

AGE



Kids often enjoy getting older and being more grown up. They don't mind talking about their age either.

Adults, on the other hand, can be quite sensitive about their age and often prefer not to talk about it.

IN GENERAL, IF YOU THINK A PERSON IS OVER THE AGE OF 21, IT IS BEST NOT TO ASK THEM ABOUT THEIR AGE.

LEARNING DIFFICULTIES



Some people have difficulties learning certain things like reading or maths.

Other people can have more general learning difficulties which means that they might learn at a different pace to other children their age.



A PERSON'S LEARNING DIFFICULTIES ARE A SENSITIVE TOPIC AND SHOULD NOT BE POINTED OUT OR COMMENTED ON.

They might find going to school stressful and difficult. Other people commenting on their difficulties can make the situation worse and make them very upset and sad.

**CAN YOU THINK OF ANY OTHER
SENSITIVE TOPICS?**

