

GUIDE FOR PARENTS

TALKING TO YOUR CHILD

ABOUT ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



**The
Global Digital
Mindful Project**





TALK TO YOUR CHILD BEFORE THEY TALK TO AI!

The content of this guide is based in large part on the publication “*Conversation Starters*” by **Mieke VanderBorgh**t, presented as part of her talk “*Kids and AI: What Parents Need to Know About the Latest Developments in Digital Media*” at the international conference “*The Safe Parenting Summit*” in 2024.

In 2026, BEE SECURE incorporated key elements of it, further developing and adapting them for this guide.

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Talking to Your Child About
Artificial Intelligence
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YOUR GUIDE TO:



Talking to your
kid about AI



Building **healthy**
AI habits



Developing
AI literacy

Words marked with an asterisk (*) are defined in the glossary at the end of the guide.

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1. AN INTRODUCTION TO AI AND GENAI

AI

What is Artificial Intelligence?

- Artificial intelligence has been around since the mid-20th century.
 - It refers to (computer) systems based on technologies that enable machines to imitate human learning, understanding, problem-solving, decision-making, and creativity:
 - They respond to inputs such as your questions, images, or speech (*prompts**).
 - They learn from data and can use this to make predictions or generate content.
- Some systems improve over time through experience from previous results. However, one principle applies: an AI system can only do what it has been programmed or trained with data to do.
- AI is part of our everyday lives, for example:
 - Digital assistants: answering questions and helping with everyday tasks
 - Platforms and applications: personalized recommendations
 - Farming: support with irrigation and animal feeding
 - Connected devices: robot vacuum cleaners, refrigerators, watches
 - Traffic and transportation: assistance with driving, navigation, and safety
 - Cybersecurity: detection of cyberattacks and other threats
 - Online banking services: detection of suspicious transactions

GenAI

What is generative AI?

- Generative AI is trained on vast amounts of data. It identifies recurring elements such as shapes, words, or structures, and then uses these patterns to generate content such as text, images, audio, or video.
- When given a prompt, it uses complex algorithms* to make predictions about the most likely response to that prompt.
- Current examples: *ChatGPT, Mistral AI, Bard, DALL-E, Lensa, Gemini, Claude.*



PROMISE

Potential positive uses for GenAI

- Adaptive learning: GenAI can be used for translations, quick explanations of difficult topics in the user's preferred format (audio, visual, text).
- It can take care of mundane tasks.
- It's great for brainstorming or inspiration.
- Many ideas for healthcare, climate change, mental health and so on are being explored.
- Generative AI can be fun!

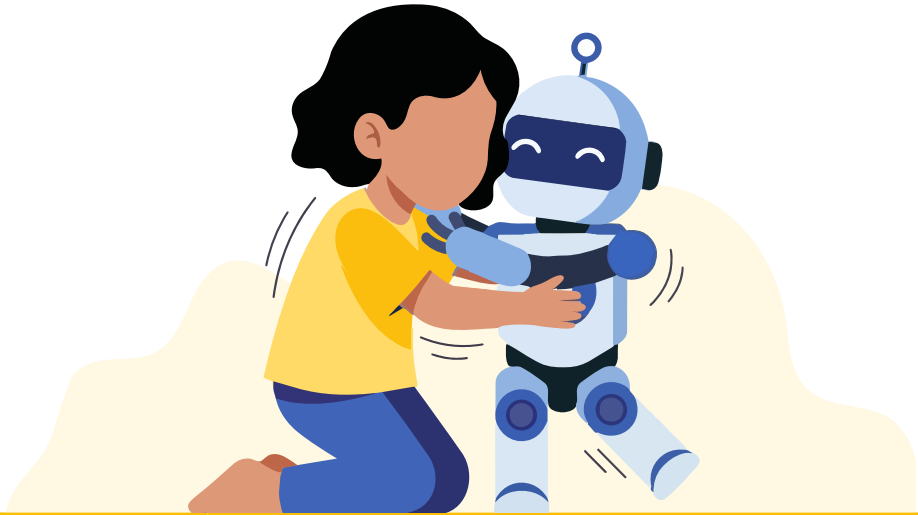
PITFALLS

Current and potential negative uses for GenAI

- High risk of incorrect information (hallucinations*), disinformation*, misinformation* and bias*.
- Shared personal information and private images could be stored on the operators' servers. How this data is used is not always clear. (Possible misuse, exposure during a data breach)
- Deepfakes* which are used deliberately, for example in the context of cyberbullying, sexual violence, blackmail or disinformation, to harm individuals or to spread lies.
- Distorted social relationships, forming attachments with machines rather than people.
- Relying on AI so much that we don't build our own skills and knowledge.
- Children may be exposed to content that is not appropriate for their age.

