

PARENT GUIDE

Season 5, Episode 4 – *Social Influencers & Online Influence*

(For Parents & Caregivers)

WHAT THIS EPISODE COVERS (Key Takeaways)

From the expert conversation, parents learn:

- Parents have more influence than they realize, even in a social-media-driven world
 - Kids form strong emotional connections with influencers and creators they follow
 - Empathy helps protect kids from copying risky or harmful behavior
 - Co-viewing and conversation are more effective than strict monitoring
 - Screen-free spaces (mealtimes and bedrooms) support healthy routines
 - Helping kids think critically about content builds long-term judgment
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AGES 6–9 (WITH THE EXPLAINER VIDEO)

Before Watching

Say something simple:

“This video helps us learn how to tell if someone online is a good guide to follow.”

Explain:

“Even grown-ups check to see if videos are kind, safe, and true.”

Optional prompt:

- “What kinds of videos do you like to watch?”
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During Watching

Let the video lead. If helpful, gently ask:

- “Was that kind?”



- “Would that be safe to try?”
- “What should they do if they’re not sure?”

Keep it curious, not quiz-like.

After Watching

Do the **Good Guide Check** together:

- Is it **Kind**?
- Is it **Safe**?
- Is it **True**?

Choose one favorite creator and talk it through.

Reinforce one clear message:

“If something online feels mean, scary, or confusing, you can always come to me.”

Optional activity:

- Create a family rule:
“Before following someone new, we watch together first.”
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AGES 10–13 (USING THE IDEAS WITHOUT THE VIDEO)

Before the Conversation

Frame it as skill-building:

“This is about learning how to think before clicking — not about taking things away.”

Ask:

- “Why do you think people post videos online?”
 - “Do you think creators always show real life?”
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During the Conversation

Discuss:

- How influencers make money or gain attention
- Why risky or dramatic content spreads faster
- How comparison can affect self-esteem

Introduce the **Good Guide Check** as a thinking tool:

“Kind, Safe, True works for what you watch — and what you share.”

After the Conversation

Agree on:

- One screen-free space (like meals)
- One regular check-in about new content

Reassure:

“We’re figuring this out together.”

AGES 13+ (TEENS)

Acknowledge independence:

“You’re making your own choices — and we still want to support you.”

Conversation focus:

- How influencer culture shapes identity and belonging
- Why some creators normalize risky behavior
- The difference between curated content and real life

Shift from rules to reflection:

- “What do you like about this creator?”
- “What message do they send?”

Encourage internal judgment over external control.

PARENT-ONLY CONTEXT (FROM THE EPISODE)

(Do not share verbatim with kids)

From the expert discussion:

- Influencers can feel like “intimate friends” to kids
- Empathy helps kids separate their own lives from what they see online
- Modeling thoughtful media habits matters more than strict rules
- Regular conversations keep parents informed without invading privacy
- Parent connection remains the strongest influence over time

You don’t need to fear social media.

Helping kids think critically and feel supported goes a long way.

PRACTICAL TOOLS YOU CAN USE

1. Co-Viewing

Watch creators together occasionally and ask open-ended questions.

2. Screen-Free Anchors

Protect mealtimes and bedrooms as phone-free zones when possible.

3. Model What You Want to See

Let kids see you:

- Put your phone down
 - Question what you watch
 - Share why you trust certain creators
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CORE LINE (CONSISTENT ACROSS EPISODES)



“We don’t have to know everything — we just have to stay connected.”

Important Note for Parents and Caregivers

This parent guide is provided for **educational and informational purposes only**. It is not intended to replace medical, psychological, legal, or substance use treatment advice.

Every child and family situation is different. The strategies and suggestions shared here are meant to support thoughtful conversation and prevention-focused parenting, but they may not apply to all circumstances. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to use their own judgment and to consult qualified professionals when appropriate.

Neither the producers of *Awkward Conversations*, nor the participating organizations, hosts, or guests assume responsibility for decisions made based on this material.

If you believe a child or family member may be at risk of harm, please seek immediate professional support or contact local emergency services