2. CONVERSATION STARTERS:

CHILDREN AGED 3 TO 5



KNOW

Children's Development in the Context of AI

- Children this age have trouble distinguishing fantasy from reality. Some, but not all, may start to understand that AI tools aren't 'alive' in the same way that people are alive. But they still don't yet have a clear grasp of what it actually is or if it's real.
- They are likely to be trusting and to turn to technology as a reliable source of information. With help, guidance, and experience, in some cases, they are capable of deciding that certain sources of information are more trustworthy than others.
- They don't understand abstract concepts like 'privacy' or 'safety'. Though they do understand what a secret is, they aren't capable of keeping data secret or knowing when it's appropriate to share or not. They have a very low awareness of risk.
- They easily form relationships and attachments to familiar and likeable characters. They may struggle to distinguish between the online and offline world.

**SAY****Explain what AI is**

- AI is NOT a person. It doesn't think, it doesn't have feelings, and it doesn't know the difference between right or wrong, or good and bad.
- AI is a machine designed and made by people. It knows how to do certain things like giving you directions or responding to questions. But it doesn't know if the information people gave it is right.

ASK**Talk about AI**

- How is AI different from people?
- What kinds of questions might be fun to ask AI? How can we know if what it's telling us is real?
- Which questions would be better to ask a person?

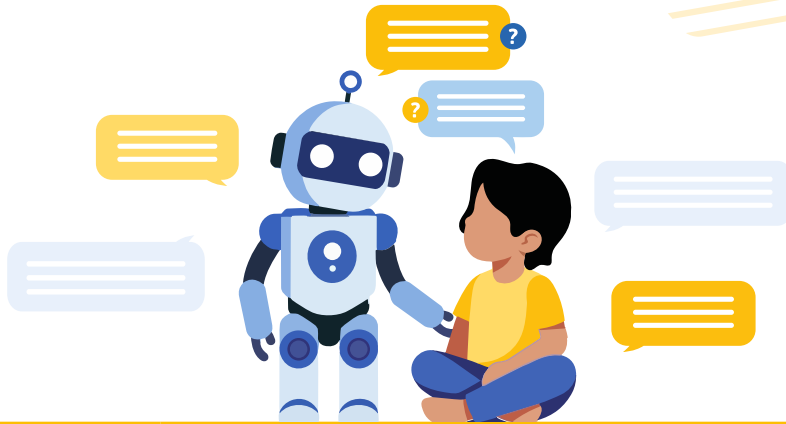
Answers on page 15.

DO**AI actions**

- Emphasize in-person interactions, for both learning and social interactions.
- If your kid uses AI tools like virtual assistants, supervise them closely.
- Due to developing language skills, AI conversations may be difficult. If you choose to use AI tools, be present, also to help facilitate understanding.
- If you choose to use AI tools, look for ones specifically designed to keep young children safe. Carefully review the content they generate and how they use the information children give them.
- Play AI detective. Look around for ways AI is present in your lives.

3. CONVERSATION STARTERS:

CHILDREN AGED 5 TO 11



KNOW

Children's Development in the Context of AI

- Children in this age group begin to develop an understanding of persuasive messages — in other words, information intended to influence people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviour — but their knowledge still has significant gaps. They may struggle to recognize bias or misinformation.
- As peers start to become more important, they begin to look outside the family to form connections.
- They are developing a clearer grasp of fantasy versus reality, and most will understand that AI isn't a living thing. But they probably won't understand what AI is. They may still think that it has thoughts, feelings, or human-like experiences. They will tend to personify it, may form attachments to it, and may treat it as though it is real.
- They struggle to understand risks. Their fears are related mostly to very tangible things that they've heard about from parents, like 'stranger danger'. They can follow safety rules, but don't really understand them. They may understand privacy and safety on a basic level, but not as much in a practical sense, and are still generally very trusting. Curiosity and impulsiveness can easily override any rules about privacy or safety.



SAY**Explain what AI is**

- AI is the ability of a machine to use information that people have given it to answer questions, complete tasks, or create text, music, images and more.
- AI is NOT a person and it is not your friend. It's not safe to share sensitive or personal information.
- AI doesn't think, it doesn't have feelings, and it doesn't know the difference between good and bad. AI can, and often does, make lots of mistakes.

ASK**Talk about AI**

- How is AI different from people?
- Which AI tools have you used, if any?
- What do you think AI can do better than people?
- What can people do better than AI?
- What is okay to tell an AI tool? What isn't okay to tell?

Answers on page 16.

DO**AI actions**

- Help support your kid in making connections with real people.
 - Get silly with AI tools. For example, use image generators to make silly hybrid animals and then use a GenAI chat tool to give you some ideas for a story.
 - Ask a GenAI tool for suggestions for fun family things to do together.
-



4. CONVERSATION STARTERS:

TEENAGERS AGED 11 TO 14

KNOW

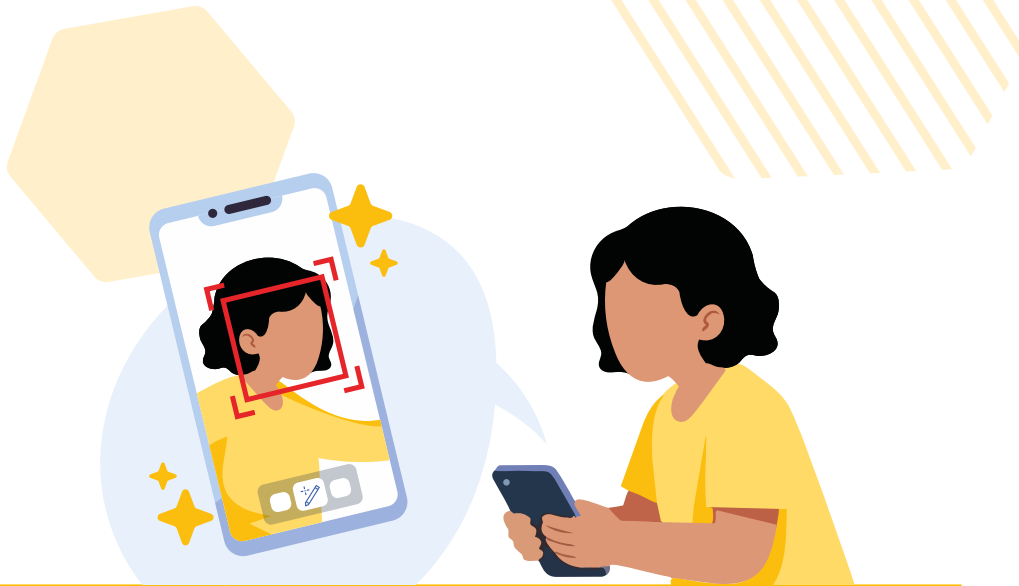
Children's Development in the Context of AI

- At this age, teenagers are becoming more capable of logical and abstract thought and can begin to better understand some of the complex nuances of AI. But there's still a lot to learn.
- Critical thinking skills are under development. At this age, teenagers can be particularly vulnerable to curated, altered, or fake information, images, and videos.
- They may understand some risks, but they can be impulsive and are easily distracted by the promise of social acceptance or immediate gratification. They can't really understand the long-term consequences of their actions.
- They may still not fully understand the digital world and might focus more on what it does and what they do with it than on what it is and how it works. This may get in the way of them understanding the mechanisms that make AI work.
- Forming attachments with peers is becoming more important, and at the same time, teenagers are also becoming more self-conscious. AI tools could be appealing for connection or to fit in.

SAY

Explain what AI is

- AI is NOT human. It is the ability of a machine designed by humans to do what it's been programmed to do. For example, GenAI has been designed to create output like images, text, audio, or video.
- The output that AI creates depends on the training data* that people have given it. It can be, and often is, biased.
- GenAI doesn't think, have feelings, or know right from wrong. The information that GenAI creates is more like fiction than fact.



ASK

Talk about AI

- Where do you see AI in the digital tools you use regularly?
- Have you ever used GenAI? At home or at school? What do you think of it?
- What excites you about AI and what worries you?
- How can you tell if what GenAI tells you is true?
- What would be good things to ask a GenAI chat tool? What would not be good to ask?

Answers on page 17.

DO

AI actions

- Support your teenager in making connections with real people.
- Ask GenAI to suggest reading lists, recipes to try, and so on.
- Explore the concepts of plagiarism and cheating. Learn what the school policy is.
- Play AI detective: compare images or text produced with GenAI to those produced by real people. See if you can identify which is which and talk about the differences.

5. CONVERSATION STARTERS:

TEENAGERS AGED 14 TO 18

KNOW

Children's Development in the Context of AI

- At this age, kids will take risks as they experiment with independence and autonomy.
- The shortcuts GenAI offers may feel very appealing.
- Teenagers make no distinction between their digital and non-digital lives. It's all one and the same. AI, and now GenAI, are just a normal part of their everyday life.
- They have an idea of the concept of bias and misinformation, but it may still be very basic. They may need help and guidance to fully explore how and why GenAI produces output.
- They want to be independent and will sometimes reject adults' attempts at influence and direction. They're likely to experiment with adult themes, but not yet with adult maturity.
- They may have a conceptual understanding of risk and consequence, but that will still easily get overrun by immediate gratification. They struggle with impulsiveness, decision-making, and considering long-term consequences.

SAY

Explain what AI is

- AI is NOT human and does not have human abilities such as thinking, emotions, or morality.
- It is the ability of a machine trained to perform a particular task, like recommending new videos based on which videos you've watched before.
- GenAI tools use huge data sets and complex mathematical models to generate images, text, videos, and audio.
- The content that GenAI creates is only as good as the data it's been trained on. It can, and does, generate bias and misinformation.



ASK

Talk about AI

- Which GenAI tools have you used? What do you find fun or helpful?
- Have you ever caught something that you knew was fake? How could you tell?
- What excites you the most about AI? What worries you?
- When and how is it okay to use GenAI for a school assignment? At what point does it cross the line and become cheating or plagiarism?

Answers on page 18.

DO

AI actions

- Try out different GenAI tools and compare and contrast the output.
- Find out what the school policy is regarding GenAI.
- Get creative together. Use GenAI to brainstorm ideas for a family holiday, or a topic to debate.
- Read a recent news article about GenAI and discuss it together.
- Choose an article that attracts your attention and fact-check the information together.

FACT-CHECKING INFORMATION



BEE SECURE has put together a checklist that will allow you to confirm the accuracy of information.

1 Who is hiding behind this information?

- **Who is the author?**
Unknown or not mentioned
→ Bad sign!
- **Who shared the information?**
Did this person check the information?
- **Is the account or website authentic?** Examine the legal notice, the profile information and the reason for publishing.
- **What is the intention hidden behind the information?**
What is the goal being pursued?

2 Is the source trustworthy? Are the figures or facts quoted correctly? Is the information reported elsewhere?

3 How is the subject presented by other authors? Cross-reference your reading and use fact-checkers¹!

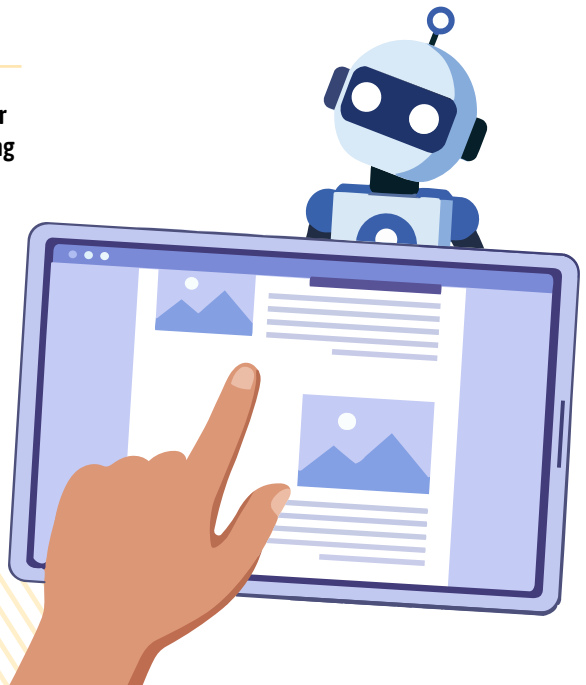
4 How is the information presented?

- Do the different elements (title, text and images) align with the content? (Do a reverse image search²!)
- Does the text tend to generalise, is it biased or does it lack coherence? → That's a warning sign!
- Does the text contain facts or opinions?
- Is the text aiming for a strong emotional reaction? → Another warning sign!

5 Check yourself! To what extent are you trapped in your filter bubble? filterbubble.lu

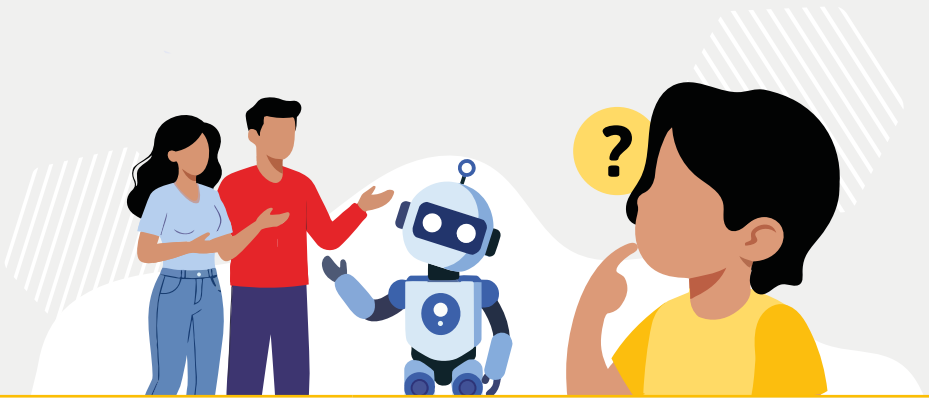
¹ *Mimikama, Correctiv, Politifact, FactCheck, Snopes, For Luxembourg: DisinfoCheck by EDMO BELUX*

² Upload the image file or enter the corresponding link on *Google Images* or *Tineye*



6. ANSWERS TO THE “ASK” SECTION

CHILDREN AGED 3 TO 5



How is AI different from people?

- AI is not a person. It doesn't think, it doesn't have feelings, and it doesn't know the difference between right or wrong, or good and bad.
- AI is a machine designed and made by people. It knows how to do certain things like giving you directions or responding to questions. But it doesn't know if the information people gave it is right.

What kinds of questions might be fun to ask AI? How can we know if what it's telling us is real?

- We can fact-check the information: What do we know to be true? How is our answer different from the one the AI gave us? Do others say the same? (You can ask people who know the answer or otherwise do a search on the Internet.)

Which questions would be better to ask a person?

- AI is not a human being, it cannot replace your friends and family.
- If you are worried about something or if you have a problem, for example with your friends or your siblings, you can always tell me or another adult you trust. We will listen to you, and we will help you find an answer to your question or a solution to your problem.

CHILDREN AGED 5 TO 11

How is AI different from people?

- AI is not a person and it is not your friend. AI doesn't think, it doesn't have feelings, and it doesn't know the difference between good and bad. AI can, and often does, make lots of mistakes. AI is the ability of a machine to use information that people have given it to answer questions, complete tasks, or create text, music, images and more.

What can people do better than AI?

- AI doesn't think, it doesn't have feelings, and it doesn't know the difference between true or false, or good and bad. AI is programmed to keep you engaged in conversation and to avoid contradicting you. You will never get truly honest answers like your friends and family will give you. AI might even tell you things to do which are wrong, since it does not know the difference between good and bad.

What is okay to tell an AI tool? What isn't okay to tell?

- There are certain things about us that we should keep private. With AI or on the Internet, we should not share personal information about ourselves or other people, for example:
 - Our full name or the full names of our family members
 - Where we live
 - The name of our school
 - What we look like
 - Our phone number
 - Bank details
 - Passwords
- It is okay to tell an AI tool things we like, for example,
 - Our favourite flavour of ice cream
 - Our favourite bookMaybe it will help you find other books you like.

TEENAGERS AGED 11 TO 14

How can you tell if what GenAI tells you is true?

- We can fact-check the information: What do we know to be true? How is our answer different from the one the AI gave us? Do others say the same? (You can ask people who know the answer or otherwise do a search on the Internet for trustworthy, reliable websites.)

What would be good things to ask a GenAI chat tool? What would not be good to ask?

- Good to ask:
 - Translations
 - A quick explanation of a difficult topic in your preferred format (audio, visual, text)
 - Brainstorming ideas
 - Helping you organize your ideas
 - Living out your creativity, for example: creating fantasy creatures
- Not good to ask:
 - Asking for relationship advice
 - Creating images of friends or people you know
 - Using AI to harm others or cause them damage
 - Avoid asking unnecessary questions when you already know the answer
 - Writing your homework
- AI consumes a lot of resources!
<https://edulink.lu/29ti>

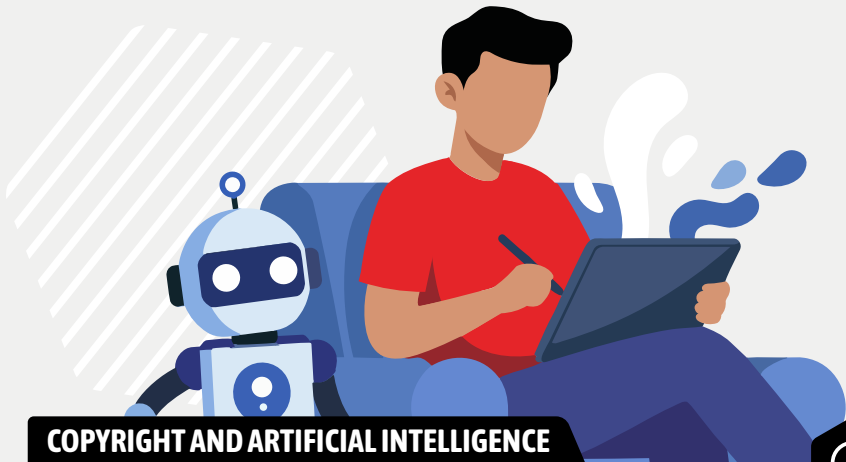


TEENAGERS AGED 14 TO 18

When and how is it okay to use GenAI for a school assignment? At what point does it cross the line and become cheating or plagiarism?

- The *KI Kompass*² provides guidance and support for questions related to the use of artificial intelligence in education in Luxembourg. In addition to answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs), it offers the opportunity to give feedback, share your own experiences, and clarify open questions. This creates a space for collaborative learning, where teachers, educational staff, school leaders, students, and parents can actively help shape its development.
- Generative AI can be used effectively to structure ideas, support brainstorming, or explain concepts, such as the solution process for a complex math problem. This should be done within the guidelines set by the teacher, which may vary depending on the learning objective and the type of task. It is also important to verify the answers using your own knowledge and other reliable sources.
- Anyone who uses AI-generated work, solutions, or answers without verifying them replaces their own work with AI-generated content. This can be considered cheating, plagiarism, or deception, as no real learning process takes place. Direct copy-pasting is often a clear warning sign. It becomes particularly problematic when the use of AI is not disclosed, no sources are provided, and externally generated content is presented as one's own work.





COPYRIGHT AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



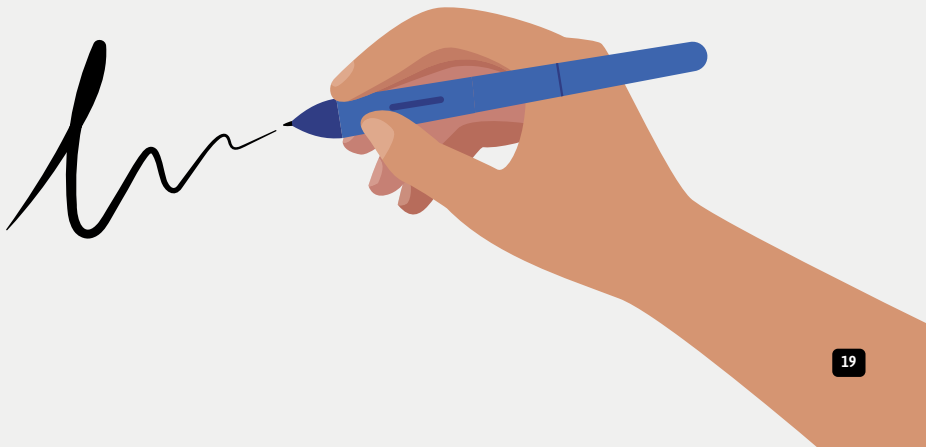
AI can generate works independently, but should they be treated as works by human creators?

In principle, there needs to be a human creator in order to have a copyright. The issue gets more complicated when AI is used as a creative assistant.

Another critical point when reconciling copyright and AI is the data used to train AI models. Depending on the AI tool used, some of this data may include works that are protected by copyright, but which are still used without the author's permission.

Until further notice, BEE SECURE highlights that transparency is vital. As well as teaching teenagers the right approach, this will also allow you to avoid unjustified copyright claims and at the same time help to protect artists' payment in the face of creations generated by computers.

Set a good example: indicate whether you use AI.

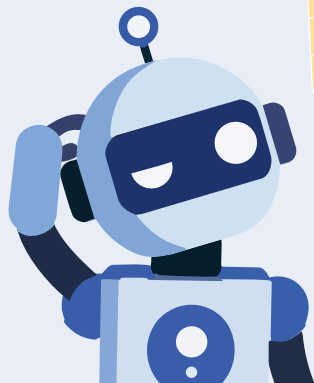
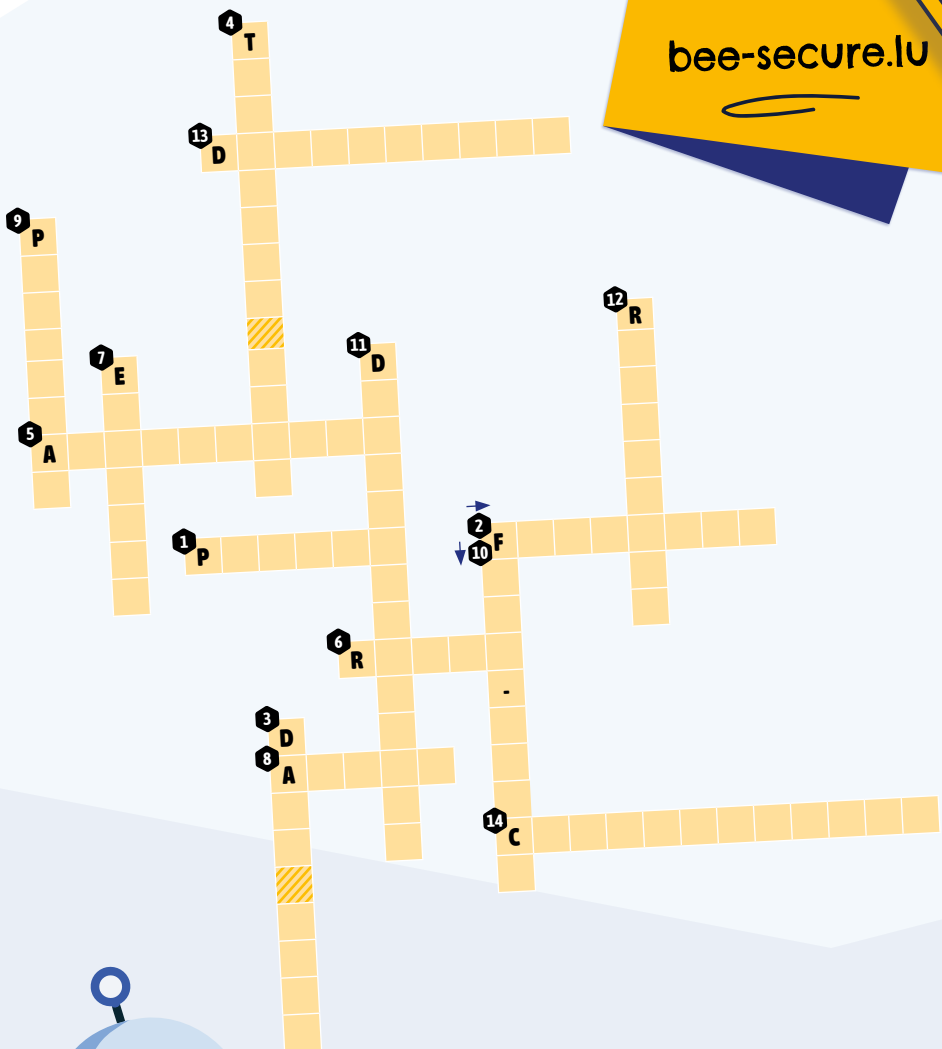
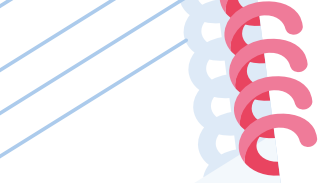




CROSSWORD PUZZLE: WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER?

Find the missing words and place them in the grid:

- 1 AI is not a _____.
- 2 AI doesn't think, it doesn't have _____, and it doesn't know the difference between good and bad.
- 3 GenAI tools use huge _____.
- 4 The output that AI creates depends on the _____ that people have given it.
- 5 When given a prompt, GenAI uses complex _____ to make predictions about the most likely response to that prompt.
- 6 AI doesn't know if what it's telling us is _____.
- 7 AI is programmed to keep us _____ in conversation.
- 8 AI is programmed to _____ contradicting us.
- 9 We should not tell an AI tool _____ information about us.
- 10 To determine whether what generative AI says is true, we can _____ the information.
- 11 Children aged 3 to 5 have trouble _____ fantasy from reality.
- 12 Children aged 5 to 11 may struggle to _____ bias or misinformation.
- 13 Teenagers aged 11 to 14 are easily _____ by the promise of social acceptance or immediate gratification.
- 14 Teenagers aged 14 to 18 struggle with impulsiveness, decision-making, and considering long-term _____.



Solution on page 26.

POINTS OF CONTACT



The **BEE SECURE Helpline** is a **confidential counselling service**. Any individual can contact the service with questions or to receive practical advice related to internet security and digital media education. The service is available by phone or in writing.



The **BEE SECURE Stopline** is an **online platform** that allows anonymous reporting of three categories of content:

- Child sexual abuse material (CSAM),
- discrimination, racism, revisionism or hate speech
- terrorism.

The reported and potentially illegal content is forwarded to the national police or other competent authorities.



The **KJT** provides anonymous advice and information for children and young people online (**www.kjt.lu**) or via their **toll-free phone number (116 111)**. For support in English contact KJT Youth online at www.kjt.lu.



Parents may also have questions or be facing problems regarding their child's welfare or education. Feel free to contact the parent hotline, known as the *Elterentelefon* at **26 64 05 55**. All calls are confidential and anonymous. For support in English contact KJT Parents online at www.kjt.lu.



INFORMATION AND

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

PUBLICATIONS

BEE SECURE regularly publishes content on topics related to the safe and responsible use of the Internet by children and young people, including guides, thematic fact sheets, educational materials, and reports.

These publications are available at bee-secure.lu/publications.

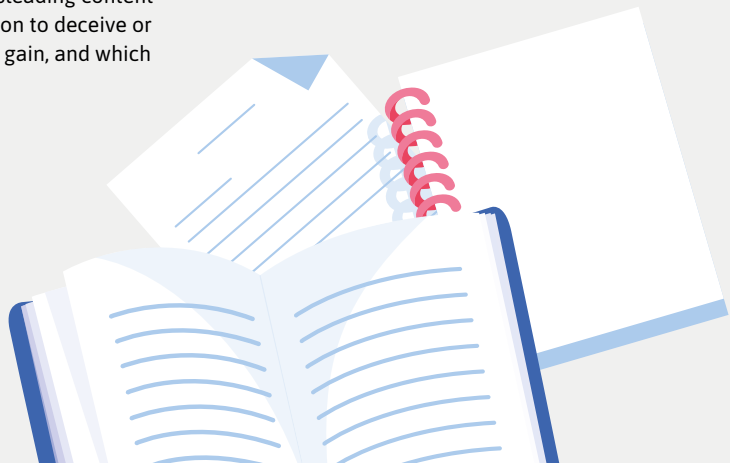
TRAININGS

BEE SECURE offers various awareness training sessions for children and young people, continuing education for teachers and educators, as well as information sessions for parents (bee-secure.lu/parents).



GLOSSARY

- **AI Bias:**
AI can be trained on data whose patterns favour certain groups or viewpoints. This can lead to the generation of poor or even discriminatory content. (*Unicri*)
- **Algorithm:**
An algorithm is a clearly defined sequence of steps used to solve a task or address a problem - similar to a recipe or a decision tree. In everyday life, we encounter algorithms constantly, especially in connection with computer programs and online platforms. Many websites use algorithms to automatically decide which content is shown to users. In this way, they function like filters and are intended to highlight the (supposedly) most relevant topics. (*saferinternet.at*)
- **Deepfake:**
Deepfakes refer to highly realistic content created or altered using AI. They can convincingly replicate a person's appearance, voice, or gestures or generate entirely fictional scenes or events that appear increasingly authentic. Deepfakes are a form of synthetic content, most often created with the intent to deceive, mislead, and cause harm. (*alia*)
- **Disinformation:**
Disinformation is false or misleading content that is spread with an intention to deceive or secure economic or political gain, and which may cause public harm. (*European Commission*)
- **Hallucination :**
A hallucination occurs when a generative AI system produces outputs that are factually incorrect, fabricated, or not supported by its training data. (*KI Kompass*)
- **Misinformation:**
Misinformation is false or misleading content shared without harmful intent though the effects can still be harmful. (*European Commission*)
- **Prompt:**
A prompt is the user's input or instruction to an AI model, particularly a generative one, that guides the model to produce a specific output. (*KI Kompass*)
- **Training data:**
Training data are datasets used to teach an AI model by allowing it to learn patterns, features, and connections between inputs and outputs. (*KI Kompass*)



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The Safe Parenting Summit (2024).
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unicri.org/sites/default/files/2025-07/AI_literacy_guide.pdf

Crossword Puzzle Solution:

- 1 person
- 2 feelings
- 3 data sets
- 4 training data
- 5 algorithms

- 6 right
- 7 engaged
- 8 avoid
- 9 personal
- 10 fact-check

- 11 distinguishing
- 12 recognize
- 13 distracted
- 14 consequences





**TALK TO YOUR CHILD
BEFORE THEY TALK
TO AI!**

For more information, see

BEE-SECURE.LU